

Policy on the Filming, Photographing, Audio Recording and Social Media Reporting of Public Parish Council and Committee Meetings

Following the amendment by the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960

This Policy identifies the Parish Council's position with the regard to the filming, photographing, audio recording and social media reporting of public Parish Council and Committee meetings

Berwick St John Parish Council supports the principle of transparency and the rights of members of the public and the press to film, photograph, audio record and report on its Council and Committee meetings which are open to the public.

1 RECORDING OF PUBLIC MEETINGS:

- 1.1 In line with national legislation, the filming, photographing and audio recording of public Parish Council and Committee meetings is permitted.
- 1.2 Anybody wishing to film, photograph or audio record public meetings is asked to inform the Parish Clerk 24 hours in advance to ensure that the necessary arrangements can be made. This will include arrangements to inform the relevant Parish Council members, guest speakers and public present and, where possible, to provide a separate area for any members of the public who do not wish to be included in the film, photographs or other recordings being made.
- 1.3 Anybody filming, photographing or audio recording public meetings is required to give due consideration at all times to ensure that there is no disruption to normal proceedings. In this regard, flash photography or additional lighting will not be permitted without the prior permission of the Chairman.
- 1.4 In line with national legislation, the reporting, filming, photographing and audio recording must only relate to the public meeting itself and must not extend to anybody seated in the public section who does not form part of the proceedings. Filming, photographing or audio recording a member of the public without their prior express permission is not permitted.
- 1.5 Anybody wishing to film, photograph or audio record the proceedings must avoid including children or vulnerable adults. Anybody intending to film, photograph or audio record any such individuals seated in the public section is required to first obtain the express permission of their parent or relevant responsible adult to that filming, photographing or audio recording taking place.

2 SOCIAL MEDIA:

- 2.1 The use of social media for the reporting of the proceedings is permitted during public Parish Council and Committee meetings.

- 2.2 Anybody wishing to use social media will be required to ensure that this causes no disruption to the running of the meeting. All devices will need to remain on silent for the duration of the meeting.
- 2.3 Those publishing material from meetings are advised to make themselves aware of the relevant legislation before posting items on social media and web sites.

3 TERMINATION OR SUSPENSION OF FILMING, AUDIO RECORDING & SOCIAL MEDIA REPORTING:

- 3.1 Where the Chairman of a relevant meeting considers that any filming, photographing, audio recording or social media reporting activity is causing a disruption to the meeting, the person causing the disruption will be requested to take the appropriate action.
- 3.2 Should the disruption continue, which makes orderly business impossible, the Chairman will have the discretion to take whatever action he thinks appropriate in accordance with the Parish Council's Standing Orders (eg adjourn the meeting).
- 3.3 The termination or suspension of filming, photographing, audio recording and social media reporting will occur when:
- there is any public disturbance of the meeting;
 - moving around the public section whilst filming;
 - the Chairman considers that a defamatory statement has been made;
 - requests are received from members of the public to cease recording when they speak;
 - people are asked to repeat statements for the purposes of recording;
 - the meeting formally agrees to exclude the press and public from the meeting due to the exempt nature of the business being discussed; or
 - it is considered that continued recording/filming/photographing could infringe the rights of any individual (e.g. an individual in the public section has made a specific request to the Chairman of the meeting that they do not wish to be filmed, photographed or audio recorded).

4 CONCLUSION:

- 4.1 The Parish Council welcomes responsible, balanced reporting of its meetings in order to promote greater transparency and awareness of its decision-making.
- 4.2 The Parish Council requests that anybody recording proceedings provides a balanced representation of the proceedings and does not edit the film or recording in such a way that could lead to misinterpretation of the proceedings or which reflects only a single or particular point expressed at the meeting.
- 4.3 The formal record of any meeting will be the approved minutes taken by the Clerk to the Parish Council and approved by a vote of its members. These can be found on the Parish Council's website

As adopted by Berwick St John Parish Council on the second day of September 2015