

Checklist for the Review and Approval of Procedural Documents

To be completed and attached to any document which guides practices when submitted to the appropriate committee for consideration and approval.

	Yes/No/Unsure	Comments
Title of Document		Meetings Policy
Could this policy be incorporated within an existing policy?	No	
Does this policy follow the style and format of the agreed template?	Yes	
Has the front sheet been completed?	Yes	
Is there an appropriate review date?	Yes	
Does the contents page reflect the body of the document?	Yes	
Are there measurable standards or KPIs to support the monitoring of compliance with and effectiveness of the document?	Yes	
Are all appendices appropriate and/or applicable?	Yes	
Have all appropriate stakeholders been consulted?	Yes	
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken?	Yes	
Is there a clear plan for implementation?	Yes	
Has the document control sheet been completed?	Yes	
Are key references cited and supporting documents referenced?	Yes	
Does the document identify which Committee/Group will approve it?	Yes	



Is there an implementation plan for this policy?	Yes	
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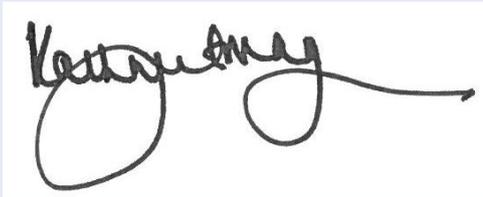
Individual Approval

If you are happy to approve this document, please sign and date it and forward to the chair of the committee/group where it will receive final approval.

Name	Rod While	Date	07/08/2017
Signature			

Committee Approval

If the committee is happy to approve this document, please sign and date it and forward copies to the person with responsibility for disseminating and implementing the document and the person who is responsible for maintaining the organisation's database of approved documents.

Name	Kathryn Magson	Date	22/08/2017
Signature			



MEETINGS POLICY

Version Number	2.0
Ratified By	Executive Committee
Date Ratified	22 August 2017
Name of Originator/Author	Rod While
Responsible Director	Kathryn Magson
Staff Audience	All staff
Date Issued	September 2017
Next Review Date	September 2018



Plan Version	Page	Details of amendment	Date	Author
1		New policy	5 July 2016	Rod While
2		Minor factual revisions	7 August 2017	Rod While



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1. INTRODUCTION

A desk top exercise conducted in May 2016 showed that CCG staff attended around 200 regular committee and group meetings. It is not unusual for managers to spend at least 50% of their time in meetings that they either call or have to attend. This leaves little time left to actually get work done. The focus on meetings is undoubtedly a feature of the modern workplace and the average professional working week has expanded steadily over the last decade with some people working 60-70 hours per week.

By making our meetings more effective we should be in a good position to increase productivity and maintain a good work-life balance. Herts Valleys CCG has set itself the objective of reducing the amount of time we spend in meetings by 50% by the end of 2016/17. This will give us the valuable time we need to think strategically and deliver on our key objectives.

This policy is intended to provide staff with the tools required to reduce time spent in meetings, make our meetings more productive and importantly the policy gives our staff permission to say no to inappropriate meeting requests and to voice their concerns or views when their time is not being used effectively.

2. PURPOSE

- 2.1 To ensure that all meetings are a good use of time, are as effective as possible to represent value for money.
- 2.2 To reduce the amount of time CCG staff spends in meetings. .
- 2.3 To set the standard of business etiquette that Herts Valleys expects of all meeting attendees.

3. DEFINITIONS

A “meeting” as referred to in this document is any formal business meeting arranged and / or attended by CCG staff. It does not refer to informal team meetings.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Roles and Responsibilities within the Organisation

- 4.1.1 All staff and meeting attendees have a responsibility to act in compliance with this policy when attending meetings hosted by Herts Valleys CCG.
- 4.1.2 All staff and meeting attendees have a responsibility to abide by the standard of business etiquette that Herts Valleys expects of all meeting attendees.
- 4.1.3 Herts Valleys CCG expects all attendees of meetings hosted by the CCG to act in compliance with the policy, whether or not they are employed by the CCG.
- 4.1.4 Managers should ensure staff and meeting attendees are aware of the policy and that staff and attendees act in accordance with it.



4.2 Consultation and Communication with Stakeholders

The CCG's Staff Involvement Group and a sample of Board members were consulted during the development of this policy.

