

HALE PARISH COUNCIL

Policy on Filming, Audio-Recording, Photographing and Social Media Reporting of Public Parish Council and Sub-Committee Meetings

Hale Parish Council supports the principle of openness and the rights of members of the public and press to film, photograph, audio record and report on its Council and Sub Committee meetings which are open to the public. It supports the use of current communication methods such as Twitter, Facebook and blogs to report what is happening at meetings as they take place.

This guidance note sets out some general information to help any person who may be intending to report on meetings, either by recording them for simultaneous or later broadcast or via social media.

“Recording” or “Record” refers to filming, photographing, audio recording and/or reporting on social media.

A Recording of public meetings

1. Pursuant to The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 (2014 SI No 2095) which came into force on 6 August 2014 the Recording of public Parish Council and Sub-Committee meetings is permitted.
2. Any person wishing to undertake any Recording during a public Hale Parish Council meeting or Sub-Committee meeting is asked to inform the Parish Clerk in writing no less than 24 hours in advance to ensure that the necessary arrangements can be made. These arrangements include informing the Parish Council Members, any guest speakers and public present and, where possible, providing a separate area for any members of the public who do not wish to be included in any Recording being made.
3. Any person Recording public meetings is required to give due consideration at all time to ensure there is no disruption to the normal course of proceedings. In this respect, flash photography or additional lighting is not permitted without the express prior written agreement of the Chairman of the Parish Council for that meeting.
4. In line with national legislation, the Recording must relate only to the public meeting itself. The Recording must not start until the meeting is called to order and must cease when the Chairman closes the meeting. The

Recording must not extend to anybody seated in the public section that does not form part of the proceedings. Recording a member of the public without their prior express agreement is not permitted.

5. Any person who makes a Recording of the proceedings must avoid including children or vulnerable adults. Any person intending to Record such individuals seated in the public section is required to obtain express agreement from their parent or relevant responsible adult prior to such Recording taking place.

B Social Media

1. The use of Social Media for the reporting of proceedings is permitted during public Parish Council and Sub-Committee meetings.
2. All devices used for such reporting will remain on silent for the duration of the meeting.
3. Those publishing materials from meetings are advised to make themselves aware of the relevant legislation before posting items on social media and websites.
4. Wifi is normally available and details should be obtained from the Clerk in advance of the meeting.

C Termination or suspension of Recording

1. Where the Chairman of the relevant meeting determines that any Recording is causing a disruption to the meeting the person causing such disruption will be asked to take appropriate action to cease that disruption.
2. Should the disruption continue such that it hinders the normal process of the meeting, the Chairman has the discretion to take whatever action he/she considers necessary in accordance with Hale Parish Council's Standing Orders (eg remove the person concerned or temporarily suspend or close the meeting).
3. The termination or suspension of any Recording will occur when:
 - i. There is any public disturbance of the meeting; or
 - ii. Any moving around the public section whilst Recording; or

- iii. The Chairman considers that a defamatory statement has been made;
or
- iv. A request or requests are received from members of the public to
cease any Recording when they speak; or
- v. People are asked to repeat statements for the purposes of the
Recording; or
- vi. It is considered that continued Recording could infringe the rights of
any individual.

This list is not exhaustive.

4. Recording equipment may be left running in the meeting even if the person using it leaves the room.

5. Oral reporting is not permitted during a meeting.

6. The Regulations do not require Hale Parish Council to permit any Recording of any part of any meeting where the public are excluded by reason of the confidential nature of the business or where publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest. Exclusion of the public must be authorised by a resolution of the meeting and the reason for exclusion must be stated.

D Conclusion

- 1. Hale Parish Council welcomes responsible, balanced reporting of its meetings in order to promote greater transparency and awareness of its decision making.
- 2. Hale Parish Council asks that anybody Recording proceedings provides a balanced representation of the meeting and does not edit the Recording in such a way that it could result in misinterpretation of the proceedings or which reflects only a single view or particular point expressed at the meeting.
- 3. The formal record of any meeting of Hale Parish Council is the approved Minutes taken by the Clerk to the Parish Council and approved by a vote of the Members. These can be found on the Parish Council website www.haleparishcouncil.newforest.gov.uk
- 4. Those Recording meetings are reminded that requirements of general law apply to their activities.

5. Hale Parish Council cannot advise on general law and accepts no liability for any material created by those Recording.

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Hale Parish Council

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