



Burgis & Bullock  
Chartered Accountants

Covid-19

Charities and Not for Profit Organisations  
Holding Meetings  
October 2020



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In the current situation, it may be difficult to hold face-to-face meetings. Some charities have clauses in their governing documents that allow them to meet virtually or to use telephone facilities, but if not we advise trustees to check their governing document and see if they can make amendments themselves to facilitate changes as to how or when meetings are held.

Generally, if there is no such clause in the governing document and you decide to hold meetings over the phone or using digital solutions, the Charity Commission are likely to understand but you should record this decision and that you have done this to demonstrate good governance of your charity.

In the specific cases of members' meetings (not trustee / director meetings) of Charitable Incorporated Organisations [CIO's] or charitable companies, held between 26 March 2020 and 30 December 2020:

- they may be held by phone/video or other electronic means, even if the governing document requires them to be held physically face-to-face
- members still have the right to vote, but the charity can require this to be done electronically, or by other means (such as by post); and
- members will not have the right to attend a meeting in person or participate in meetings other than to vote.

If you rely on these provisions, you must ensure that this decision is recorded in the minutes and that all other meeting requirements are met. You should ensure that you have a robust system to ensure only those eligible to vote can do so and that you record who has voted and the percentages of votes cast.

This temporary amendment is in the Corporate Insolvency and Governance Act 2020 and also applies to exempt charities which are community benefit or friendly societies. It was extended from 30 September to 30 December 2020 but may be extended again if the government thinks this is needed.

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