

Guidance Note for Running Hybrid National Council Meetings More Effectively

Subsequent to the last National Council meeting, a small group of National Councillors have met to consider how to make the best use of the TTE equipment that is used for hybrid meeting. The equipment that TTE use is a “Meeting Owl Pro” which provides a 360-degree camera, a room microphone and a speaker all combined into one device. This equipment is appropriate for running hybrid meetings, but needs to be used correctly – hence the need for these guidelines.

The following procedures will be followed at the next National Council meeting in June for those attending in person (rather than on-line). They are based on testing that has recently been carried out using the TTE equipment in the “All England” meeting room at the Badminton Centre.

1. Those speaking need to be within 6 feet of the room microphone/camera used for hybrid meetings.
2. A mobile/hand-held microphone will not be used. This adversely affects the quality of the audio.
3. The Chair of the meeting will be centrally located within 6 feet of the room microphone.
4. Those expected to be speaking regularly, particularly the TTE Chair and Chief Executive will be located alongside the Chair – again within 6 feet of the room microphone.
5. Those wishing to speak will be asked to move to a position alongside the Chair so that they are within 6 feet of the room microphone. This will also make it easier for them to be picked up by the camera.
6. To ensure the smooth running of the meeting, for those in the room who wish to speak on a particular topic, the Chair will identify both the next speaker and the subsequent speaker so that they can be quickly in position.
7. Experience suggests that there is an improvement in audibility and clarity of speech if those speaking in the room stand up when they speak. The camera will automatically re-orient itself to ensure that the person speaking is in the centre of the screen.
8. Those present in the room must remain silent when someone within the room is speaking. “Background chatter” is significantly deleterious to the quality of the audio. The speaker volume will be adjusted to get the right balance that ensure the volume is sufficient but isn’t so loud it gives rise to an echo.
9. Jo/Victoria will have a second laptop on which they can monitor exchanges taking place on Zoom “Chat” between on-line participants. They will summarise the relevant points at appropriate intervals.
10. There are no changes to how on-line participants engage with the hybrid process and it should not be necessary to change any settings on their devices compared to those that are normally used for Zoom meetings.

On the basis of the testing carried out, these procedures will result in adequate audio during a hybrid meeting using the existing equipment. But no doubt as we gain experience with the equipment, further refinements that improve the audio quality will emerge.