

HILLAM PARISH COUNCIL – RECORDING POLICY

Any person may now legitimately record a parish council meeting and this includes committee and sub-committee meetings. However, recording of any type is not permitted where the council or parish meeting resolves to exclude the press and public due to the nature of the business being transacted being prejudicial to the public interest.

A person may:

- a. Film, photograph or make an audio recording of proceedings at a meeting (eg using a mobile phone, tablet device, filming for a TV broadcast or recording for a radio broadcast);
- b. Use any other means for enabling people not present at a meeting to see or hear proceedings as it takes place or later (eg live streaming);
- c. Report or comment on the proceedings during or after a meeting or orally report or comment after the meeting. Examples of written reporting or commentary include blogging, posting comments on Facebook or Tweeting.

A parish meeting does not have to give prior permission to anyone who wishes to record but it is acceptable for the council or meeting to expect any person wishing to record by any means to inform the body prior to the meeting so that specific arrangements can be made for this to take place. A sample form is attached for completion. A parish meeting is obliged only to provide reasonable facilities for any person who wishes to record. For instance a space to view and hear the meeting; seats; and ideally a desk/table. Parish meetings should use their common sense to determine the range of reasonable facilities they can actively provide to support the free press in all its forms.

A person recording cannot make oral commentary in the meeting and this provision is made in the Regulations to prevent disruption to the meeting.

There are other forms of disruptive behaviour that should not be tolerated in the process of recording and these are:

- a. The person recording moves outside the area designated for the purpose.
- b. Excessive noise in the setting up or re-siting of equipment during the recording;
- c. Intrusive lighting and use of flash photography;
- d. Asking people to repeat statements for the purposes of recording.

Before any recording takes place The Clerk and councillors should consider who is to be filmed and what agenda items are to be discussed. They must ensure that they protect children, vulnerable adults and other members of the public who actively object to being filmed, without undermining the broader transparency of the meeting. For reasons of protection and public interest then the public may be excluded for that item.

HPC can record its own meetings by either visual or audio recording or both and retain this as the council's official record of the proceedings. However it cannot prevent another person from making a record in addition.