

UPTON & NORTH ELMSALL PARISH COUNCIL

RECORDING, FILMING AND REPORTING AT MEETINGS PROTOCOL

Introduction

Upton and North Elmsall Parish Council is committed to openness, transparency and public engagement in its decision-making.

Members of the public and press have the right to attend, report on, film, photograph, audio-record and use social media to report on meetings of the Council, its committees and sub-committees that are open to the public.

This protocol sets out how recording and reporting may take place while ensuring that meetings remain orderly, accessible and respectful to all those present.

For the purposes of this protocol, “recording” includes filming, photographing, audio-recording, live-streaming, blogging, posting on social media or any other form of electronic recording or reporting.

Meetings covered by this protocol

This protocol applies to meetings of:

- Full Council;
- Council committees;
- sub-committees; and
- any other formal public meeting of the Council to which the press and public are entitled to attend.

It does not apply to informal meetings, working groups, site visits, staff meetings, confidential briefings or any meeting which is not a formal public meeting of the Council.

Right to record and report

Any person may record or report on a public meeting of the Council, provided that they do so in a way that does not disrupt the meeting or prevent others from following the proceedings.

The Council cannot prevent recording simply because it does not agree with it. However, the Chair of the meeting may take appropriate action where recording or reporting is disruptive, intrusive, unsafe or otherwise interferes with the proper conduct of the meeting.

Notification to the Clerk or Chair

Anyone intending to record or film a meeting is encouraged to inform the Clerk or Chair before the meeting starts.

This is not to seek permission, but to allow reasonable arrangements to be made where possible, such as identifying a suitable place to sit or stand, managing cables or equipment safely, and making attendees aware that recording may take place.

Where no advance notice is given, recording may still take place provided it is carried out in accordance with this protocol.

Adopted On: 19th May 2026

Conduct during meetings

Anyone recording or reporting on a meeting must:

- do so openly and not secretly;
- remain seated or in an agreed position unless otherwise agreed with the Chair or Clerk;
- avoid moving around the room while the meeting is taking place, unless this has been agreed in advance;
- ensure that equipment does not obstruct walkways, create a trip hazard or interfere with the meeting;
- avoid using flash photography, additional lighting or large equipment unless agreed in advance;
- not interrupt the meeting;
- not ask councillors, officers or members of the public to repeat anything for the purposes of a recording;
- not make oral commentary during the meeting in a way that disrupts proceedings; and
- comply with any reasonable direction given by the Chair for the proper management of the meeting.

Small devices such as mobile phones, tablets, laptops or compact cameras may normally be used, provided they do not cause disruption.

Larger equipment, tripods, microphones, lighting or live-streaming arrangements should be discussed with the Clerk in advance.

Public participation

The public participation session forms part of the wider meeting arrangements, but it may not form part of the Council's formal decision-making business.

Members of the public who speak during public participation should be aware that their comments may be recorded or reported by others attending the meeting.

Where a member of the public does not wish to be filmed or photographed, they should inform the Clerk or Chair before the meeting starts. The Council will, where reasonably practicable, ask those recording to respect that request.

Children, young people and vulnerable adults

Particular care must be taken where children, young people under the age of 18, or vulnerable adults are present.

Anyone recording or filming a meeting should avoid focusing on children, young people or vulnerable adults unless appropriate consent has been obtained from a parent, guardian, carer or other responsible adult.

The Chair may give reasonable directions to protect the privacy and welfare of children, young people or vulnerable adults present at the meeting.

Attendees who do not wish to be recorded

The Council recognises that some members of the public may not wish to be filmed, photographed or otherwise recorded.

Anyone who does not wish to be recorded should inform the Clerk or Chair before the meeting starts.

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Where reasonably practicable, the Chair or Clerk may arrange seating or ask those recording to focus on councillors, officers and those who are content to be recorded. However, the Council cannot guarantee that a person will not be incidentally captured by another person's recording.

Confidential or exempt business

Recording, filming, photographing, live-streaming or reporting is not permitted during any part of a meeting where the press and public have been lawfully excluded due to the confidential or exempt nature of the business being considered.

Where a meeting moves into private session, all recording and reporting must stop. The Chair may require recording equipment to be switched off or removed from the room for that part of the meeting.

Disruption and Chair's authority

The Chair is responsible for the orderly conduct of the meeting.

The Chair may ask a person to stop recording or reporting if, in the Chair's opinion, their actions are disrupting the meeting or preventing others from properly observing or participating in the meeting.

Examples of disruptive behaviour may include:

- moving around the room unnecessarily;
- obstructing councillors, officers or members of the public;
- using intrusive lighting or equipment;
- making comments or commentary during the meeting;
- refusing to follow reasonable directions from the Chair;
- recording confidential or exempt business; or
- behaving in a way that intimidates, harasses or causes distress to others.

If disruption continues, the Chair may adjourn the meeting or ask the person to leave.

Responsibility for published material

Any person recording or reporting on a meeting is responsible for the material they create, publish or share.

Those recording or reporting should ensure that their activity complies with the law, including data protection, human rights, copyright, libel, defamation, harassment and safeguarding requirements.

Recordings should not be edited or published in a way that is misleading, inaccurate or gives a false impression of the meeting or those who attended.

The Council is not responsible for recordings, photographs, comments or other material published by third parties.

Council recordings

The Council may itself choose to audio-record, film, photograph or live-stream meetings where it considers this appropriate.

Where the Council makes its own recording, this will normally be for administrative, transparency or minute-taking purposes.

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Any Council recording will be managed in accordance with the Council's data protection, retention and publication arrangements.

The approved minutes of the meeting remain the formal legal record of the Council's decisions.

Notice at meetings

The Council will include a notice on agendas, or display a notice at meetings, advising attendees that recording and reporting may take place.

Suggested wording:

"Please be aware that this meeting may be recorded, filmed, photographed, live-streamed or reported by members of the public and press. Anyone intending to record the meeting is encouraged to inform the Clerk or Chair before the meeting starts, so that reasonable arrangements can be made where necessary. Recording must not disrupt the meeting or prevent others from following the proceedings."

Review

This protocol will be reviewed periodically, or sooner if there are changes in legislation, guidance or Council procedures.