

ARRANGING THE CLUSTER MEETING

The Role of the Parish Cluster Clerk

How do you know if you are hosting?

The date and host for the next cluster meeting is a standard agenda item and is usually agreed at each Cluster meeting. Your Council should have received a set of minutes/meeting notes from the host Parish Clerk.

You will receive confirmation from the BDC Parish Liaison Officer that your Parish has agreed to act as host for the next Cluster meeting, within two weeks of the last cluster meeting.

Booking the Venue

Tip: As soon as you are aware that you are to host the Cluster meeting you may wish to check venue availability as this might need to be booked months in advance.

Book the hall

Confirm the date of next Cluster Meeting with:

- Your Parish Council
- The Parish Clerks in you Cluster Group
- The Parish Liaison Officer

Arrange for Coffee/Tea/Water (optional)

Tip: Some people may be arriving directly from their workplace so water or refreshments may be appreciated.

Preparing the agenda

You will receive a letter from The Braintree District Parish Liaison Officer, which contains:

- The “Parish Update” newsletter
- The contact details of the Parish who hosted the last Cluster Meeting
- A list of parish councils who will be hosting the next round of cluster meetings
- Dates of the BDC meetings if you wish to avoid clashes

For Agenda Items contact

- Your Parish Council
- The Parish Clerks in your Cluster Group
- BDC agenda items can be selected from BDC “Parish Update”

Tip: It would be helpful to put the name of the Parish Council in brackets against their agenda items.

The Standard Items on most Cluster Meeting agendas are:

- Apologies for absence
- Minutes of the last meeting held (date)
- Matters arising from those minutes
- Any other items for discussion
- Date and host for the next meeting

Tip: Agenda items that can be clearly understood as to what, where or why the item has been raised will make it easier for organisations to provide relevant advice or information.

Inviting representatives from organisations to provide information or attend

Depending on the agenda items raised you may wish to invite specialist officers from:

- Braintree District Council
- Essex County Council
- Essex Police
- Environment Agency
- Health Authorities
- Other Organisations

Tip: Organisations will require advanced notification of at least 4 weeks if you wish them to attend or prepare briefing notes for your meeting.

Sending out the agenda and minutes of the last meeting

The agenda is best sent out about 4 weeks before the date of the meeting.

The people who will need an agenda are:

- Your Parish Councillors
- The Parish Clerks in your Cluster
- Braintree District Councillor portfolio holder for Planning and Rural Issues
- Your Braintree District Council Ward Member/s
- The Parish Liaison Officer (Braintree District Council)
- Any other representatives from organisations you wish to invite or keep informed, e.g. Essex Police, Essex County Council

Tip: You may wish to include directions of how to find your venue.

If you need help in contacting any of the aforementioned organisations please contact the BDC Parish Liaison Officer.

At the meeting

Ensure that the hall is open and the layout of the room is set out to accommodate your requirements.

Set out the Tea/Coffee/Water (optional).

Tip: Some people may be arriving directly from their workplace so water or refreshments may be appreciated.

Ensure your Chair of the Parish Cluster meeting has a copy of the previous minutes/meeting notes and is aware of all apologies received.

Take minutes/meeting notes of the meeting.

Tip: Make available a few extra copies of the previous minutes/notes.

After The Meeting

Distribute the minutes/meeting notes to all Parish Clerks, the Parish Liaison Officer and the organisations that have been invited to the Cluster Meeting.

The BDC Parish Liaison Officer will distribute these within BDC and help you with contact details for the other organisations if required.

Tip: email minutes/meeting notes where possible as this helps to speed up the process and cost of distribution.

Please remember if you need help contact the Parish Liaison Officer.