

Section 40

Protocol for Recording, Filming and Social Media at Meetings

1.1 PROTOCOL

The Council welcomes engagement by the public and through the media with the decision-making processes that determine the policies and strategies that shape provision of services in Cannock Chase. Audio and video/visual recording, photography, blogging, tweeting or use of other social media at meetings open to the public (hereafter referred to as 'broadcasting activities') are allowed subject to the following restrictions:

- (i) Anyone wanting to undertake broadcasting activities at a meeting shall give written notice to the Managing Director at least 24 hours before the scheduled start of the meeting.
- (ii) All broadcasting activities should take place from the public gallery or the designated press seating in the meeting room.
- (iii) All broadcasting activities shall be carried out in such a way that no disruption is caused to the meeting and that no obstruction or inconvenience is caused to others wishing to observe the meeting or undertake their own broadcasting activities.
- (iv) Anyone undertaking broadcasting activities must comply with any instructions given by the Chairman of the meeting.
- (v) The use of flash photography, additional lighting or microphones placed outside the public gallery/press seating area in connection with audio/visual recordings at meetings, will not be permitted without prior permission.
- (vi) Democratic Services will ensure signs are displayed at meetings to remind attendees that broadcasting activities may be undertaken and that the Council has no control over where material may appear (for example posted on the internet). Meeting agendas will also carry this message.
- (vii) Where the Chairman of a meeting reasonably considers the broadcasting activity is disrupting the meeting, the operator of the equipment will be required to stop.

- (viii) Anyone refusing to stop when requested to do so may be requested by the Chairman to leave the meeting. If the person refuses to leave the meeting then the Chairman may adjourn the meeting or make other appropriate arrangements for the meeting to continue without disruption. These will be in line with the disorderly conduct procedures set out in the Constitution.
- (ix) Where members of the public are involved in the meeting (e.g. when making representations to the Planning Control Committee), any member of the public may request that they are not filmed/recorded and the person carrying out the filming/recording must comply with the request and cease broadcasting activities until that person has finished their contribution to the meeting.
- (x) Where a recording is made that features a minor (under the age of 18), it is the recorder's responsibility to gain the permission of the appropriate parent/guardian, both for the initial recording and for any subsequent dissemination of it (e.g. on social media), and to ensure compliance with any prevailing legislation in relation to such activity.
- (xi) Any decision taken by the Chairman on the interpretation of this Protocol is final.
- (xii) The media and public may only be excluded from a meeting in respect of business relating to confidential or exempt information if a resolution is passed under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972. The media and public will be told about the nature of the exclusion relating to the business to be discussed. No broadcasting activities will be permitted during this exclusion. All cameras, recording and sound equipment must then be removed from the meeting room for the duration of the confidential or exempt business.
- (xiii) Any audio or visual recording made which is broadcast or distributed in any way shall not be edited or otherwise manipulated so as to give a distorted or unrepresentative representation of the meeting or of any part of the meeting.
- (xiv) Anyone breaching this Protocol or refusing to comply with the Chairman's requests may be refused permission to engage in broadcasting activities at future meetings.