

North Huish Parish Council

Protocol for Filming and Audio Recording of Council Meetings – The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014

Introduction

1 This Protocol provides guidance to members of the public or press who wish to photograph or record proceedings at any of North Huish Parish Council's public meetings.

2. The Council supports the principles of openness and transparency in the way it conducts its meetings. Sound recording, photographing, filming, and use of social media at meetings which are held in public is permitted:

(a) subject to the provisions of this Protocol; and

(b) provided that the /Chairman is satisfied that it will not be disruptive or distracting to the good order and conduct of the meeting.

3. No restrictions will be placed on anyone using social media at a public meeting subject to the limitations regarding photography and audio/visual recording set out in this Protocol.

4. Meetings which take the form of hearings or which discuss sensitive information, may not be suitable for recording due to the nature of some of the evidence given at the meeting. It will be at the Chairman's discretion to determine whether the recording of a particular meeting will be permitted.

5. Failure to follow the provisions within this Protocol may result in the Chairman refusing to allow the proceedings to be photographed or recorded.

6. For the purposes of this Protocol 'recording' includes sound recording, photographing, filming, and use of social media. Social media includes, but is not limited to Twitter, Facebook and blogs.

Before the meeting

1 Those wishing to record proceedings at a meeting are asked to contact the Clerk before the start of the meeting so that the agreement of the Chairman be sought.

2 The name, organisation (if applicable) and contact details of the person wishing to record proceedings are required and should be provided before the meeting if possible:

3. At the meeting

- 1 Notices will be displayed in the meeting room advising that proceedings may be recorded, and the Chairman will make an announcement to this effect at the beginning of the meeting if a request has been received. He will indicate the location of the device.
2. If you enter the room after the meeting has started please ensure that any recording does not disrupt the meeting. If there is such disruption, the Chairman may adjourn the meeting or make other appropriate arrangements for the meeting to continue without disruption.
- 3 Members of the public attending a meeting to ask a question will be deemed to have given consent to being photographed or recorded.
4. Members of the public seated in the public seating area who actively object, should not be photographed, filmed or recorded as long as this does not undermine the broader transparency of the meeting.
5. Photography or filming must take place from a fixed position in the meeting room approved by the Parish Council Chairman, and must not obstruct others from viewing proceedings..
6. The use of flash photography or additional lighting is not permitted
7. There shall be no oral commentary permitted in the meeting
8. Photography or audio/visual recording will be stopped if the Chairman feels it is disrupting or inhibiting the meeting in any way.
9. If someone refuses to stop recording when requested to do so the Chairman will ask the person to leave the meeting. If the person refuses to leave, the Chairman will adjourn the meeting or make other appropriate arrangements for the meeting to continue without disruption.
- 10 Anyone asked to leave a meeting because they have refused to comply with the Chairman's request to do so, may be refused permission to record future meetings.

After the meeting

- 1 Photographs and audio/visual recordings must not be edited in a way that could lead to misinterpretation of the proceedings. This includes refraining from editing the views being expressed in a way that may ridicule or show lack of respect towards those being photographed or recorded.
 - a.. Any published filming or audio recording should be accompanied by a statement of when and where the filming and audio recording was made, the context of the discussion that took place and a clear identification of the main speakers and their role or title.
 - b. Those undertaking the filming or recordings must not edit the recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation or misrepresentation of the proceedings or comments made by attendees.

2 If someone fails to comply with this Protocol the Chairman may refuse to allow this person to record any future meetings.

3 The responsibility for how any photographs or audio/visual recording is used rests with the person who made the recording and not the Council.

4. Only the official signed minutes of the council and its committees will be recognised as the formal, statutory and legally binding record of a meeting.

5. The Council may itself photograph, film, record or broadcast at its meetings and can retain, use or dispose of such material in accordance with its retention and disposal policies.