



Locking Parish Council

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Policy on Use of Social Media and Recording at Council Meetings

1. Introduction

This policy sets out the rules and responsibilities for the use of social media, filming, and recording during Council meetings. It ensures compliance with relevant legislation and promotes transparency while safeguarding individual rights.

2. Legal Framework

- Local Government Audit and Accountability Act 2014 – Grants the public the right to report on public meetings, including filming, photographing, audio recording, and using social media.
- Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 – Reinforces the right to use digital and social media tools during public meetings and requires councils to allow reporting by any communication method.
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR – Recording or broadcasting may involve personal data. Compliance with data protection principles is mandatory.
- Human Rights Act 1998 – Protects individuals' right to privacy; councils must balance openness with respect for personal rights.

3. Council Responsibilities

- Provide reasonable facilities for filming and recording, including access 15 minutes before and after meetings.
- Display requirements for filming and recording at venues and publish guidance online.
- Inform attendees that filming or recording may occur and provide privacy notices.

4. Public Rights and Restrictions

- Members of the public may film or record meetings they are permitted to attend, provided it is non-disruptive and only from public areas.

- Meetings or parts of meetings where the press and public are excluded cannot be filmed or recorded.
- Those recording must respect the rights of others under Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.
- Recordings must not be edited in a way that misrepresents proceedings or ridicules participants.

5. Use of Social Media

- Councillors may use social media during meetings but must avoid disrupting debate.
- Comply with the Councillor Code of Conduct.
- Not share confidential or exempt information.
- Be mindful of libel laws and safeguarding obligations.

6. Authority and Enforcement

The Chairman (or designated representative) may stop a meeting and take action if any person contravenes these principles or records in a disruptive manner. Anyone choosing to film, record, or broadcast accepts responsibility for any claims or liabilities and must indemnify the Council.

7. Compliance Checklist

- Inform attendees at the start of meetings.
- Provide seating arrangements for those who do not wish to be filmed.
- Ensure recordings are stored securely and retained only as necessary.
- Publish privacy notices on council websites and meeting agendas.