

Public Filming, Recording or Reporting at Council or Committee Meetings - Policy

COUNCIL POLICY STATEMENT

The Council acknowledges that it is required by legislation to allow any member of the public to take photographs, film and audio record the proceedings and report on all public meetings.

The Council acknowledges that no prior permission is required but asks that any person wishing to film or audio record a public meeting let Council staff know in order that all necessary arrangements can be made for the public meeting.

The Council will provide “reasonable facilities” to facilitate reporting.

The Council will provide a space to view and hear the meetings with seats. This will not be part of the seating arrangements for the Council itself or an area required by Council staff or invited guests.

It is not permitted to provide a running verbal commentary.

Those undertaking reporting must not act in a disruptive manner. This could be any action or activity which disrupts the conduct of meetings or impedes other members of the public being able to see, hear or film etc. the proceedings.

Examples are listed but are not inclusive:

- (i) Moving to areas outside the areas designated for the public without the consent of the Chairman.
- (ii) Excessive noise in recording or setting up or re-siting equipment during the debate / discussion.
- (iii) Intrusive lighting and use of flash photography; and
- (iv) Asking for people to repeat statements for the purpose of recording.

Public will be excluded from a meeting, under the Council’s Standing Orders, if acting in a disruptive manner.

Recording equipment must be removed from the chamber if at any stage the meeting becomes a private meeting.

No trailing cables or plugging in to sockets of electrical equipment will be permitted.

Children and vulnerable adults are not to be filmed, recorded or photographed or otherwise reported about where the relevant responsible adult has not given consent. (which in the case of a vulnerable adult is a medical professional, their carer or legal guardian, and in the case of a child, their parent, legal guardian or teacher).

Part of the public area will be used, if required, for children and vulnerable adults or those public attending who do not wish to be filmed, however, this is within the limitation of the Council Chamber and its layout.

Persons taking part in the public participation section, excluding children and vulnerable adults as indicated above, may be filmed, recorded or photographed or otherwise reported whether they are in a designated area or not.

Persons filming meetings etc. are likely to record personal data of individuals. These persons must take care to ensure that personal data is used in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The policy is intended to clarify the requirements of the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 for the benefit of employees, Councillors, members of the public and members of the press.

The Chair of the Council or Committee meetings will be responsible for its implementation and deal with any disruption associated which disrupts the conduct of meetings or impedes other members of the public being able to see, hear or film, audit record, take photographs and use social media such as tweeting and blogging.

The Chairman of the Council or Committee will remind those present at the meeting of this Policy. In particular reminding individuals who wish to film to avoid those who have expressed a wish not to be filmed or children or vulnerable adults without the express permission of the parent or responsible adult.

ENFORCEMENT OF THE POLICY

Enforcement of the policy will be undertaken by the Chairman of the Council or Committee meeting as appropriate.