

# WELLS CITY COUNCIL

## **'Third-Party Recording of Meetings' Policy**

*(Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014)*

*Adopted by Wells City Council 24<sup>th</sup> September 2015. Reviewed February 2017*

In accordance with the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 recording is allowed at all formal meetings of Wells City Council to enable those not present to see or hear the proceedings either as they take place (or later) and to enable the reporting of those proceedings.

For the purposes of this Policy the following specific meanings are used:

'Recording': Any means used to record the proceedings including filming, audio-recording and the use of photography.

'Reporting': Reporting of the business of the meeting via any social media.

'Council meetings': All formal Full Council and Committee meetings which are open to the press and public to attend and other meetings as agreed at the time by the Council.

Accordingly, it is the Policy of Wells City Council that:

1. Recording and reporting of Council meetings is permitted subject to the requirements set out below.
2. Those wishing to record proceedings should, as a courtesy, inform the Town Clerk of their intentions, prior to the beginning of the meeting.
3. Where the Council is notified in advance of an intention to record, the Mayor/Chairman at the start of the meeting will announce that the meeting or part of it may be recorded by a third party and will ask if any member of the public objects to being recorded. If objections are raised, then the person responsible for the recording must take all reasonable steps to ensure that an individual request not to be recorded is complied with.
4. Recordings may only be taken from the area designated for the public and:
  - Recording devices must be in silent mode (no 'bleeping' etc).
  - No flash or additional lighting is permitted.
  - Recordings must be taken from one fixed position and must not obstruct others from observing proceedings.
5. If a meeting includes the consideration of confidential business then recording must cease prior to the consideration of such business and the recording equipment must be removed from the meeting room for the duration of the consideration of such business. If the person doing the recording is not present then the Clerk to the meeting shall remove the equipment from the meeting room for the consideration of confidential business.
6. Any person can provide a written commentary during the course of a meeting that falls under this Policy.
7. Oral commentaries are not permitted within the meeting room during the course of the meeting.

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8. The Chairman can require recording to be stopped where:
- The requirements of section 3 above are not met by the person doing the recording.
  - The press and public are excluded from the meeting due to the nature of confidential business being discussed.
  - There is public disturbance or a suspension/adjournment of a meeting.
  - The recording has become disruptive or distracting to the good order and conduct of the meeting.
  - Where it is considered that continuing the recording might infringe the rights of an individual or intimidate them.

After the meeting –

## Use of Recordings made by Third Parties

- a. The law applies to any information recorded and transmitted including the laws on defamation, public order, human rights and data protection and intellectual property rights. Freedom of speech within the law should also be exercised with personal and social responsibility.
- b. Any published recording should be accompanied by a statement of when and where the recording was made, the context of the discussion, and a clear identification of the main speakers and their role or title.
- c. Those making recordings must not edit the recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation or misrepresentation of the proceedings or comments made by attendees. In particular there should be no internal editing of published extracts; recordings may start at any point and end at any point but the material between those points must be complete.
- d. Those making recordings will be responsible for any breaches of the law resulting from their use of recorded material. The Council takes no responsibility for any recording carried out by a third party or its subsequent use.