5. CONTENT

5.1 Strategies to use to reduce the time you spend in meetings

5.1.1 *Pre-meeting guidelines for the Chair and meeting organisers*

- 5.1.1.1 Ask yourself a simple question: can the matter be resolved without a meeting? If the answer is “no”, consider a telephone conference if attendees are based on different sites. Be clear on the meeting purpose, the primary purpose of most meetings should be to make a decision and gain commitment to a course of action, not to share information and give updates.
- 5.1.1.2 It is undoubtedly the case that the meeting content will expand to fit the amount of time available. Be ruthless when estimating how much time is required. Meetings that last more than an hour tend to be less productive than shorter meetings, why not experiment with 30 minute or even 15 minute meetings. If a particular committee holds a meeting regularly, don't fall into the trap of assuming it will always take a fixed amount of time. Flex the length of the meeting according to what is actually on the agenda.
- 5.1.1.3 There is a responsibility on the organiser to make sure that the right people are invited to a meeting. If you don't know who needs to be there, don't just invite everyone and hope for the best. Do your research and respect people's time.
- 5.1.1.4 Develop your agenda well in advance of the meeting to allow for suggestions from attendees. Review agenda item suggestions critically and think about whether your meeting is the right forum for a particular item.
- 5.1.1.5 When formulating the agenda, don't automatically add a slot for “any other business”. All too often this becomes an “escape route” for people to add items that have just occurred to them that should have been added to the agenda weeks before. The chair should insist that any urgent items should be discussed with him/her first.
- 5.1.1.6 When sending out the agenda, request any declarations of interest in respect of the agenda items, this enables any potential conflicts to be managed before the meeting and appropriate actions planned.
- 5.1.1.7 Make it clear to members and meeting attendees that you expect them to have read the papers and that they should seek any clarification from the author before the meeting not at the meeting if there are issues that require clarification.
- 5.1.1.8 Make it clear to authors that papers should be no longer than four pages and must follow the Integrated Corporate Governance Protocol¹ and the writing and style guide².
- 5.1.1.9 Don't routinely arrange for the printing of papers prior to the meeting, expect your attendees to either make their own arrangements or encourage them to bring a

¹ [Integrated corporate governance protocol](#)
² [Writing and Style Guide](#)



portable device onto which the papers have been loaded.

- 5.1.1.10 Do not book meetings at lunch time or outside the normal business hours of 9am-5pm.

5.1.2 Chairing the meeting

- 5.1.2.1 As chair you should always start the meeting at the stated time, regardless of whether all attendees are present. Don't recap what has happened so far at the meeting for people who have arrived late.
- 5.1.2.2 The chair, upon opening the meeting, should say a few words on what to do if the emergency alarms sound.
- 5.1.2.3 At every meeting you must request declarations of any potential or actual conflicts of interest with regard to any matter on the agenda. Make it clear that you expect declarations whether or not they have already been declared on the register of interests. For further detailed guidance on managing conflicts of interest and the options open to you as chair, please consult the CCG policy³.
- 5.1.2.4 Encourage everyone to participate and do not allow individuals to dominate the discussion. When asking people to introduce their items, ask them not to repeat the contents of the paper, ask them to very briefly highlight the key points, questions and recommendations that should be considered.
- 5.1.2.5 Summarise any decisions so that everyone is clear on what has been decided and make sure that everyone is clear on individual responsibilities as a result of the decision.
- 5.1.2.6 End the meeting at the published time, even if there are items still to be discussed. Attendees will not have planned for a longer meeting and running over time is likely to irritate many.

5.1.3 Responsibilities of meeting attendees

- 5.1.3.1 The CCG expects all attendees to prepare fully for all meetings, making sure they have read all papers and prepared all their potential questions and comments.
- 5.1.3.2 If you are presenting an item, please do not repeat the content of your paper, assume people have read it and re-emphasise a small number of key points and the recommendations if necessary.
- 5.1.3.3 We encourage people to express their views but do not repeat what has already been said or drift off topic. Each **minute** of Board and larger committee meetings costs the CCG between £30 and £50.
- 5.1.3.4 We encourage everyone to be honest and forthright in their views, ensuring though that views expressed are about issues and not about people. Don't talk across other people and don't have private conversations. However tempting it might be, do not use your portable device to read emails or browse the internet during a meeting.

