

Filming of Public Meetings

Code of Conduct

The Council is committed to being open and transparent particularly in relation to the way it conducts business at those meetings which are open to the public.

As part of this approach this Code of Conduct provides guidance on the filming, photographing and/or making an audio recording of proceedings at meetings of the Council, Executive, Committees and Sub-Committees.

As a means to assist with this, the Council will itself film the proceedings of Council meetings and, where it is feasible and practical to do so, other meetings which are open to the public. It is intended to make the footage available for public viewing via the Council website.

In accordance with pending legislation, members of the public and media are to be allowed to film, photograph and/or make audio recordings at public meetings held by the Council from 2 July 2014 onwards.

As a means to assist this, the Council has adopted the following guidelines, which are based on common courtesy and respect:

1. that all members of the public remain seated during the proceedings of the meeting;
2. as some members of the public may prefer not to be filmed, they should sit or stand to the rear of the public area;
3. those wishing to film must show appropriate respect for the wishes of the public who do not want to be filmed;
4. that in seeking to film, photograph or make an audio recording, the conduct of the meeting is not disturbed;
5. if it is agreed at the meeting to pass a motion to exclude the press and public because confidential and/or or exempt information, as defined by the Local Government Act 1972, is likely to be disclosed, members of the public will be asked to leave the meeting and no filming, photography and/or audio recordings can then take place;
6. that without the express consent of their parents/guardians, the filming of any children who might be in attendance is strictly prohibited;
7. whilst not a requirement, it would be helpful for anyone intending to film, or wishing to discuss any special requirements, to contact the Members' Office in advance of a meeting to seek advice, guidance and help.

As indicated at point 5 above, there are some limited circumstances, related to items containing either confidential or exempt information, when the filming of public meetings is prohibited. Whilst it is considered that such items will be infrequent, when such matters do arise, the Chair of the meeting will be responsible for providing guidance and advice.

If for whatever reason someone refuses to stop recording, taking photographs or making an audio recording when requested to do so, the Chair will ask the person to leave the meeting. If they refuse to do so then the Chair may adjourn the meeting or make other appropriate arrangements for the meeting to continue without disruption. These will be in line with disorderly conduct procedures set out in the Council's Constitution.

NOTES

(1) There is a presumption that Members and Officers give their consent to be filmed and for images to be webcast, unless a specific request is made to the Monitoring Officer for an exception to be made in advance of the meeting. The Monitoring Officer will take a view on a case-by-case basis on whether there is sufficient justification for making an exemption.

(2) On each agenda and on signs to be displayed inside and outside the meeting room there will be the following notice:-

Please note: this meeting may be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's internet site.

You should be aware that the Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act. Data collected during this webcast will be retained in accordance with the Council's published policy.

Therefore by entering the meeting room, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purposes.