

MEOPHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Protocol for the recording or reporting of Council and Committee meetings

The right to record and report on meetings of the Council, its committees, sub committees and any joint committees is established under the Openness of Local Government Regulations 2014. This is in addition to the rights of the press and public to attend such meetings.

Recording for the purposes of this document is defined as: Video recording, audio recording, photography.

Reporting for the purposes of this document is defined as: Tweeting, blogging, broadcasting video or audio streams, or any other mechanism which allows those not physically present at the meeting to follow the course of debate.

Meopham Parish Council is committed to the principles of openness and transparency in its decision making process and will support the right of members of the public to record and report on meetings subject to the following protocol being followed:

1. As a matter of courtesy Meopham Parish Council would request that members of the public intending to record a meeting inform the Clerk of their intention at the earliest possible opportunity to enable adequate facilities to be put in place.
2. Members of the public present at meetings will be notified that recording of the meeting may be taking place. This will be noted on the agenda, on signage, and by the Chairman at the beginning of the meeting.
3. Members of the public attending meetings may put a request to the Clerk or Chairman that they are not to be recorded, Meopham Parish Council would expect any member of the public recording a meeting to respect and comply with such a request. To this end, Meopham Parish Council request that any recording of a meeting be overt i.e. clearly recognisable to anyone present at the meeting.
4. While those attending meetings are deemed to have consented to the filming, recording or broadcasting of meetings, those exercising the rights to film, record and broadcast must respect the rights of other people attending under the Data Protection Act 1998.
5. The right to record is limited to the duration of the meeting. Therefore recording must not start until the meeting is called to order, and must cease when the Chairman closes the meeting.
6. If it is resolved to exclude members of the public from the meeting under Meopham Parish Council standing order 3(d) then all recording must cease.
7. The member of the public recording a meeting must not at any time leave recording equipment unattended.
8. The right of members of the public to record or report on the proceedings of a meeting does not override Meopham Parish Council Standing Order 2(a), 2(b) and 2(c). If a member of the public in the process of recording or reporting on a meeting is considered by the Chairman to be obstructing or disrupting the

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transaction of business at a meeting, behaving offensively, or improperly, the Chairman may take appropriate action as stated in the Standing Orders.

9. Recording and reporting on meetings are subject to the law, and it is the sole responsibility of the member of the public carrying out the recording or reporting to ensure they are compliant with relevant acts, including but not limited to the Human Rights Act, the Data Protection Act, and the laws of libel and defamation.
10. Meopham Parish Council asks those recording proceedings not to edit the film or recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation of the proceedings, or infringe the core values of the Council. This includes refraining from editing an image or views expressed in a way that may ridicule, or show lack of respect towards those being filmed or recorded.
11. Meopham Parish Council will have no liability for material recorded or published by any other person.
12. Meopham Parish Council may record or report on meetings itself, and when doing so will be bound by this protocol and can retain, use or dispose of such material in accordance with its retention and disposal policies. Unless legally required to do so, the meetings will not be recorded, either in video or audio form, except by request of the Chairman of the meeting. This is on administrative grounds as the work created is disproportionate to the benefit.
13. Meopham Parish Council is not responsible or liable for the actions of any person recording or reporting on the proceedings of a meeting which identifies a member of the public or records them without their consent.
14. The Council will display requirements as to filming, recording and broadcasting at its meeting venues and those undertaking these activities will be deemed to have accepted them whether that have read them or not.
15. The minutes of the meeting remain the statutory and legally binding formal record of council decisions.

Approved by Administration and Resources Committee – 14.2.17

Revised by Administration and Resources Committee – 09.02.21