

## **Nottingham City Council: Policy on Recording and Reporting on Public Meetings**

This policy applies to all public meetings of Nottingham City Council, with the exception of meetings of the Licensing Committee and Panels and Special Licensing Panel. The policy does not apply to meetings which aren't public meetings of the local authority, for example education appeal hearings.

1. Nottingham City Council supports the principles of openness and transparency and encourages public interest and engagement in decision-making.
2. In accordance with the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 persons and press attending any meeting of the Council open to the public are allowed to record and/or report all or part of that meeting. This includes filming, audio-recording, photographing or any other means for enabling people not present to see or hear proceedings at a meeting at the same time as it takes place or later. The Council will provide reasonable facilities to enable them to do so, as far as is practical.
3. The Regulations also allow an individual or organisation to report and/ or provide commentary on a public meeting making it available to others not present.
4. Individuals or organisations intending to record and/ or report on a public meeting are asked to notify the relevant Constitutional Services Officer (as listed on the meeting agenda) in advance of the meeting.
5. If notification of an intention to record/ report all or part of a meeting has been received the Chair will make an announcement accordingly at the start of the meeting. If a member of the public present indicates that they do not wish to be recorded then the Chair will ask the individual/ organisation to refrain from filming/ audio-recording/ photographing them. If a person with known learning disabilities or mental health issues is expected to be speaking at the meeting then there will be a need to ensure that they have given informed consent. If a young person will be speaking at the meeting then parental consent should be sought for them to be filmed/ recorded/ photographed. The Chair will decide if this has been achieved and if not, request that recording does not take place while they are speaking. Any objections received to being recorded should be made known to the Chair and the person(s) recording, and the Chair may request that they refrain from recording while that individual is speaking.
6. Those recording and/ or reporting on public meetings should be aware of and abide by the following points:
  - Unless agreed otherwise in advance of the meeting, recording and reporting must take place from the public seating area and should be overt and focused on those speaking at the meeting, not other members of the public.
  - The use of flash photography or additional lighting is not allowed unless it has been discussed in advance and agreement reached on how it can be done without disruption to the meeting.

- Individuals and organisations recording a meeting are asked to respect any requests from external contributors/ members of the public to the meeting to suspend recording while they are speaking/ to not record them.
  - Recording is not allowed:
    - when the meeting has agreed to formally exclude the press and public due to the nature of business discussed. Filming/ recording equipment should not be left in the meeting room during private sessions.
    - if there is a public disturbance/ the meeting has been suspended.
    - If the Chair determines that it has not been possible to obtain informed consent from a person with known learning disabilities or mental health issues; or parental consent for a young person speaking (see paragraph 5) then any recording of these individuals is not allowed.
  - Oral reporting or oral commentary on a meeting as it takes place is not allowed if the person doing the reporting or providing the commentary is present at the meeting. Oral commentary should take place outside or after the meeting.
  - Recording and reporting should not be disruptive to the meeting, including preventing others viewing and listening to the meeting. Acting in a disruptive manner could result in expulsion from the meeting.
  - The Council expects that recording will not be edited in a way that could lead to misinterpretation of the proceedings.
  - Individuals and organisations recording/ reporting on a meeting must respect the law and will be responsible for any allegations of breaches of law which may result from their actions.
7. The Council allows such reporting/ recording to take place only in accordance with its legal obligations and takes no responsibility for, nor will accept any liabilities for, any filmed/ recorded/ photographed material made by any persons or its subsequent use or publication.

Any queries regarding this policy should be directed to Debra La Mola, Head of Democratic Services.

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Further guidance is also available in the DCLG publication 'Open and accountable local government', June 2014