

# Filming and Recording of Council Meetings

## **1.0 Filming and Recording of Council Meetings Media Protocol**

- 1.1 Filming of Council meetings will be permitted in accordance with the following media protocol.
- 1.2 Council meetings include all meetings of Full Council, Cabinet, Committees, Panels, Boards, and Working Parties.

## **2.0 Who do the rules apply to?**

- 2.1 This protocol applies to any person attending a Council meeting including the press, the public and Councillors.
- 2.2 The Press are defined as traditional print media, filming crews, hyper-local journalists and bloggers.
- 2.3 Recording may include filming, audio-recording, the taking of photographs and the use of social media such as twitter and blogging.

## **3.0 The Protocol**

- 3.1 Those wishing to record a Council meeting do not need to seek prior permission in order to record the meeting. However the Council would respectfully ask that if a person intends to record a meeting they contact the Council prior to the meeting, as this will help the Council to ensure that they have reasonable facilities at the meeting. All notifications should be sent to [press.office@thanet.gov.uk](mailto:press.office@thanet.gov.uk) .
- 3.2 The Chairman of the meeting will, during the house keeping announcement at the beginning of the meeting, ask whether any of those present will be recording the meeting. The Chairman will then give any member of the public present who objects to being filmed the opportunity to leave the meeting. Once those persons have left the Chairman will then ask those people present who are recording to refrain from recording those members of the public who are left in the public gallery, but to especially refrain from recording any children present. In addition if a member of the public is present to speak, but has raised an objection to being recorded, the Chairman will also ask all those present to refrain from recording that person.
- 3.3 Filming of proceedings on any items which are identified as 'excluded from the press or public' (under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 or equivalent provisions) will not be permitted. All recording equipment should be removed from the meeting room at the point in any meeting that it moves into closed session under such provisions.
- 3.4 Those recording the proceedings do not have permission to move around the room while the meeting is underway.

3.5 Those present to the record the meeting should not act in a disruptive manner as this could result in them being excluded from the meeting.

3.6 The Chairman of the meeting could use Council Procedure Rules (CPR) 27.3 and 27.4 if you are a Councillor or CPR 28 if you are a member of the public to exclude you from the meeting if you conduct any action or activity which disrupts the conduct of the meeting or impedes other members of the public being able to see, hear or film etc. the proceedings. Examples which may lead to exclusion include:

- 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, including providing oral commentary on a meeting;
- intrusive lighting and use of flash photography; and
- asking for people to repeat statements for the purposes of recording.

#### **4.0 Reasonable Facilities**

4.1 The Council will make the following facilities available to those present to record meetings:

- That persons attending to report meetings should be advised of the availability of WIFI to assist in this process (where it is available);
- That seats with a view of proceedings are provided and that those present should remain seated, unless permission has been given to operate recording equipment that requires the user to stand up;
- That, in order to avoid accidents, it will not be possible to use electric sockets for equipment;
- The use of a tripod is allowed, however you should ensure that it does not cause a trip hazard or in any other way disrupts the meeting.

#### **5.0 Tweeting and Blogging**

**5.1 This protocol does not prevent councillors from tweeting and blogging at meetings, so they should be able to do so, provided it is not disruptive and does not detract from the proper conduct of the meeting. Further advice on the use of social media can be found in the Social Media Guidance for Councillors contained elsewhere within the Council's constitution.**