

# PROTOCOL ON RECORDINGS AT MEETINGS

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Protocol provides guidance to members of the public or press who wish to record proceedings at any of the Council's public meetings.
- 1.2 Gloucester City Council supports the principles of openness and transparency and allows recording at its meetings that are open to the public, subject to the provisions of this Protocol
- 1.3 The Council already makes facilities available for reporting on its meetings and these facilities include:
  - Publication of agendas, reports and minutes on the Council's website;
  - Provision of a 'public gallery' from which the proceedings of meetings can be observed – including a designated area for journalists.
- 1.4 For the purposes of this Protocol, 'recording' includes sound recording, photography and filming.
- 1.5 Failure to follow the provisions within this Protocol may result in the Mayor/Chairman refusing to allow the proceedings to be recorded.

## 2. Before the meeting

- 2.1 There is generally no requirement for those wishing to record proceedings at a meeting to notify the Council in advance. However, as a matter of courtesy, anyone wishing to record proceedings at a meeting is advised to make the Mayor/Chair aware that they wish to do so before the meeting starts.
- 2.2 Those intending to bring large items of equipment or who may have special requirements are advised to contact the Council's Policy and Governance Manager in advance of the meeting to seek advice and guidance.
- 2.3 The use of flash photography and/or additional lighting will not be allowed unless this has been discussed and agreed in advance of the meeting.

## 3. At the meeting

- 3.1 Notices will be displayed in the meeting room advising those present that the proceedings may be recorded and the Mayor/Chairman will make an announcement to this effect at the beginning of the meeting. Meeting agendas will also carry this message.
- 3.2 The Council understand that some members of the public attending its meetings may not wish to be recorded whilst using their right to speak. Members of the public attending a meeting, whether to ask a question, present a petition, make a representation or view proceedings from the public gallery, and who actively object to being recorded, should not be recorded. The Mayor/Chairman will remind all present at the start of the meeting of the right not to be recorded and will take reasonable steps to ensure that any request not to be recorded is complied with.
- 3.3 Recording must take place in such a way as to ensure that the view of Councillors, officers, the public and press is not obstructed.
- 3.4 Where any meeting goes into exempt session, all recording equipment must be switched off and removed from the meeting room.

- 3.5** The Mayor/Chairman has absolute discretion to terminate or suspend any recording activities if, in their opinion:
- (a) continuing to do so would prejudice the proceedings at the meeting; or
  - (b) the recording is disruptive or distracting to the good order and conduct of the proceedings; or
  - (c) the person recording is in breach of this Protocol.
- 3.6** If a person refuses to stop recording when requested to do so by the Mayor/Chairman, the Mayor/Chairman will ask the person to leave the meeting. If the person refuses to leave, the Mayor/Chairman may adjourn the meeting or make other appropriate arrangements for the meeting to continue without disruption.

**4. After the meeting**

- 4.1** Any recordings made of Council proceedings must not be edited in a way that could lead to misinterpretation or misrepresentation of the proceedings or comments made by Councillors, Officers or others speaking at the meeting or in a way that infringes the core values of the Council. This includes refraining from editing the views being expressed in a way that may ridicule or show a lack of respect towards those being recorded.
- 4.2** If any person fails to comply with this Protocol when recording proceedings of the Council, the Mayor/Chairman may refuse to allow this person to record any future meetings.
- 4.3** The Council takes no responsibility for any recording made by a third party or its subsequent use.