

# Leigh on Mendip Parish Council Policy on audio/visual recording and photography at council meetings

## 1. Introduction

Leigh on Mendip Parish Council is committed to being open and transparent in the way it conducts its decision making. Recording, including filming, audio recording, taking photographs, blogging, tweeting and using other social media is permitted at Council meetings, which are open to the public, subject to the following policy.

## 2. Procedure at meetings

- 2.1 Anyone wishing to record is requested to let the Chairperson of the meeting know prior to, or at the start of, the meeting and the recording should be overt (i.e. clearly visible to anyone at the meeting) and not disruptive.
- 2.2 Anyone visually recording a meeting is requested to only focus on recording councillors, officers and the public who are directly involved in the conduct of the meeting. Any children present at the meeting should not to be filmed unless they and their parents/guardians have given their consent.
- 2.3 At the beginning of each meeting, the Chairman will make an announcement that the meeting may be filmed or recorded.
- 2.4 Leigh on Mendip Parish Council supports the right of any member of the public not to be recorded. Anyone speaking at the meeting who does not wish to be recorded should let the Chairman of the meeting know.
- 2.5 Any person wishing to record Council meetings will be responsible for ensuring that any cabling, or electrical equipment they use has been properly tested and installed and adheres to health and safety requirements. The Council will not be held liable for any injuries to the individual or members of the public caused by the recording of its meetings.
- 2.6 The Chairman of the meeting has absolute discretion to request a person to stop or suspend recording if in the Chairman's opinion continuing to do so would prejudice proceedings at the meeting because:
  - recording is disrupting the proceedings of the meeting
  - there is public disturbance or a suspension of the meeting
  - the meeting has resolved to exclude the public for reasons of confidential business

For these purposes recording equipment must not be left unattended at meetings. The Council cannot accept liability for any equipment that is lost, stolen or damaged at its public meetings

- 2.7 The recording should not be edited in any way that could lead to misinterpretation or misrepresentation of the proceedings or infringement of the Council's values or in a way that ridicules or shows a lack of respect for those in the recording.
- 2.8 If the Council resolves to discuss confidential information, and the public are excluded from the meeting, all recording equipment must be removed immediately from the room.
- 2.9 The use of flash photography or additional lighting will not be allowed unless this has been discussed with the clerk in advance of the meeting and agreement reached on how it can be done without disrupting proceedings.

## Guidance Notes

Please contact the Parish Clerk prior to the meeting you wish to record, and especially if the recording you wish to make involves large equipment or special requirements.

Recording and reporting the Council's meetings is subject to the law and it is the responsibility of those who undertake the recording and reporting to ensure compliance. This will include the Human Rights Act, the Data Protection Act, the Public Order Act Part III (1986 as amended), the Equality Act 2010, the laws of libel and defamation and any subsequent legislation or regulations.

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