

# LONGCOT PARISH COUNCIL

## RECORDING AND REPORTING OF PROCEEDINGS BY THE MEDIA AND GENERAL PUBLIC

### General

Audio and visual recordings of a meeting of the Council and its Committees by the general public or the media, is permitted. It would be helpful if those wishing to record could contact the Council before the meeting so that we can ensure the necessary facilities are in place. The Chairman of the meeting will advise the public that the meeting is being recorded. A request to record a meeting will only be refused if the Chairman of the meeting believes recording would disrupt the meeting. The purpose of this guidance is to inform members of the press or public, as to approach that the Council will adopt towards the taking of photographs and/or the audio visual recording of any council meeting which is held in public.

There are no restrictions on anyone at a council meeting using Twitter, blogs, Facebook or similar social media provided that the Chairman does not consider their actions are disrupting the meeting's proceedings.

### Guidance

#### Limitations

- 1 Although there is a statutory right to photograph and record Council meetings, the use of media tools must **not** disrupt the proceedings and must **not** inhibit community involvement in the proceedings: the laws of libel and those covering public order offences continue to apply.

#### Audio and Visual Recording - Your Obligations

- 1 Any member of the public, or of the media, wishing to photograph or record a meeting is asked to comply with the following:
  - a. Photography or audio / visual recording must take place from a fixed position in the meeting room approved by the Chairman so as to reduce disruption to the proceedings.
  - b. Flash photography or additional lighting may only be used for a limited period during the meeting and at a point in the proceedings agreed in advance with the Chairman.
  - c. If the Chairman feels that any photography, audio or visual recording is disrupting the meeting in any way, or any pre-meeting agreement has been breached, then the Chairman will require the operator of the equipment to stop the operation.
    - Failure to stop the operation will be dealt with under the Council's Standing Orders covering 'Disorderly conduct at meetings'
  - d. If, during the meeting, a motion is passed to exclude the press and public, because confidential or exempt information is likely to be disclosed, then all rights to record the meeting are removed and the operator of the equipment will be required to stop recording and/or photography and to leave the room.
  - e. If a meeting is adjourned by the Chairman then the operator of the equipment must stop any recording or photography at the point at which the meeting is adjourned.
    - The adjournment removes the statutory right to record or photograph.
  - f. Any request made by the Chairman regarding respecting the public's right to privacy must be complied with
  - g. People seated in the public seating area should not be photographed, filmed or recorded without the consent of the individuals concerned. Public notices will confirm that recording may take place and it is for the public to inform the council, or the person recording, if they object.
    - Those filming or recording are reminded of the need to gain proper consent before filming or recording children and vulnerable adults.
  - h. Use must not be made of an image or recording if consent is refused by a member of the public featured in that recording or image.
  - i. Photographs, audio, and visual recordings should not be edited in a way that could lead to misinterpretation of the proceedings.

- This includes refraining from editing the views being recorded in a way that may ridicule or show lack of respect.
- 2 Notices will be displayed in the room advising the public that meetings can be recorded legally. The Chairman will also make an announcement that the meeting will be photographed and/or recorded or filmed. The Council may, on occasion, audio record meetings for minuting purposes only. The relevant Chairman will make an announcement to this effect.

### **Audio and Visual Recording - Your Rights**

- 1 If, as a member of the public, you do not wish to be photographed, filmed or recorded please inform the Clerk in attendance at the meeting or the Chairman of the meeting when notice is given that a request to photograph / record has been received.

### **Procedure Prior to the Meeting for those Wishing to Record or Photograph a Meeting**

- 1 It would be appreciated if requests to take photographs at or to record meetings open to the public, either by members of the public or by the media, were, wherever possible, made to the Clerk for the meeting concerned before the meeting. Her contact details are:

Address	Ms T Brock, Clerk to the Council, 8 Sand View, Faringdon, Oxon, SN7 7UT
Telephone	01367 240497
e-mail	clerk@Longcotparishcouncil.org.uk

- 2 It would be helpful for the request to include the following information:
  - a. to which meeting the request refers
  - b. the name, organisation (if applicable) and contact details of the person making the request
  - c. what equipment it is intended will be used (to determine what facilities might be required)
    - The Council will endeavour to provide the required facilities but cannot guarantee to do so.
  - d. what the photographs, or audio / visual recording will be used for and/or where the information is to be published
    - This information will allow the Chairman to inform the Council and other members of the public present
- 3 Any equipment required for recording purposes should be set up before the meeting starts to avoid disturbance.
  - Failure to observe this request could, if the set up proves disruptive to the meeting, lead to a ruling by the Chairman that the equipment be not used.

### **Social Media**

- 1 There are no restrictions placed on anyone at the meeting using Twitter, blogs, Facebook or similar “social media” unless the Chairman considers their actions are disrupting the proceedings of the meeting.
- 2 If the Chairman feels the use of social media is disrupting the proceedings, he/she may require the Councillor, member of the public or media representative concerned to stop the offending activity.
- 3 If the use continues the Chairman will ask the person to leave the meeting. If the person refuses to leave then the Chairman may adjourn the meeting or make other appropriate arrangements for the meeting to continue without disruption.

Review date October 2025