

HARLING PARISH COUNCIL

Filming, Videoing, Photography, Audio Recording and use of Social Media at Council Meetings Policy

The Council supports the principles of openness and transparency and encourages filming, recording and taking photographs at its meetings that are open to the public. It also welcomes the use of social networking websites (such as Twitter and Facebook) and blogging to communicate with people about what is happening, as it happens.

As a courtesy to the public, and to assist anyone planning to film etc., it would be helpful if anyone wishing to film etc, would contact the Council, preferably one week before the start of the meeting, if filming or photography is to take place. This would enable the Clerk to discuss and assist with any specific requirements. The Chairman will then be informed of what is to take place.

There is no requirement to notify the Council in advance, but it should be noted that the Chairman of the meeting will have absolute discretion to terminate or suspend any of these activities if, in their opinion, continuing to do so would prejudice proceedings at the meeting.

The circumstances in which termination or suspension may occur include:

1. public disturbance, disruption or suspension of the meeting;
2. the meeting agreeing to exclude formally the press and public from the meeting due to the exempt/confidential nature of the business being discussed in accordance with statutory procedures;
3. where it is considered that continued recording/photography/filming/webcasting may infringe the rights or privacy of any individual, or intimidate them;
4. when the Chairman considers that a defamatory statement has been made.

The Council requests those recording proceedings not to edit the film/recordings/photographs in a way that could lead to misinterpretation of the proceedings, or infringe the core values of the Council. This includes refraining from editing an image or views expressed in a way that may ridicule, or show lack of respect towards those being photographed/filmed/recorded.

Those intending to bring large equipment, or wishing to discuss any special requirements are advised to contact the Clerk in advance of the meeting to seek advice and guidance. The use of flash photography or additional lighting will not be allowed unless this has been discussed in advance of the meeting and agreement has been reached on how it can be done without disrupting the proceedings. The use of recording/filming/ broadcasting equipment will be silent and will not distract those involved in the democratic process or impinging on the decision making or block viewing from the public seating area.

At the beginning of each meeting the Chairman will make an announcement that the meeting may be filmed, recorded or photographed. Notice of the filming/recording/broadcasting of

meetings will be displayed in and outside the place of meeting and meeting agendas will include the following:

“The Council, members of the public and the press may record/film/photograph or broadcast this meeting when the public and the press are not lawfully excluded. Any member of the public who attends a meeting and wishes to be filmed should advise the Clerk.”

Members of the public speaking at, or attending, the meeting must not be filmed to protect their privacy.

Adopted by Harling Parish Council September 2017