

## **HIGHLANDS AND WESTERN ISLES VALUATION JOINT BOARD**

### **PROTOCOL FOR THE USE OF VIDEO-CONFERENCING FACILITIES**

**The following protocol shall be adopted in relation to the conduct of all meetings of the Board and its Sub Committees. Participation via video conferencing will be permitted from appropriate Highland Council and Comhairle nan Siar premises.**

#### **Prior to the Meeting**

1. Any Member wishing to participate by video-conference link in any meeting of the Board or Sub-Committee, must intimate his/her request in writing to the Clerk not less than 24 hours in advance of the meeting taking place and must specify at which of the premises listed in the Appendix to this Protocol the establishment of the remote link is requested.
2. The Clerk will immediately notify the Convener, and will take steps to ensure that the requested venue is available throughout the required period, that the link can be established, that staff support for this link and for the Member using it can be provided, and that all associate facilities e.g. telephone, fax, e-mail are available.
3. For the avoidance of doubt, the Convener may not participate remotely.
4. In the case of a number of requests being received for the establishment of multiple remote links for the same meeting, such requests will be considered in chronological order of receipt until the maximum number that the equipment can support has been reached.
5. Details of fax and email facilities, as well as contact details for member of staff, at the remote venue must be verified and tested.
6. The video-conference link must be established and tested before the commencement of the meeting.
7. The video-conferencing equipment must be arranged in such a way that the Chair can see the remote Member(s), as well as those present in the Chamber or meeting room (Standing Order 22 refers: "A member wishing to speak will attract the Convener's attention by raising his or her hand....").

#### **At the meeting**

8. The Convener will confirm at the outset and at any reconvening of the meeting that he/she can see and hear all participating Members. Any Member participating by remote link must also confirm at the outset and at any reconvening of the meeting that he/she can see and hear the proceedings at the main venue and at all other remote links.
9. Any Member participating by remote link who declares an interest in any item of business in terms of Standing Order 20 and is either required to leave the room

or determines to do so, shall leave the room at the remote venue and this departure will be confirmed by a member of staff at that venue. The member of staff will thereafter confirm to the remote Member when he/she may re-join the meeting.

10. Should any aspect of the video-conference link fail, the Convener will call a short adjournment of up to fifteen minutes to determine whether the link can quickly be re-established. If not re-established within this time, the Convener will temporarily suspend discussion of the item under consideration at the time of link failure and continue with the remaining agenda items. Efforts should continue to re-establish the link. The Convener will return to the suspended item on re-establishment, or on confirmation that this cannot be done, or before the end of the meeting, whichever is the earliest. For clarity, the item under consideration at the point of any re-establishment of a link will be concluded before returning to the suspended item.
11. In the event of a link failure, the remote Member(s) will be deemed to have left the meeting at the point of failure of the equipment and if the link cannot be re-established before the end of the meeting (as detailed in item 10 above) then the presumption will be that the meeting should continue to deal with the item. If the link is successfully re-established then the remote Member(s) will be deemed to have returned to the point of re-establishment.
12. Should a remote Member wish to move a motion or amendment, which, in accordance with Standing Order 24.1 must be "given in writing to the Clerk", the Member will arrange for this to be faxed or emailed on his/her behalf by a member of staff at the remote venue. If necessary a short adjournment should be called to allow delivery of the fax or e-mail to the Clerk. Should the fax or email equipment transmission fail, back-up arrangements for transmission by email or fax should be available.
13. A remote Member participating in a vote will cast his/her vote as if participating in a roll call vote.

#### **Confidential/Exempt Items**

14. If a remote Member wishes to participate in discussion of a confidential/exempt item, he/she, and the member of staff at the remote venue, must verify that the venue is secure, that no member of the public or press has access and that no recording of the proceedings is being made.

#### **Appointments**

15. Standing Order 29 refers. A remote Member may participate on the same basis as the other Members present in an Election, Selection or Appointment of Members of the Board to any particular office, Sub-Committee or other Group or outside body where the Board determines that the vote will be by show of hands. If the vote is taken by electronic ballot, the remote Member will require to state

his/her preferences via the link and will not be able to enjoy confidentiality. If the vote is taken by paper ballot, the remote Member may participate by fax. In such a case, time must be allowed, by a short adjournment if necessary, for remote votes to be delivered to the Clerk.

**Clerk to the Board**  
**29 August 2012**

	Location	Address	Contacts
1.	Inverness	Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness (Committee Room 1)	Lorraine Macrae 01463 702881
2.	Inverness	Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness (Mobile Unit for Committee Rooms 2 or 3)	Lorraine Macrae 01463 702881
3.	Inverness	Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness (Council Chamber)	Lorraine Macrae 01463 702881
4.	Fort William	Council Offices, Lochaber House, High Street, Fort William, PH33 6EL	Ellen Morrison 01397 707231
5.	Dingwall	Council Offices, High Street, Dingwall, IV15 9QN	Alison Macarthur 01349 868506
6.	Wick	Area Office, Market Square, Wick, KW1 4AB	Fiona Anderson 01955 607791
7.	Golspie	Council Offices, Drummuie, Golspie, KW10 6TA	June Mackay 01408 635285  Anne Duncan 01408 635214
8.	Portree	Tigh na Sgìre, Park Lane, Portree, IV51 9GP	Carol Nicolson 01478 613824
9.	Stornoway	Council Offices, Sandwick Road, Stornoway, Isle of Lewis, HS1 2BW	Angela Katie 01851 822635