



VISUAL AND AUDIO RECORDING AND USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

1. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance, particularly, for members of the press and the public on the filming, taking of photographs and the audio recording of any Council meeting which is held in public.
2. The policy also refers to the use of social media at meetings and makes clear that there are no restrictions placed on anyone at the meeting using Twitter, blogs, Facebook or similar social media provided that the Chairman does not consider their actions are disrupting the meeting.
3. The Council will not vet those who want to film, audio-record, take photographs, or use social media to report the meeting. It would help us however in providing reasonable facilities if anyone wanting to film, audio-record, take photographs, or use social media to report the meeting were to notify the Town Clerk of their intention 24 hours before the meeting.
4. Irrespective of whether the Town Clerk has been notified, anyone wanting to film, audio-record, take photographs, or use social media to report the meeting must on arrival at the meeting inform the Town Clerk of their attendance.
5. The Town Clerk will then tell the person what facilities the Council can make available for them to use and any restrictions. The use of flash photography is not permitted due to it being likely that it will become a distraction and annoyance. In addition, it is essential that all apparatus is switched to the silent mode.
6. If a request has been received to take photographs or to audio or visually record a particular meeting, notices to this effect will be prominently displayed inside and outside of the Council Chamber advising members of the public that other members of the public and the press may be recording the meeting and if they do not wish to be filmed or be photographed, they should inform the Town Clerk. Failure to register an objection will be taken to indicate their consent to being filmed or photographed. The Town Clerk will advise those wanting to film, or take photographs, of the objection.
7. In accordance with Wareham Town Council Standing Orders 9.4, the Chairman may require anyone who is filming, taking of photographs, audio recording or using social media to record the meeting to leave the meeting if their activities disrupt the meeting. Examples of acts or activities that are likely to disrupt a meeting include but are not limited to:

- (a) moving to areas outside the areas designated for the public without the consent of the Chairman;
- (b) excessive noise in recording or setting up or re-siting equipment during the debate/discussion;
- (c) intrusive lighting;
- (d) asking for people to repeat statements for the purposes of recording; and
- (e) filming or taking photographs of members of the public who have actively objected to being filmed or photographed.

8. **Further information**

- 9. Please contact the Town Clerk (office@wareham-tc.gov.uk)
- 10. The Government has also published a plain English guide for the press and public on attending and reporting meetings of local government.