



Department for Levelling Up,  
Housing & Communities

**Lee Rowley MP**

*Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Local  
Government and Building Safety*

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Our reference: 29068723

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Dear Robert,

Thank you for your letter of 11 July on behalf of the Society of Local Council Clerks about the reintroduction of virtual meetings of local authorities.

I am grateful for you getting in touch and letting me know the strong view of your colleagues regarding virtual and remote meetings; I welcome the carefully considered arguments put forward by your organisation and others in the sector in recent months. There is obviously a delicate balance to be struck here between ensuring the ability for people to take part in local democracy in a way which is accessible and works, along with ensuring that citizens are able to attend council meetings in person to interact with their local representatives and to hold them to account. Physical attendance at meetings remains important in building strong working relationships between councillors and to deliver good governance and democratic accountability.

As I know you will know, the House of Lords voted to support the amendment to the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill tabled by Baroness McIntosh of Pickering. The Government will be setting out its position on this matter when the Bill returns to the House of Commons in the autumn.

I am grateful for you getting in touch and thank you for sharing your thoughts on this important matter which we have certainly noted and will consider as part of that response.

Yours sincerely,

**LEE ROWLEY MP**