5.1.4 Saying no to meeting requests

- 5.1.4.1 Beware of meetings with no agenda and no stated desired outcome. If you have been sent an agenda, be wary if it contains the words "discuss", "update", "review" or "inform". There are exceptions but the aim of a meeting should include the words

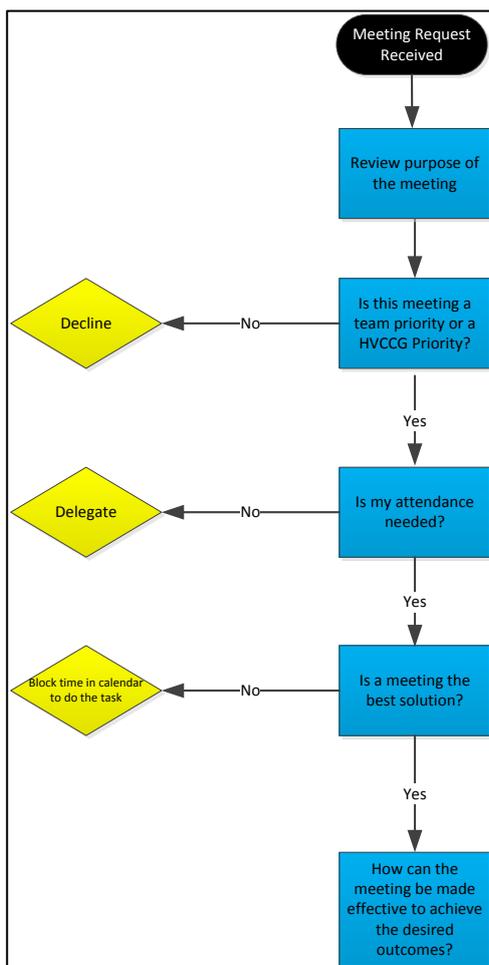
³ [Standards of Business Conduct V2, July 2017](#)



“decide and commit”. Many of us sit in meetings where most of the agenda doesn’t apply to us, consider saying no to such meetings but make yourself available for a short time if appropriate.

5.1.4.2 Sometimes we are invited to meetings out of politeness; this is a particular issue with partnership meetings across two or more organisations. Ask yourself whether the meeting outcomes are likely to be any different if you do not attend.

5.1.4.3 The decision tree below can be used to help you to decide whether to attend a meeting or not.



5.1.4 Identifying repetition

5.1.4.1 We have all attended meetings and experienced a vague feeling of déjà vu. Papers and reports can be repeated at a number of forums, sometimes with the same audience. All staff have permission to critically evaluate the meetings they attend and if they experience repetition they should feel free to raise it as an issue with the meeting chair or their line manager. Of the large number of regular committees, groups and forums a number could either be combined or, at the very least, time saved by not repeating discussions that have already taken place.



Using meeting time effectively

5.1.4 There is a responsibility on meeting organisers and chairs to make sure that meetings are effective and that time is not wasted. All meeting attendees should also share this responsibility and have the permission to raise concerns (politely of course) if they feel that time in meetings is not being used as effectively as it could be.

5.1.4.1 Meetings should not be generally used for the sole purpose of imparting information; there are quicker and more cost effective routes to share information. If the focus of your agenda is not on decision making and commitment to a course of action then your meeting may not be making the best use of people’s time.

After the meeting

5.1.5 Meeting secretaries should circulate the draft minutes and an action log as soon as time allows, however all meeting attendees have a responsibility to share feedback on the meeting outcomes with other appropriate people. Do not wait until the minutes and action log are circulated and do not expect the meeting secretary to inform people of the outcomes. You should follow up any agreed actions as soon as possible and do not rely on the action log to inform you of what you agreed to do.

5.1.5.1 Meeting attendees should understand that decisions are taken collectively and responsibility remains collective too. If you disagree with the decision you have been part of making, you are acting outside of your remit and have a duty to support that decision.

Meeting business etiquette

5.2 Our values

5.2.1

Our Values	
	BEING caring and respectful
	HAVING ambition, courage and high standards
	MAKING SURE we are open, transparent, honest and straightforward
	WORKING with partners and the public as a Team
	EMPOWERING AND ENERGISING clinicians, staff and local people
	LEARNING to be the best we can

5.2.2 Pre-Meeting

- 5.2.2.1 Members should propose agenda items to the chair and secretary two or more weeks in advance of the meeting.
- 5.2.2.2 Meeting organisers should publish an agenda at least one week advance of the meeting.
- 5.2.2.3 If you cannot attend the meeting, submit apologies and where necessary arrange for a deputy (if the terms of reference allow this) to go in your place, ensuring that they are briefed and have the authority to make decisions.

