

PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL

MOTION ON NOTICE No 7 2010/11

ELECTRONIC RECORDING OF SPEECH AND THE MAKING OF PHOTOGRAPHIC / VIDEO IMAGES

Plymouth City Council meetings are formal gatherings of elected Members supported by officers and witnessed by the public in accordance with the laws that govern the local authority democratic process in England. Such meetings should be conducted in a serious and businesslike manner.

The constitution holds that Members will, “be the ultimate policy-makers and carry out a number of strategic and corporate management functions” and one of the ten general principles for those who act on behalf of the public is that, “Members should promote and support these principles by leadership, and by example, and should act in a way that secures or preserves public confidence”. Using mobile devices during any formal meeting is a breach of good manners, discourteous to others in attendance and a hindrance to good decision making?

Current practice is that the electronic recording of speech and the making of photographic/video images (other than by the Council) is prohibited at formal meetings.

I therefore move that this Council:

1. Enforces the ban of the electronic recording of speech and the making of photographic/video images (including by mobile phones) (other than by the Council) and a) places notices to this effect prominently within meeting rooms in the Council House and b) includes this information in all meeting agendas.
2. Requires the Lord Mayor, Leader and Committee Chairs to insist that any device that is capable of transmitting and receiving voice and text messages must be turned off during all Plymouth City Council’s formal meetings (Exceptionally, the Lord Mayor or a Committee Chair may allow the recording of speech and photography.)
3. Allows the Lord Mayor, Leader and Committee Chairs to exercise discretion for Members and other attendees who are “on call” for family, health or business reasons and allow their personal mobile phones to be switched to “silent” and placed clearly on display. Any subsequent calls or messages must be made or taken outside the meeting room.

Note: Members who are “on call” should formally request this of the Lord Mayor, Leader or Committee Chairs at the start of a meeting.

4. Instructs the monitoring officer to amend the constitution to give effect to this resolution.

Proposed by Councillor Ball. Seconded by Councillor James.