

Protocol for Reporting and Filming at meetings of the Council

Introduction

1. The council allows and welcomes reporting of the proceedings of a council meeting and use of social media by any member of the public, media or councillor.
2. Reporting in this context means:
 - Filming, photographing or making an audio recording of the proceedings of the meeting
 - Using any other means for enabling those who are not present to see or hear the proceedings at a meeting as it takes place or later

It should be noted that the council does not allow oral reporting/commentary on a meeting as it takes place by someone present at the meeting.

Practical arrangements

3. If you are attending and want to record or film a council meeting, you are asked to let council officers know in advance and inform us how you want to report on the proceedings and the agenda item or representation you wish to record. Council officers will then be able to consider how to provide reasonable provision to enable you to report effectively.
4. You will be required to set up any recording equipment that you might have before the start of the meeting; this will also minimise any disruption when the meeting starts. Flash photography, additional lighting or large equipment will not be permitted, unless agreed in advance and it can be accommodated without causing disruption to the meeting. Requests to use equipment of this nature will be subject to consideration of the constraints of meeting rooms.
5. For reasons of health and safety the council is unable to facilitate the use of electric plug sockets in meetings for your equipment.

Filming at the meeting and attendance of the public

6. You should ensure that your recording is of the meeting, not the public seating area, and be considerate towards other people in the room and not film other members of the public who may not wish to be filmed. This means that any filming is directed towards the meeting area. This will be where the decisions take place and the discussion happens.
7. The chair will make an announcement at the beginning of the meeting to make all present aware that the meeting may be filmed or recorded.
8. 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 they 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, presenting petitions) should be aware that they are likely to be filmed, recorded or reported on. If you have any queries on the day, please speak to a council officer.

Reasons for terminating or suspending recording and filming

9. The chair has the discretion to terminate or suspend the recording or photographing or filming if, in the opinion of the chair, its continuation would prejudice the proceedings of the meeting.
10. The circumstances, in which termination or suspension might occur, could include:
 - a) Public disturbance or suspension of the meeting (including any oral reporting or oral commentary as the meeting takes place)
 - b) Exclusion of public and press being moved and supported
 - c) The chair, on advice of the monitoring officer or their representative, considering that continued recording/photography/filming/web casting might infringe the rights of any individual
 - d) The chair, on advice of the monitoring officer or their representative, considering that a defamatory statement has been made.
11. Filming and recording is only permitted in the 'open' session of the meeting.

Use of recordings

12. The council would appreciate those filming or recording the proceedings to abide by the following:
 - a) Any published filming or audio recording should be accompanied by a statement of when and where the filming and recording was made and the context of the discussion that took place.
 - b) Those undertaking the filming or recordings must not edit the recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation or misrepresentation of the proceedings or comments made by attendees.

Web casting of meetings

13. The council web casts some of its meetings. A web cast is a live transmission of audio and video over the internet. The public is able to access previous meetings that have been recorded in this way on the council's web site. If the meeting is being web cast, a notice will be posted onto the main entrance to the meeting room. The chair will make an announcement at the beginning of the meeting if this is taking place. If you do not wish to have your image captured you should sit in the public gallery area away from the camera. Images and sound recordings for web casting may be used for training purposes.

Wi-fi access

15. For meetings taking place at 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH we will be happy to provide the latest Wi-fi password. In terms of meetings outside this venue, you will need to speak directly to the relevant council officer in advance.

Queries or request for additional information

All queries or notice to be provided to the council's communication team: press@southwark.gov.uk, or the constitutional team to constitutional.team@southwark.gov.uk, or for scrutiny meetings to scrutiny.team@southwark.gov.uk.