Recording and Use of Social Media at Meetings

Cheriton Parish Council

Members of the press and public have a right to observe parish council meetings. In addition to this, they also have the right to record, film and to broadcast meetings of the parish council under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, Part 2.

This policy identifies the parish council's position with regard to the filming, photographing, audio recording and social media reporting of public parish council and committee meetings.

The term 'record' or 'recording' used throughout this policy covers filming, photography, audio recording and use of social media.

1. Recording of public meetings

1.1 The council supports the principle of openness and the rights of members of the public and press to film, photograph, audio record and report on council and committee meetings, which are open to the public.

1.2 In line with legislation, the filming, photographing and audio recording of public council and committee meetings is permitted.

1.3 Anybody wishing to film, photograph or audio record public meetings is required to inform the council in advance to ensure that all necessary arrangements can be made. This will include informing Councillors, guest speakers and members of the public, and where possible, to provide a separate area for any members of the public who do not give their permission to be recorded.

1.4 Anybody recording is required, at all times, to give due regard to ensure there is no disruption to normal proceedings. Flash photography or additional lighting will not be permitted without the prior permission of the chairman.

1.5 In line with legislation, any recording or reporting must only relate to the public meeting itself and must not extend to anybody seated in the public section who do not form part of the proceedings. Recording a member of the public without their consent is strictly prohibited.

1.6 Anybody wishing to record proceedings must avoid capturing children or vulnerable adults. Anybody intending to record any such individual seated in the public section is required to first obtain the express permission of their parent or the relevant responsible adult that recording is taking place.

1.7 The council welcomes responsible, balanced reporting of its meetings in order to demonstrate and promote greater openness and transparency.

Anybody recording proceedings is kindly asked to provide a balanced representation of the proceedings and to not edit the recording in such a way that could lead to misinterpretation or misrepresentation of the proceedings, or which reflects only on a singular or particular point within the meeting.

1.9 The approved minutes of the council remain the formal record of meeting proceedings and are available via the council's website at www.cheritonparishcouncil.org.uk or by contacting

the Clerk by the following means: clerk@cheritonparishcouncil.gov.uk or by telephone on 07942 278013

2. Confidential items of business

2.1 There will be times when the council needs to hold a closed session within their meeting to discuss confidential matters, such as contractual terms or staffing matters. In these situations, the press and public will be removed from the meeting and the council have the right to prevent anyone, including all councillors present, from recording this part of the proceedings.

3. Social media

3.1 The use of social media for the reporting of proceedings is permitted during the public proceedings.

3.2 Anyone wishing to use social media, including councillors, will be required to ensure that this does not cause any disruption to the running of the meeting. All devices will need to remain on silent for the duration of the meeting.

3.3 Those publishing material from meetings are advised to make themselves aware of the relevant legislation before posting items on social media and web sites.

4. Disruption to meeting proceedings

4.1 Where the chairman considers any recording activity to be causing a disruption to proceedings, the person causing the disruption will be asked to take appropriate action.

4.2 Should the disruption continue, the Chairman has the discretion to take whatever action they deem necessary in accordance with the council's standing orders. This may include removing the person concerned from the meeting or adjourning the meeting to another time.

4.3 The termination or suspension of recording will occur when:

- there is any public disturbance to the meeting.
- moving around while recording.
- the chairman considers that a defamatory statement has been made.
- requests are received from members of the public to cease recording when they speak.
- individuals are requested to repeat statements for the benefit of a recording.
- the meeting resolves to remove the press and public from the meeting due to the confidential or sensitive nature of the business to be discussed.
  or
- it is considered that the recording infringes upon the rights of any individual who has made a specific request to the chairman that they do not consent to being recorded.

5. Councillors

5.1 Councillors cannot refuse to be captured within recordings. This is because they hold public office and are required to be seen and heard during proceedings.

5.2 Councillors have a right to record the proceedings themselves, and while doing so shall adhere to the procedures set out within these procedures in conjunction with the council's standing orders.

6 Council recording of meetings

6.1 The Clerk to the council may make a recording of meetings for the purpose of the minutes. Once a formal record of the meeting has been approved by members, any recordings will be destroyed.

Approved at Full Council Meeting: 12th May 2026
Next review: May 2028