

Protocol for Reporting and Filming Council, Cabinet and Committee meetings

Introduction

As set out in the Council Procedure Rules (Constitution, Section 26, Paragraph 22), members of the press and public are welcome to film, audio record, take photographs, use social media or otherwise record or report on (collectively referred to as film/record in this protocol) meetings of the Council, Cabinet and Committees.

This facility is important in ensuring the transparency and openness of the Council's decision making.

It is equally important that this filming/recording is done in a way which does not:

- Cause a disturbance at the meeting
- Cause health and safety issues
- Unnecessarily impact on the privacy of members of the public

It should be noted that, unless previously agreed for accessibility reasons, the Council would not normally allow oral reporting/commentary on a meeting as it takes place by someone present at the meeting.

The Speaker/Chair of the meeting will in all cases make the final decision on all matters of dispute in regard to filming/recording meetings.

Attendance at Meetings

Whilst the Chair of the meeting will look to ensure those present are aware of all filming/recording taking place and request that members of the public gallery are not filmed no guarantee can be given.

Recommended actions for those wishing to film/record meetings by attending physical meetings

It is recommended that all those who wish to film/record meetings follow these guidelines to ensure their approach meets with the smooth running of meetings:

- Read any specific guidance in the meeting agenda.
- Notify the clerk to the meeting at least 24 hours in advance (contact details are printed on the agenda front sheet).
 - In particular, it is important to highlight if you wish to bring larger hardware/equipment as facilities arrangements may have to be made.
- Members of the Press should also notify the Communications team [**Add contact details**].

When recording the meeting:

- Do not approach the committee Members or tables, remain at the front of the public gallery or any other location directed by staff and generally follow any instructions given by staff present at the meeting.
- Ensure all equipment is set up in advance of the meeting starting to avoid disruption.
- Avoid the use of flashes, bright lights, noisy equipment or anything which could be distracting.

- Only record those who are actively participating in the meeting.
- Do not film the public gallery.
- Obey any instructions of the Chair of the meeting including on who can/cannot be filmed/recorded.
 - Note that Councillors and officers are excluded from this provision in accordance with the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014.

The Role of the Chair of the meeting

Should the Chair determine at any time that the recording or filming the meeting is causing a disturbance or is otherwise inappropriate then they have the authority to request the activity cease.

Should anyone refuse a request to cease or adjust their filming/recording, the Chair will ask the person to leave the meeting. If the person refuses to leave then the Chair may adjourn the meeting or make other appropriate arrangements for the meeting to continue without disruption. This is in line with the meeting conduct procedures set out in the Council Procedure Rules.

Restrictions

You may not film/record:

- Any person(s) who the meeting is informed must not be filmed.
- Any portion of a meeting where a motion has been passed to exclude the press and public.

Publishing content

The Council would expect that those publishing films or recordings made at meetings or from webcast footage would be clear as to the context the recording was made and would not edit the footage in such a way as could lead to misinterpretation or misrepresentation of the proceedings or comments made by attendees.