**ADSO & LLG PRESS RELEASE – VIRTUAL MEETING PROVISION**

**15th AUGUST 2024**

At the end of July, ADSO & LLG wrote to the new Sectary of State – Angela Rayner, to reignite our long-standing campaign to obtain permanent provision for local authority virtual meetings with the new government.

We were very encouraged to receive a response from Minister Jim McMahon which was highly positive and emphasised the government’s intention to ensure that local government is ‘modern, efficient, flexible and diverse’, and that they are keen to ‘break down barriers that prevent people from seeking to serve their communities’. Acknowledging that hybrid meetings might be a ‘helpful step’ in achieving this- Minister McMahon indicated the government wished to have an ‘evidenced based discussion’ on the merits.

LLG & ADSO have already replied to Mr McMahon agreeing that any change in legislation should be evidence based and backed by a governance framework to ensure such meetings are run properly. We reminded the Minister that Councils ran hybrid and remote meetings successfully during the pandemic and that our two organisations supported our members extensively in ensuring that they operated within the law and their council constitutions. We also pointed out that whilst the previous government’s Call for Evidence is now over 2 years old, the 4000 plus responses are unlikely to have changed significantly and could usefully still help to inform discussions moving forward.

We are extremely encouraged by these early communications and we will work with our partners to support both the evidence required and procedural framework needed to bring about remote provision to ensure an inclusive and modern local government sector.

**Queries to:-**

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