5.2.3 During the meeting

- 5.2.3.1 Please try not to arrive late for a meeting, it is accepted that there are times where this is unavoidable but please plan accordingly so you can attend on time.
- 5.2.3.2 Attendees should declare any potential or real conflicts of interest with regard to any matter on the agenda. This should be included on every agenda for every business meeting.
- 5.2.3.3 Avoid talking across other people, allow everyone to participate and avoid dominating the discussion.
- 5.2.3.4 Be brief and to the point when voicing your opinion; avoid repetition.
- 5.2.3.5 Ask questions to get clarification – don't be afraid to say you don't understand something.
- 5.2.3.6 Be constructive in the way you express your views.
- 5.2.3.7 Challenge inappropriate behaviour or language from others at the time via the chair or after the meeting if more appropriate.
- 5.2.3.8 Challenge the issue being discussed, not the personality. Speak honestly and don't hold back on challenging; someone's formal status should not be a barrier to constructive challenge.
- 5.2.3.9 Welcome challenges as a test of the robustness of papers and arguments presented. Do not cause offence or take offence, accept the diversity of opinions and views presented.
- 5.2.3.10 Refrain from private conversations with others at the meeting and the passing of notes.
- 5.2.3.11 Know and understand the role you play at the meeting and the need for the board / committee to act as a corporate body.
- 5.2.3.12 Do not use your portable device for responding to e-mails or undertaking other work that would distract you from the meeting.
- 5.2.3.13 Speak in plain English – remember our drive for clarity which means avoiding jargon, acronyms and sentences that are not readily understood. Feel free to ask others to recall our 'campaign for clarity'.
- 5.2.3.14 Listen fully and actively to colleagues – everyone has a contribution to make.
- 5.2.3.15 Do disagree if you don't agree - without being disagreeable. Acknowledge the points being made and critique constructively.
- 5.2.3.16 If not done already, request that the Chair summarise any decisions made so that all are clear on the understanding of these decisions.

5.2.4 Post-meeting

- 5.2.4.1 Ensure that there is effective feedback to anyone that needs to be made aware of the outcome of the meeting.
- 5.2.4.2 Remember that decisions were taken collectively by the board / committee and therefore that responsibility remains collective too.
- 5.2.4.3 Meeting secretaries should make sure that the minutes and action log are completed and distributed as soon as possible after the meeting.
- 5.2.4.4 Keep confidential matters confidential.
- 5.2.4.5 Follow up agreed actions.

6. MONITORING COMPLIANCE

Implementation of the policy will be monitored through the following methods:

- Staff survey;
- Senior management review;
- Individual calendar analyses;
- Committee annual reviews of effectiveness;
- Informal desktop audit.

7. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Any training needs will be addressed at directorate level.

9. REFERENCES

The following source materials were used in the development of this policy:

- Harvard Business Review – Breaking your addiction to meetings
(<https://hbr.org/2013/02/break-your-addiction-to-meetin>)
- Psychology today – Why meetings kill productivity
(<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/wired-success/201204/why-meetings-kill-productivity>)
- Time management ninja – 10 easy ways to spot unnecessary meetings
(<https://timemanagementninja.com/2012/09/10-easy-ways-to-spot-unnecessary-meetings/>)
- Everything small business – 6 ways to reduce timer spent in meetings
(<http://www.kristymlopez.com/2013/09/6-ways-to-reduce-time-spent-in-meetings/>)
- Fred Kofman - Cut Your Meeting Time by 90%
(<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/20130819190438-36052017-cut-your-meeting-time-by-90>)

10. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTATION

Click below to download
[Integrated Governance Protocol](#)
[Writing and Style Guide](#)
[Standards of Business Conduct V2](#)



Policy Brief

Meetings Policy

Briefing No. 014

September 2017

In this briefing

Background
Definitions
Procedures
Consequences

Further information

This policy brief is an executive summary of the meetings policy. The full policy must be read and implemented by all staff.

The full policy is available at <N:\Corporate Services\Policies\Final Versions>

Rod While, Head of Corporate Governance

Background

This policy is intended to make formal business meetings more effective, reduce unnecessary time spent in meetings and to set the standard of business etiquette that Herts Valleys expects of all meeting attendees.

Definition

A “meeting” as referred to in this policy is any formal business meeting arranged and / or attended by CCG staff. It does not refer to informal team meetings.

