



**Filming, Audio-Recording, Photographing and Reporting of Council and Committee Meetings**

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## Filming, Audio-Recording, Photographing and Reporting of Council and Committee Meetings

1. The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 (SI No. 2095), which came into force on 6 August 2014, require parish councils to allow any person to film, audio-record or take photographs of, and to report on, the proceedings of any part of a meeting which the public are entitled to attend by law. (The Regulations also contain provision requiring a written record to be kept of delegated decisions made by officers; the Parish Council has a separate policy on this).
2. The Regulations do not require parish councils to allow filming or recording of any part of a meeting where the public are excluded by reason of the confidential nature of the business or where publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest. Exclusion of the public must be authorised by a resolution of the meeting and the reason for exclusion must be stated.
3. The Regulations apply only to formal, decision-making meetings of the Council or a Committee or a Sub-committee and not to informal meetings or meetings of a working party without decision-making powers.
4. The Department of Communities & Local Government (DCLG) has published a 'plain English' guide to the Regulations (available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/open-and-accountable-local-government-plain-english-guide>).

Worplesdon Parish Council's policy is based on this guide.

5. The Parish Council has no objection to quiet and inconspicuous filming, photography, tweeting and blogging using a hand-held device such as a mobile phone or tablet. A table will be provided for this purpose. The filming device to remain on the table throughout the meeting. Oral commentary in the meeting room during a meeting may be disruptive and is not, therefore, permitted by the Regulations.
6. Anyone acting in a disruptive manner may be asked by the Chairman to stop doing so and if they continue, they may be asked to leave the meeting. The DCLG guide gives the following examples of disruptive activity:
  - Moving to areas outside the areas designated for the public without the consent of the Chairman.
  - Excessive noise in recording or setting up or re-siting equipment during the debate/discussion.
  - Intrusive lighting and use of flash photography.
  - Asking people to repeat statements for the purposes of recording.
7. Intrusive filming of a specific individual or individuals will not be permitted.

8. The Council expects that film or audio recordings will not be edited before transmission in a way that would misrepresent what occurred at the meeting.
9. The Parish Council asks anyone proposing to use a device larger than a mobile phone or tablet to notify the Clerk prior to the start of the meeting so that proper facilities can, if possible, be provided.
10. The Regulations apply to Councillors as they do to members of the public, but Councillors will wish to ensure that they are not distracted from the business of the meeting.
11. Members of the public who attend a meeting merely to observe it are not taking part in the proceedings and the Parish Council asks others not to film or photograph them without their consent. Children or vulnerable adults attending a meeting should not be filmed or photographed.
12. Recording equipment may be left running in the meeting room even if the person using it leaves the room. However, it may not be left running for a part of a meeting where the public are excluded and an Officer of the Council may stop the recording or switch off the equipment if this happens.
13. Those filming, recording or photographing the meetings are reminded that the law of the land applies, including the law of defamation and law on public order offences ([Crown Prosecution Service Guidance on Communications via Social Media](#)).

Freedom of speech within the law should also be exercised with personal and social responsibility - showing respect and tolerance towards the views of others.

14. The Parish Council cannot advise on general law and accepts no liability for any material created by those filming, recording or photographing a meeting.

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