

# **USE OF FILMING, PHOTOGRAPHY, RECORDING AND THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AT COUNCIL MEETINGS**

## **Introduction**

Plymouth City Council believes in openness and transparency. Anyone who wishes to report on any public meeting will be welcomed and will be provided with reasonable facilities to report, film, tweet or blog about any aspect of the meeting.

## **Filming, photographing and recording meetings**

The Council asks that filming and/or photography requests are made in advance of the meeting (contact Democratic Support) and takes place from positions in the room as agreed by the Chair as such activities must not be disruptive or distracting to the good conduct of the meeting.

The Chair's decision, on whether or not the meeting is being disrupted or disturbed and to require filming, photography, recording or the use of social media to stop, is final.

At the start of each meeting, the Chair will make an announcement that the meeting may be filmed, recorded or photographed. Meeting agendas will carry this message and notices will be placed in meeting rooms.

There are situations where national rules require or allow the Council's committees to be closed to the public and press for example when they have to deal with confidential information. This protocol does not apply in such cases.

## **Filming and photographing members of the public**

Some Council meetings are webcast. Where a meeting is not webcast and members of the public may speak (to ask a 'public question' for example) the Democratic Support Officer will ask each individual to give their permission to be photographed and/or filmed and they will not be photographed/filmed if they object.

## **Use of mobile devices**

To minimise disruption to others attending the meeting, all attendees must ensure that their phone or other mobile devices are switched off or set to silent during the meeting.

No councillor, whether a decision maker or an observer, is permitted to use social media or mobile devices in a private meeting (when the press and public are excluded) or to disclose in any way the content of items under discussion.

The Councillors Code of Conduct will apply when using social media. Inappropriate comments made during a meeting could open councillors to potential complaints or investigation under the Code of Conduct.

Democratic Support

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