

Cambridge City Council protocol on filming, recording and photography at council meetings

Filming, recording and photography at council meetings

Before the meeting

Filming, recording and photography at council meetings¹ is allowed subject to certain restrictions and prior agreement from the chair of the meeting. Requests to film/ record/ photograph, whether from a media organisation or a member of the public, must be made to the democratic services manager [for each meeting, no less than 3 working days in advance of a meeting and no more than 2 weeks in advance of the meeting using the application form provided at least three working days before the meeting.](#)

The [application form democratic services manager will](#) advise the applicant of the following **restrictions**:

1. Any filming/ recording/ photography must take place from positions in the meeting room approved by the chair. [Filming will be from a fixed camera position in normal view \(ie. no zoom or panning the room is permitted\).](#) [Setting up This](#) must be done before the meeting starts to ensure the view of members, officers, public and media representatives is not obstructed. The time at which the filming/ recording/ photography takes place must also be approved by the chair;
2. The use of flash photography or additional lighting in connection with recording/ filming will be permitted for periods of up to two minutes. The point at which this happens during the meeting must be agreed with the chair as part of the permissions process;

~~3. The use of additional lighting in connection with recording will be treated in the same way as flash photography (this is covered in 2 above);~~

~~4.3.~~ If the chair feels the filming/ recording/ photography is disrupting the meeting in any way the operator of the equipment will be required to stop. Anyone undertaking filming/ recording/ photography must comply with any requests made by the chair of the meeting;

~~5.4.~~ The applicant must agree to ensure the film/ record/ photographs will not be edited in a way that could lead to misinterpretation of the proceedings. This includes refraining from editing the views being expressed in a way that may ridicule or show a lack of respect towards those being filmed/ recorded/ photographed;

[¹ Council, scrutiny committees, Planning Committee, Licensing Committee/sub-committee, Civic Affairs Committee and Area Committees.](#)

6.5. The applicant must agree to share the film/ recording/ photograph in its original and unedited form with the council's democratic services manager on request.

~~Having briefed the applicant the democratic services manager will invite the applicant to complete a form which will ask for provide the following details as part of the formal request to film/ record/ photograph:~~

- a. The name, organisation and contact details of the applicant making the request;
- b. What the film/ recording/ photographs will be used for;
- c. When the applicant wishes to film/ record/ photograph during the meeting;
- d. How this information will be retained;
- e. Which The name of the meeting the request refers to, the venue and the date;
- f. ~~What will be captured (which parts of the meeting, which speakers and which observers);~~

When the form ~~has been received~~ a request is received the democratic services manager will consult the chair of the meeting on the detail of the specific request. The chair will then decide whether to grant permission.

If permission to film/ record/ photograph is denied the reasons for refusal will be given and a note of the request will be made on the meeting agenda.

The democratic services team will ensure signs are put in place before the meeting starts to remind attendees that filming/ recording/ photography is by a third party and that the Council has no control over where it may appear (for example posted on the internet) and to remind the public of their right not to be filmed, recorded or photographed ~~may take place~~. Meeting agendas will also carry this message.

During the meeting

The chair will announce at the beginning of the meeting that permission to film/ record/ photograph has been requested and permitted. The chair will ask those any members of the public present whether ~~or not~~ they agree to be filmed/ recorded/ photographed and -at this point those present can choose to move. Any objections about filming can be raised with the Chair at any point, before or during the meeting.

~~This will be done on an opt-in rather than an opt-out basis to ensure individuals do not feel pressurised.~~

Anyone seated in the public area or anyone attending the meeting to speak will have the opportunity to express to the Chair at any point in the proceedings his or her wish not to be filmed/ recorded/ photographed, ~~and to be guided to seating areas away from the area being filmed/ recorded/ photographed. If a member of~~

~~the public is attending to speak at the meeting and prefers not to be filmed/ recorded/ photographed their wish will take precedence.~~

~~At all times the wishes of those who chose not to be involved will take precedence.~~
[Councillors are excluded from this provision]

The Chair can suspend filming when someone who wishes to speak does not wish to be filmed

If the chair feels the filming/ recording/ photography is disrupting the meeting in any way or any pre-meeting agreement has been breached the operator of the equipment will be required to stop.

If someone refuses to stop recording when requested to do so, the chair will ask the person to leave the meeting. If the person recording refuses to leave then the chair may adjourn the meeting or make other appropriate arrangements for the meeting to continue without disruption. These will be in line with disorderly conduct procedures set out in the constitution.

Anyone asked to leave a meeting because they have refused to comply with the chair's requests may be refused permission to ~~film/ record/ photograph~~ at future council meetings.

The chair of the meeting has a right to withdraw consent to film/ record/ photograph at any time ~~during the meeting~~.

Any decision taken by the chair on the interpretation of this protocol is final.

Media and public exclusion

The media and public may only be excluded from a meeting in respect of business relating to confidential or exempt information if a resolution is passed under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972. The media and public will be told about the nature of the exclusion relating to the business to be discussed. No filming/ recording/ photography will be permitted during this exclusion. All cameras, recording and sound equipment must be removed from the meeting room.

After the meeting

Any member of the public who wishes to comment on any recording undertaken should contact the Democratic Services Manager