

# CONDUCTING VIRTUAL GOVERNOR MEETINGS

During these unprecedented times, governors must avoid all non-essential contact, and this includes governing board meetings. The DfE is advising boards to use alternative arrangements, like video or teleconferencing, instead of face-to-face meetings. Below are some helpful guidelines to ensure your meetings are arranged effectively and run successfully:

## BE PRAGMATIC WITH THE AGENDA



Meetings should focus on urgent, time-bound decisions. These should include:

Submitting the school's financial value standard to your LA (maintained schools) – check with your LA in case they've changed the deadline.

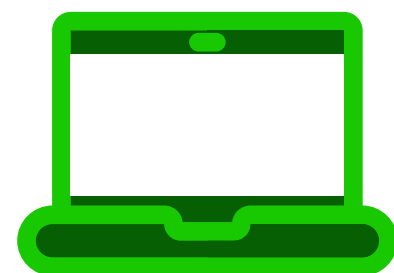
Approving the budget.

Approving timescales for any staffing appointments (if relevant).

Staff restructures (if relevant).

## MAKE SURE THE TECHNOLOGY WORKS

Do your research and look to be using a 'dependable' platform. We suggest Microsoft Teams. These systems are continually evolving so governors will have to ensure their device (laptop, desktop or mobile technology) has connectivity prior to the meeting. This will reduce the possibility of technical difficulties, interruptions and the potential of having to reschedule if the meeting becomes inquorate.

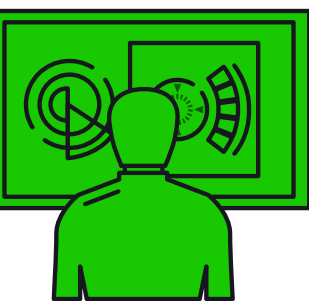


## ACCESSIBILITY

You will need to gauge the governors' familiarity with technology as this may have an impact on their ability to engage effectively in the meeting; not all people are comfortable with virtual face-to-face encounters. If all governors are not familiar with technology, you must ensure your meeting is quorate prior to arranging.

Encourage everyone to call in with their webcam/video switched on, if possible. It's much harder for everyone to participate, and for you to moderate the meeting, if you can't see everyone.

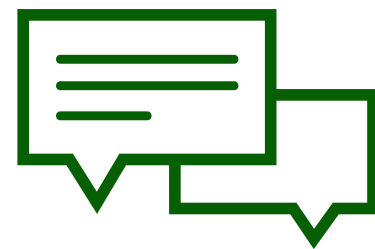
It is up to the governors to be prepared in all other ways, as they would for an in-person meeting.



## RUN A TIGHT SHIP

The Chair of Governors or the Clerk should be responsible for setting up the meeting on whatever platform you choose, and circulating the link to everyone else.

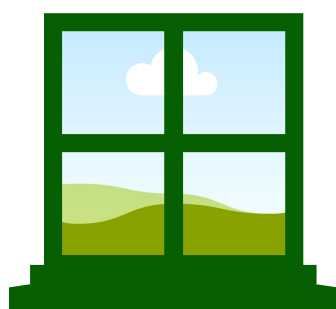
During the meeting, check in regularly with the clerk – time delays and variable sound quality can make it hard to take accurate minutes. It is also important you make sure everyone has the opportunity to contribute and ask questions. In the minutes, make sure there's a note that the meeting was held through teleconference/video conference.



## SURROUNDINGS & CONFIDENTIALITY

A well-lit space is ideal to conduct meetings. Sources of noise and distraction should be eliminated by turning off phones, closing doors and letting those around governors know that they are not to be disturbed. There is nothing worse than an a meeting being continually interrupted.

If you'll be discussing confidential information, make sure everyone can be in an appropriate location (to avoid other people overhearing confidential details).



**Chair of Governors remember:**

**If you need to deal with something urgent and it's not possible for the board to meet, you might be able to use 'chair's action'.**

**For example; update a vital document, e.g. changes to your child protection policy, or handle an urgent press response.**

**CLICK THE LINK BELOW TO CONTACT US FOR FURTHER ADVICE, GUIDANCE & SUPPORT**

<http://schoolpro.uk/contact.html>