



PROTOCOL FOR THE LIVE TRANSMISSION OF COUNCIL MEETINGS (“WEBCASTING”)

Background

The main purpose of webcasting is to give members of the public the chance to view meetings as they happen without having to attend in person. It is an ambition of both the Council and of the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to enable and encourage residents to participate in local democracy through the provision of live transmission and recording meetings of the Council. Fixed cameras are located within our two offices for this purpose.

Webcasting and the retention of film on the Council’s YouTube channel does not replace the formal record of the Meeting and the decisions made. The only formal record of any Meeting of a Local Authority is the minutes and agenda which are required to be maintained and retained for several years.

Protocol

1. At the start of each Meeting to be transmitted, the Chairman will make an announcement to state that the meeting will be broadcast live via YouTube.
2. The webcast will only commence when, at the beginning of the Meeting, the Chairman so indicates will finish when the Meeting is closed by the Chairman.
3. No exempt or confidential agenda items shall be webcast, and no part of any Meeting will be webcast after the Committee has voted to support the exclusion of the public and press because there is likely to be disclosure of exempt or confidential information, as defined in paragraphs 1 to 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 A of Section 100(a)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.
4. The Chairman has the discretion in certain circumstances to terminate or suspend the Meeting and therefore the webcast if, in their opinion, continuing would prejudice the proceedings of the Meeting. Circumstances that could lead to suspension or termination might include public disturbance.

5. Councillors and Officers are to expect to be filmed and for their images to be webcast unless a specific request is made to the Monitoring Officer in advance of the Meeting for an exemption to be granted. The Monitoring Officer will consider if there is sufficient justification for the making of such an exemption.
6. Members of the public participating in or attending to watch the meeting will be made aware that the Council cannot guarantee they will not be filmed or recorded. By entering the Conference Room and sitting in the public seating area, those present will be deemed to have consented to the possible use of filmed images and sound recordings. However, the Council will do all it can to ensure personal wishes are met. The exception to this is that young people under the age of 16 years must not be filmed and the Council will therefore seat any such attendees out of camera shot.
7. Agendas and the Council's website will advise that the Meeting will be broadcast live, and a copy retained on YouTube (see 12 below). If a member of the public participating in a Meeting does not wish to be filmed the Clerk will give advice on where best to sit, however please see 6 above and note that the Council cannot guarantee this. If the member of the public is speaking at the Meeting, the Host should ensure they have switched off their camera.
8. Signs will also be placed inside and outside the Conference Rooms (see below).
9. Editing of content will only be undertaken if there is a legal reason, for instance the name of a person in witness protection was divulged by a public speaker, confidential personal information was inadvertently disclosed, or defamatory comments made. Editing of content may also be authorised in exceptional circumstance such as if an attendee was taken ill on screen. A log will be maintained by Democratic Services of webcasts where content has been edited. The Chief Executive will, in consultation with Group Leaders, make the final decision on editing any webcast or filmed material to be broadcast or published in connection with any Council meeting. The reason for any decision to edit a webcast or filmed material will be published.
10. In the event of obscenities being shouted, the Host will mute the sound, including on live broadcasts, until the Chairman has restored order.
11. Should the webcast be halted for a technical reason, the Host will advise the Monitoring Officer as soon as possible after the meeting. The Monitoring Officer will inform the Group Leaders what went wrong, what is being done to recover any lost data, if possible, and how such matters might be mitigated going forward.
12. Recordings of meetings will be available to the public on the Council's website until the formal minutes of that Meeting are confirmed, or in the case of Licensing Sub-Committee meetings until the period to appeal a decision to the Magistrates Court has passed. After this time recordings will be archived.
13. Archived webcasts will be available for a period of six months from the date of broadcast. The exception to this will be if, in the opinion of the Monitoring Officer, all or part of the content of a webcast is or is likely to be in breach of any statutory provision or common law doctrine, for example, data protection and human rights legislation.

The following will be displayed inside and outside the room.

WEBCASTING NOTICE

Please note: This Meeting will be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the internet (the Council's YouTube channel).

At the start of the Meeting, the Chairman will confirm if all or part of the Meeting is to be filmed. The Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act 2018. Data collected during this webcast will be retained in accordance with the Council's published policy.

The Council cannot guarantee public seating areas will not be filmed or recorded. By entering the Conference Room and sitting in the public seating area, those present will be deemed to have consented to the possible use of filmed images and sound recordings. If you do not wish to be recorded, please speak to a member of the Democratic Services team at the earliest opportunity.

Filming, recording and photography by members of the public

1. Residents are permitted to film or record Councillors and Officers at any Council Meetings that are open to the public and press.
2. Those wishing to film, or record are directed to point 6 above and asked to respect the wishes of those members of the public who would prefer not to be filmed.
3. The Council may reasonably ask for the filming to be undertaken in such a way that it is not disruptive or distracting to the good order and conduct of the Meeting. As a courtesy, attendees will be informed at the start of the meeting that it is being filmed; the Council recommends that those wishing to film, record or photograph the Meeting liaise with democratic.services@eastsoffolk.gov.uk before the day of the meeting.
4. The Council requires those participating not to edit the recordings, film, or photographs in a way that could lead to misinterpretation of the proceedings. This includes refraining from editing an image or views expressed in a way that may ridicule or show a lack of respect towards those being photographed, filmed, or recorded.
5. Those intending to bring large equipment or wishing to discuss any special requirements are advised to contact the Council's Democratic Services Team in advance of the meeting to seek advice and guidance.
6. The use of flash photography or additional lighting will not be allowed unless this has been discussed in advance of the meeting and agreement reached on how it can be done without disrupting proceedings.
7. The Council also allows the use of social networking websites and blogging to communicate with people about what is happening, as it happens, during the Meeting.

April 2023