

RECORDING, PHOTOGRAPHY AND USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA PROTOCOL

RECORDING OF PROCEEDINGS BY THE MEDIA AND RESIDENTS OF THE DISTRICT

The purpose of this protocol is to provide guidance, particularly, for members of the press or public on the taking of photographs and/ or the audio / visual recording of any Council meeting which is held in public.

The protocol also refers to the use of “Social Media”.

Limitations

Although it is permissible to photograph and make audio / visual recordings of Council meetings, the proceedings of that meeting should not be disrupted by the use of media tools and should not inhibit community involvement in the proceedings.

It is only permissible to record the proceedings of the meeting. This permission does not extend to the public gallery and the rights of members of public also attending should be respected.

Oral reporting or oral commentary on a meeting as it takes place by a person present at the meeting is not permitted as this is likely to disrupt the proceedings of a meeting.

If during the meeting a motion is passed to exclude the press and public, because confidential or exempt information is likely to be disclosed, then all rights to record the meeting are removed and the operator of the equipment will be required to stop recording and /or photography and required to leave the meeting.

Whilst the venues of meetings will provide reasonable facilities to enable the recording of proceedings, any person wishing to record a meeting is advised to check with the appropriate Democratic Services Officer to ensure that the venue can accommodate his or her recording equipment.

Audio and Visual Recording - Your Obligations

1. Subject to the limitations set out above, audio and visual recording is permitted of all Council meetings which are open to the public.

2. Those wishing to record proceedings should, as a courtesy, inform the Democratic Services Officers of their intentions to record prior to the commencement of the meeting. (Contact details are available on the Agenda for the meeting and on the Council's Website) and provide the following information:
 - (a) the name, organisation (if applicable) and contact details;
 - (b) what equipment it is intended will be used (e.g. camera/audio recorder/video camera);
 - (c) what the photographs, or audio / visual recording will be used for and / or where the information is to be published
3. Any photography, audio or visual recording must not disrupt the meeting in any way. To avoid disruption of the meeting all recordings may only be taken overtly from the area designated for the public and;
 - a. recording devices must be in silent mode;
 - b. flash photography should only be taken at the beginning or during a break in the meeting;
 - c. recordings must be taken from one fixed position and must not obstruct others from observing proceedings; and
 - d. additional lighting will not be permitted
4. As a matter of courtesy any person recording the proceedings of a meeting is asked to comply with any request by the Chairman of the Council or Chairman relating to disruption of the meeting and the privacy of members of the public.
5. Any published recording must be accompanied by a statement of when and where the recording was made, the context of the discussion that took place, and a clear identification of the main speakers and their role or title.
6. Those making recordings must not edit the recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation or misrepresentation of the proceedings or comments made by attendees. In particular there should be no internal editing of published extracts; recordings may start at any point and end at any point but the material between those points must be complete.
7. People seated in the public gallery / seating area should not be photographed, filmed or recorded if they object to being photographed, filmed or recorded. The Chair will make an announcement at the beginning of that the meeting will be photographed and /or recorded or filmed and give members of the public an opportunity to indicate whether they don't wish to be filmed. Individuals making a deputation may be filmed. However, if a depute objects to being filmed, you are asked to respect this individual's right to privacy and only make a sound recording of the deputation.
8. Use should not be made of an image or recording if consent is refused by an individual.

Audio and Visual Recording - Your Rights

9. If as a member of the public you do not wish to be photographed, filmed or recorded please inform the Democratic Services Officer in attendance at the meeting or the Chairman of the Council or Chairman of the relevant committee.

Procedure at the Meeting

10. Equipment must be set up before the meeting starts. The use of flash photography or additional lighting will only be permitted for a limited period at the commencement or during a break in the proceedings.
11. The Chair will also make an announcement at the beginning of the meeting that the meeting will be photographed and /or recorded or filmed and give members of the public an opportunity to indicate whether they don't wish to be filmed
12. If the Chairman of the Council or Chairman of the relevant Committee feels the photography and/or the audio / visual recording is disrupting the proceedings or any pre-meeting agreement has been breached the meeting shall be adjourned and the persons causing the disturbance will be asked to resolve the issue. If the disruption continues the Chairman of the Council or Chairman of the relevant Committee may adjourn the meeting to another date.
13. If during the meeting a motion is passed to exclude the press and public, because confidential or exempt information is likely to be disclosed, then all rights to record the meeting are removed.

Social Media

14. There are no restrictions placed on anyone at the meeting using Twitter, blogs, Facebook or similar "social media". However, if the Chairman of the Council or Chairman considers their actions are disrupting the proceedings of the meeting he or she may adjourn the meeting to enable the matter to be resolved. If the disruption continues after the meeting has resumed the Chairman of the Council or Chairman may adjourn the meeting to another date.
15. If during the meeting a motion is passed to exclude the press and public, because confidential or exempt information is likely to be disclosed, then all rights to Tweet, blog, Facebook or similar "social media" in the meeting is removed and the press and public will be required to leave the meeting.