

Hellingly Parish Council



DRAFT V2 Recording of Public Meetings Policy

POLICY REVIEW DATES:

Policy Reviewed & **UPDATED on: 11th MARCH 2026**

*Next review date: **MARCH 2030***

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The right to record meetings of the council, its committees, sub-committees or working groups, is permitted under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014. This is in addition to the rights of the press and public to attend such meetings. Hellingly Parish Council (the Council) is committed to being open and transparent in the way it conducts its decision making. For the purposes of this policy, the term 'record' refers any form of audio, visual or electronic recording. Such recording is permitted under the lawful direction of the council.
- 1.2 The council understands that some members of the public attending its meetings may not wish to be recorded and the Chair of the meeting will facilitate this by ensuring that any such request will be respected by those making a recording. Any member of the public who does not wish to be recorded should make this known to the Clerk or the Chair prior to the commencement of the meeting.

2. Guidance for recording

- 2.1 The recording and reporting on meetings of the council its committees and sub-committees is subject to the law, and it is the responsibility of those doing the recording and reporting to ensure compliance. This will include the Human Rights Act, the Data Protection Act and the laws of libel and defamation. The recording should not be edited in a way that could lead to misinterpretation or misrepresentation of the proceedings or infringement of the council's values or in a way that ridicules or shows a lack of respect for those in the recording. **In the event that we are being recorded, Hellingly Parish Council will also record the meeting.** The council would expect any recording in breach of these rules to be removed from public view.
- 2.2 The council will have no liability for material published by any other person unless it is itself undertaking the publication through its offices. The council is not liable for the actions of any person making a recording at a meeting which identifies a member of the public.
- 2.3 Anyone wishing to record a meeting should inform the Clerk before the start of the meeting. The Clerk's details are set out in the public notice and agenda of the meeting; (or in her absence, the contact will be the Chair of the parish council).

- 2.4 The recording of any person under the age of 18, or a vulnerable adult, is not permitted unless an adult responsible for them has given permission.
- 2.5 Where the press and the public are excluded from a meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, recording of that part of the meeting is not permitted.
- 2.6 A person or persons recording the council are reminded that the “Public Participation” period is not part of the formal meeting and that they should take legal advice for themselves as to their rights to make any recording during that period.
- 2.7 The council will define an area from which recording may be carried out and, if given advance notice, will strive to ensure that reasonable facilities are made available to any person wishing to record, e.g. provision of a table. However, the council should point out that the physical layout of a room may restrict the council’s ability to make any provision.
- 2.8 Recording must be overt (clearly visible) and from a static point. All those recording a meeting are requested to focus only on recording councillors, officers, those members of the public who have not requested anonymity or have not been identified as under the age of 18 or a vulnerable adult.

Anyone recording a meeting must not leave their equipment unattended.

- 2.9 The Clerk should be contacted in advance of the meeting if the recording device being used involves equipment which is larger than a smart phone, tablet or compact camera or if the person recording has other special requirements eg to move around the room to record or film from different angles (note the council’s preference for static recording). The use of lighting for filming/flash photography will usually be allowed if it is arranged via the Clerk prior to the meeting but the council will have regard to the impact of such lighting on the ability of others present to view the meeting, or for reasons of health, and may require that such lighting is not used or is reduced to a level which does not adversely affect other people. The lighting must not cause any other form of disruption.

- 2.10 Recording must be undertaken in a non-disruptive manner. Oral commentary is not permitted. Members of the public are permitted to film or record meetings to which they are permitted access in a non-disruptive manner. The use of digital and social media recording tools, for example Twitter, blogging or audio recording are allowed as long as this type of recording is carried out in a non-disruptive way and only to the extent that it does not interfere with any person's ability, even where he or she has a disability, to follow the debate.
- 2.11 The Chair of the meeting may suspend or stop a recording of a meeting if the guidance for recording is not observed. The Chair of the meeting has absolute discretion to stop or suspend recording if, in his/her opinion, continuing to do so would prejudice proceedings at the meeting or if the person recording is in breach of these rules.
- 2.12 The council may itself photograph, film, record or broadcast meetings and can retain, use or dispose of such material in accordance with its retention and disposal policies. Where a council proposes to record all its own meetings it will be bound by this policy. Copies of the recording will be available to listen to, by prior appointment during normal office hours, until they are deleted.
- 2.13 Where a council/parish meeting proposes to record all its own meetings, it will resolve how long such recordings will be kept and how members of the public may obtain copies. The council will include such recordings within its Publication Scheme.
- 2.14 The council may, at its own discretion, require members of the public who do not consent being recorded to sit separately from those who are content to be recorded. A person or persons making a recording has no right to interrupt a council/parish meeting by asking questions or making comments. The person recording has no right to ask councillors, officers or any members of the public who have been given permission to contribute orally to the meeting to repeat a statement for the purposes of the recording.
- 2.15 The minutes of council/committee meetings remain the formal record of Hellingly Parish council.

Adopted	Reviewed	Next Review
11 th May 2022	11 th MARCH 2026	MARCH 2030