Procedures to be followed

- Meetings should commence at the published time and finish on or before the published finishing time.
- Meeting objectives should be clear and be focused on decision making and a commitment to a course of action.
- Declarations of interest to be made before and during the meeting.
- Meeting attendees are strongly encouraged to utilise portable devices rather than printed papers.
- All attendees should prepare fully and ensure papers have been read prior to the meeting.
- If you are presenting a paper you should assume it has been read and not repeat the contents of the paper.
- Late agenda items will not be accepted unless the chair considers the issues to be urgent. This bit isn't in the policy
- Staff should not routinely accept all meeting invitations but critically evaluate whether their attendance is essential.
- When making comments at a meeting, do not repeat what has already been said.
- Be prepared to challenge and also welcome challenge as a test of the quality of proposals.
- Avoid private conversations and respect others points of view.

Consequences of a breach

Breaches of this policy could lead to:



- Ineffective and non-productive meetings.
- Reduced individual productivity.



Appendix 5 - HVCCG Equality & Quality Analysis Form

Step 1:

<p>Name of 'Policy or function' – this may relate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Decisions made, Budget, Business Case, Care Pathways Commissioning or De-commissioning, Employees, Function, Practices, Procedure, Processes, Procurement, Projects, Programme, Protocols, Services, Service re-design, Strategy, Systems <p>Policy for the Development, Ratification and Implementation of Policies and Related Procedural Documents</p>	<p>Please summarise the purpose, aims and objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To ensure that all meetings are a good use of time, are as effective as possible and represent value for money.• To reduce the amount of time CCG staff spend in meetings by 50% between quarter 1 and quarter 4 2016-17.• To set the standard of business etiquette that Herts Valleys expects of all meeting attendees.
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Step 2:

<p>Test for relevance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Will this help to deliver one or more of the aims of the Equality Act 2010? (Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, Advancing equality of opportunity between people, Fostering good relation between people)• Will this have a potential impact on the nine protected groups and/or others ('seldom heard' groups) as described in the guidance? <p>Does the above 'Policy' have any relevance to equality? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Please give your reasons for your selection.</p> <p>Policy outlines an organisational process which does not relate to equality in any way</p> <p>If you have selected yes, please complete section 3-8 below.</p>



Step 3:

Engagement, involvement and consultation undertaken	PSED Due regard to	1. Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation			2. Advancing equality of opportunity between people			3. Fostering good relation between people			Please provide details of equality evidence considered, service, workforce, research (national or local), demographic etc.
Internal <input type="checkbox"/>											
External <input type="checkbox"/>											
Provide details	Equality Characteristic Groups	-ve	N	+ve	-ve	N	+ve	-ve	N	+ve	
	Age										
	Disability										
	Gender										
	Gender Reassignment										
	Marriage & Civil Partnerships										
	Pregnancy & Maternity										
	Race or Ethnicity										
	Religion or Belief										
	Sexual Orientation										
	Carers										
	Other groups (please list)										

Key: +ve = positive impact, -ve = negative impact, N = no impact



Step 4:

Quality			
Patient/Programmes	-ve	Neutral	+ve
<p>Patient Experience – will it: Impact on the experience of patients and service users?</p> <p>Impact on patient choice?</p>			
<p>Patient Safety – will it: Impact on safety? Impact on preventable harm? Impact on the risk of healthcare acquired infection? Impact on clinical workforce capability, care and skills?</p>			
<p>Clinical effectiveness – will it: Meet evidence based practice/NICE guidance?</p> <p>Impact on clinical leadership?</p> <p>Include systems for monitoring clinical quality supported by good information?</p>			



Step 5:

Have you identified any gaps or potential negative impact from the above? If yes, please state:			
Do you plan any further engagements? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		Do you require further information or data to complete the analysis/actions? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Any actions to be undertaken (including mitigation) regarding the negative impact:			
Action	Outcome	Lead	Date for completion
Any changes made as a result of this assessment?		YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Please provide brief description of changes			

Step 6:

Conclusion and/or recommendations:



Step 7: Key individuals

Analysis conducted by:	Lead Name:	Job Title:	Contact Details:
Other key contributors involved:			

Step 8:

Date form completed:	Clinical/Managerial approval:	Job Title/Directorate:	Date:	Signature:
Does a Board or Committee or Senior Leadership Team need to be informed about this EQA? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		Do you need to undertake monitoring/review Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, date of Review:		Date of publication:
Completed copy to be forwarded to Quality Team (Diane Curbishley)				

