

Midlothian Council to meet in person for first time since the pandemic began

Midlothian councillors will hold their first public in person meeting in more than two years next week after being told a hybrid plan may not be in place for six months.

Elected members had agreed to move from virtual meetings, which have taken place since June 2020, to a hybrid model which would allow some people to attend council chambers and others to take part virtually.

However a special meeting of councillors on Tuesday agreed to allow next week's full meeting of the council to go ahead on an in person basis only after being told the hybrid plans may not be ready to introduce for some months.

And they were told the costs of the new hybrid meetings going forward had been estimated at around £128,000.

A report to members said that a cross party working group had considered three options moving forward – option one returning to in-person only meetings, option two continuing virtual meetings and option three hybrid meetings.

It supported the introduction of hybrid meetings moving forward with a report on costs due to go to council on October 4 making the proposal.

However it said: "Noting that implementation of option 3 may

take until March 2023, the group were to explore the interim hybrid arrangements for scheduled council meetings in November, December 2022 and February 2023.”

And it asked councillors to approve a decision to meet in person next week for the October meeting when the plans would be discussed further.

Councillors unanimously agreed to meet in council chambers for next week’s meeting.

by Marie Sharp Local Democracy Reporter

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