

DECISIONS BY EMAIL

The interpretation taken by Central Council at its meeting on 20ú Meitheamh 2022 was that decisions taken by email are valid and are not in conflict with the Official Guide. However, this mechanism must be used sparingly and appropriately. Specifically, email decisions are not to be employed universally by default. It is at the discretion of each committee to adopt their use, or otherwise, depending upon suitability. Furthermore, where such a decision-making mechanism is to be employed it must be undertaken in accordance with a policy to be set down by Central Council.

The proposed policy and parameters are as follows:

1. Each unit/committee/sub-committee must have a policy determining what exceptional circumstances email decisions will be used.
2. Decisions by emails must be reserved for administrative decisions and not used for decisions of adjudication or property transactions.
3. Decisions by email must, in as far as is possible, be confined to voting “For” or “Against” a question not requiring further clarification or capable of being amended. Where a unit/committee pose a question for decision which attracts more than one opposing or varied view from members, the decision must be deferred to a convened meeting held either in person in accordance with Rule 4.3 Official Guide or virtually in accordance with Code 5.4.
4. In advance of any such decision the secretary of the unit/committee/sub-committee must explain why a physical meeting is not possible, establish the number of members entitled to vote; establish that current email addresses are available for each member so entitled; determine the necessary quorum; and advise the members accordingly.
5. Where possible, the secretary must establish a system whereby confirmation of receipt of the email can be satisfied.
6. A specific deadline for return of votes must be communicated and strictly adhered to.
7. Only the members who vote, or communicate abstention, must be deemed to be present for the purposes of determining a quorum
8. If there are insufficient votes cast, or abstentions communicated, by the specific deadline, to reach a quorum then a valid decision by email is not possible.
9. Votes not cast are not deemed to be assenting to the proposal.