

# Coping with the Crisis – Checklist 2

## Virtual Governance

Governance, when you cannot meet in person, has to change. Current requirements on social distancing mean that physical meetings cannot take place, but our vital work has to go on and urgent, sometimes life-saving decisions still need to be made. Make sure your governance is robust – this checklist will help.

Key things to know	Have you...	
The Charity Commission has said that its 'approach to regulation during this period will be as flexible and supportive as possible.	<b>Read the Charity Commission's latest guidance?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It has also been announced that charities having difficult filing their annual return on time can get an extension.	<b>Applied for an extension to filing your annual return?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The first thing trustees should do is to review their charity's governing document. Trustees must familiarise themselves with provisions in relation to holding meetings and AGMs, including papers to circulate, procedures and timescales for giving notice, the minimum number of trustees that must be present, and so on. Knowing and understanding this is the best starting point.	<b>Checked your governing document?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If you have had no choice but to do so, you must record the decision to do so ensuring you quorum is noted and your proposers and seconders noted.	<b>Had to cancel your AGM or other critical meetings?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Check your governing documents. Some charities have clauses that allow them to meet virtually or to use telephone facilities, so check. Can you make this amendment if not? Whatever you do, you must record the decision to hold virtual meetings noting quorum and proposer/seconded. The courts have ruled that a meeting where people can see and hear each other counts as a meeting for legal purposes, which would include videoconferencing.

**Had to hold meetings online or by telephone?**

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The Charity Commission is prioritising all coronavirus related applications so get yours in asap and don't forget to mark it: Covid-19 or Coronavirus.

**Had to change what you are doing during this crisis?**

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To ensure that the necessary DBS checks can still be carried out, the DBS ID checking guidance has been updated temporarily so that ID documents can be viewed over video link and scanned images can be used in advance of the DBS check being submitted. Note, the change should only be implemented for urgent cases where it is not possible to follow the normal identity checking guidelines. The applicant must present the original versions of these documents when they first attend their employment or volunteering role.

**Had to approve a DBS check for a new member of staff or volunteer?**

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1. Make sure your trustees have access to the technology and if it's new for them, help them learn how to use it.
  2. Think about online meeting etiquette. Minimise background noise by asking trustees to either put themselves on mute or to make sure they're in a quiet place.
  3. Don't forget about procedure

**Decided to run video meetings and AGMS?**

## Sources of further support

### UK Government advice

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-the-charity-sector>

### Charity Trustee's Handbook

<https://www.dsc.org.uk/publication/key-guides-the-charity-trustees-handbook/>

### Filing returns during the pandemic

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/filing-charity-annual-returns-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic>

### Charities and meetings

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charities-and-meetings-cc48/charities-and-meetings#contents>

### Association of Chairs

<https://www.associationofchairs.org.uk/coronavirus-support/>

### DSB checking

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/covid-19-changes-to-dbs-id-checking-guidelines>

### Trustee meetings guidance

<https://bateswells.co.uk/2020/03/charity-trustee-meetings-a-coronavirus-guide/>

**This Coping with the Crisis Checklist is part of a series, visit [www.dsc.org.uk/crisischecklists](http://www.dsc.org.uk/crisischecklists) for more**