

Policy on Recording, Photography and Use of social media at Council Meetings

Introduction

Mumbles Community Council fully supports the principle of openness and transparency and has resolved to allow both filming and reporting (by means of social media) at its Council and Committee meetings. We welcome the use of social networking websites – such as Twitter and Facebook – to communicate with people about what is happening, as it happens.

What you can Do

Members of the public can:

- Use social media to report/tweet from meetings
- Film, photograph or make an audio recording of the proceedings
- Use any other means to enable those not present to see or hear proceedings as they happen or at a later date
- Report or provide commentary on proceedings so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or at a later date

If you're planning to record/film a meeting

You don't need permission to record meetings, but because we need to provide reasonable facilities for filming, we ask that you let us know in advance if you wish to record the meeting.

You can contact the Clerk, on 01792 363598 or email the council at council@mumbles.gov.uk.

You're entitled to publish, post or share your recording online, but we ask you not to edit the recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation of the proceedings or shows a lack of respect to those being filmed.

What behaviour isn't allowed

The public is not allowed to make oral commentary (i.e. commentate on proceedings) during a meeting.

The Chair of the meeting has the absolute discretion to stop or suspend filming, recording and use of social media during a meeting if, in their opinion, the activity:

- is disrupting the meeting and impeding good decision making
- is infringing the rights of any members of the public
- is in danger of repeating a defamatory statement that has been made

What if participants do not want to be filmed?

The notice on the agenda and displayed in meeting rooms explains to members of the public that they may be filmed, especially if they participate in any way during the meeting (e.g. deputations, questions, heckling), and although we ask those filming/recording to refrain from covering the public seating area, we cannot guarantee that members of the public will not be filmed.

We ask those filming/recording meetings to avoid vulnerable people and/or children, but we cannot guarantee this will happen. Those responsible for children/vulnerable people must decide whether it is appropriate for them to attend meetings in these circumstances.

Private sessions

Where a meeting goes into private session, for example where confidential or exempt information is to be discussed, the public are excluded and any filming/recording equipment remaining in the room must be turned off before the person responsible for it leaves the room.

Councillors use of social media/record during meetings

Councillors need to consider their role at meetings and ensure that nothing stops them making good and effective decisions.

Keeping the public informed

On the front sheet of each meeting agenda; on signs displayed at the meeting and by announcement of the chair there will be the following notice.

"Please note this meeting may be filmed or recorded by the council for live or subsequent broadcast via the council's website or by anyone attending the meeting using any communication method. Although we ask members of the public recording, filming or reporting on the meeting not to include the public seating areas, members of the public attending the meeting should be aware that we cannot guarantee that you will not be filmed or recorded by others attending the meeting. Members of the public participating in the meeting (e.g. making deputations, asking questions making oral protests) should be aware that they are likely to be filmed, recorded or reported on. By entering the meeting room and using the public seating area, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings.

"The chair of the meeting has the discretion to terminate or suspend filming or recording, if in his or her opinion continuation of the filming, recording or reporting would disrupt or prejudice the proceedings, infringe the rights of any individual or may lead to the breach of a legal obligation by the council."

Whilst Meetings are Held Virtually

The Council will record all meetings of the council and its committees and publish them on its website.

Approved by Council on 8 September 2020