

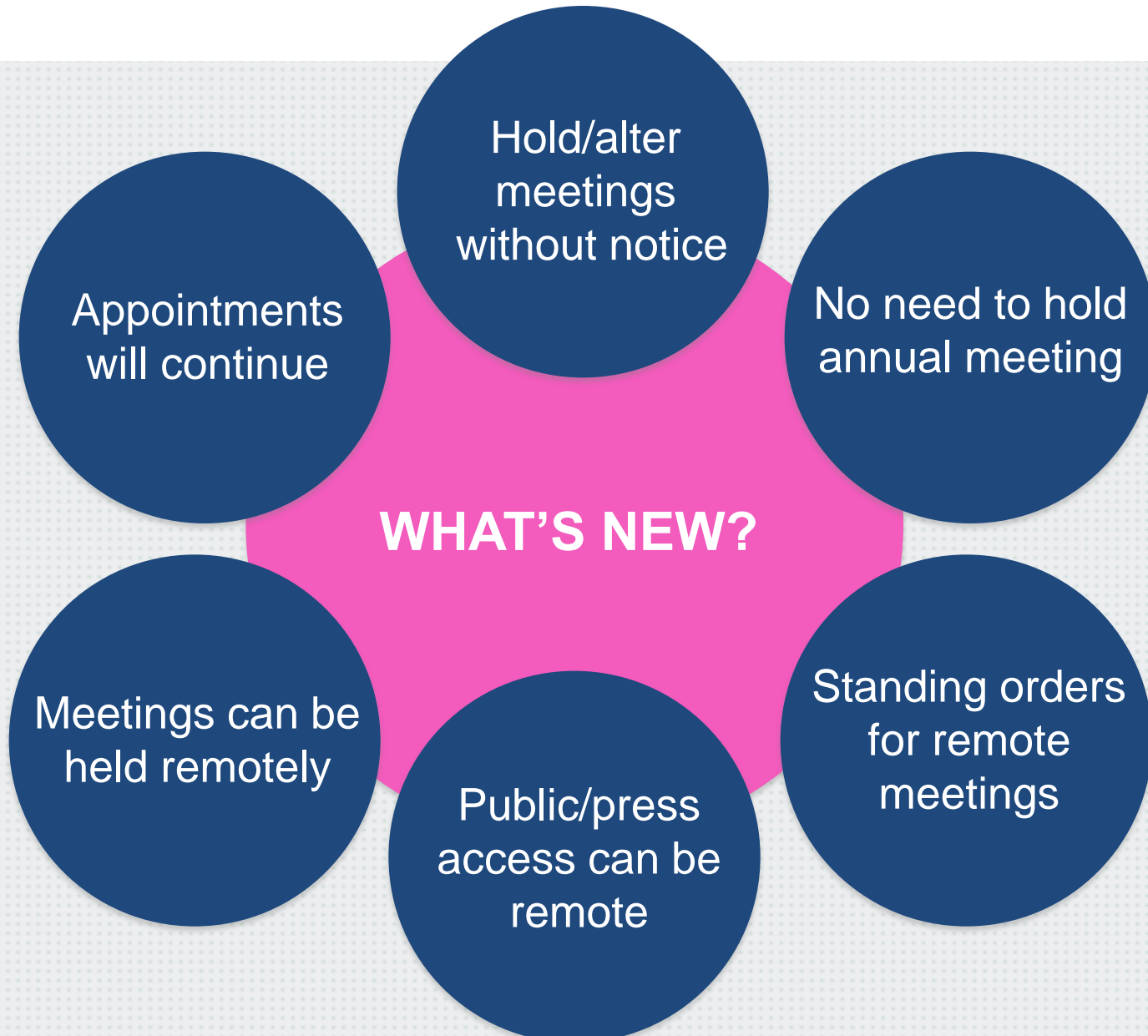


Virtual Meetings: the New Reality

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8 April 2020

The Regulations: an overview (1)



The Regulations: an overview (2)



Apply to...

All local
authority
meetings
(reg.3)

From
4 April 2020

To
7 May 2021

Virtual meetings



Two main issues:

(a) PRACTICAL PROTOCOLS for meetings

(b) CHANGES TO CONSTITUTION to reduce need for & make more manageable

- Clear procedural protocols, e.g. Role of chair/deputy chair, what if connections go, confidential items, document handling
- Remember – it is a meeting in public most often not a public meeting

Changes to Constitution



Options

- Reduce size of committees
- Consider size of quorums
- Review delegation to officers to limit committee workload
- Review rights to address committees/council
- Review document handling
- Consider expanding emergency powers of officers

Notice requirements



First, give notice online...

- Under reg. 6(e), still need to give 5 days' notice of principal council meetings – but can be on website
- This (probably) includes committee and subcommittee meetings

Notice requirements



... but no need the second time?

- Under reg. 4(1), can hold, alter frequency, move, or cancel meetings without giving “further notice”
- Intended to give local authorities freedom to reallocate resources, officers and members
- BUT policies and other public law obligations still apply!

Hosting and webcasting the meeting



Choose a video conferencing platform



Webcast the meeting



Data protection implications



Security settings/permissions

- Beware Zoombombers!
- Carefully control permissions
- Disable/limit file sharing and screen sharing
- Use email invitations to limit meeting participants

Third Country Transfers

- Check where data is being stored – preferably on EU-based servers

Risk assessment

- Balance security risks against need to conduct business effectively

Inspection or supply of documents



Publication on council's website covers

- 'Council' functions:
 - documents 'open to inspection'
 - publication/posting/making available of document at office
 - Executive arrangements:
 - agenda & reports beforehand
 - records & reports after decision
 - background papers and list after decision
- Inspection, or supply, for fee disappplied

Inspection or supply of documents



- ‘Openness of LG Bodies Regs 2014
 - Police & Crime Panels
 - ***FOI/EIR obligations***
 - ICO approach
 - FOI exemption: s21, FOIA
 - No EIR equivalent
 - Breadth of EIR definition
- NB:** information on current emergency

Your questions



- How do we exclude the public and the press from a virtual meeting going into Part II?
- How do we deal with the late submission of evidence before licensing hearings?
- How do we determine whether or not to have our annual Council?

Your questions



- Who can make changes to procedure rules. Can the Chief Executive or Monitoring Officer do this?
- How do you interpret the requirement in Reg.5 that members must be able to be “hear and be heard” and, “where practicable” to “see and be seen”?
- Should we disable the “chat” function during remote meetings?



Ask us more questions:

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