



COMPTON MARTIN PARISH COUNCIL FILMING, PHOTOGRAPHING AND SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

GUIDANCE FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 (2014 SI No. 2095), which came into force on 6 August 2014, require parish councils to allow any person to film, audio record or take photographs of, and to report on, the proceedings of any part of a meeting which the public are entitled to attend by law.

The Regulations do not require parish councils to allow filming and recording of any part of a meeting where the public are excluded by reason of the confidential nature of the business or where publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest. Exclusion of the public must be authorised by a resolution of the meeting and the reason for exclusion must be stated.

The Regulations apply only to formal, decision-making meetings of the Council, a committee or a sub-committee and not to informal meetings or meetings of a working party without decision-making powers.

This guidance note sets out some general information intended to help members of the public who may be intending to report on meetings, either by recording them for simultaneous or later broadcast, or via social media. Anyone wishing to take advantage of these facilities should inform the clerk before the meeting, so that arrangements can be discussed in advance.

FILMING, PHOTOGRAPHY AND RECORDING

Compton Martin Parish Council has no objection to quiet and inconspicuous filming, photography, tweeting and blogging using a hand-held device such as a mobile phone or tablet. Oral commentary in the meeting room during a meeting is not permitted by the Regulations and may be disruptive.

The Regulations apply to councillors as they do to members of the public but councillors will wish to ensure that they are not distracted from the business of the meeting.

Members of the public who attend a meeting merely to observe it are not taking part in the proceedings and the council asks others not to film or photograph them without their consent. Children or vulnerable adults attending a meeting should not be filmed or photographed.

The council expects that film or audio recordings will not be edited before transmission in a way that misrepresents what occurred.

Filming or recording is not permitted if the effect would be to interrupt or disturb the proceedings. This means that, for example:

- Oral commentary is not permitted.
- Equipment which needs setting up must be in place when the meeting starts.
- Excessive noise, intrusive lighting, and the use of flash photography are not permitted.
- Speakers must not be asked to repeat statements for the purpose of recording.
- “Roaming” while filming or recording is not permitted – those operating equipment must stay in the area designated to them.

This list is not exhaustive. If, in the Chair’s opinion, a person filming or recording a meeting or taking photographs is interrupting proceedings or causing a disturbance, under the Council’s Standing Orders the person can be ordered to stop their activity, or to leave the meeting.

The council may itself photograph, film, record, or broadcast at its meetings and can retain use or dispose of such material in accordance with its retention and disposal policy.

Those filming and recording meetings are reminded that requirements of general law apply to their activities, for example:

- the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) may apply to personal information about living individuals including visual images;
- there may be legal liability for defamatory or offensive statements, including statements made by people being filmed that are 'published' by the person filming.

The parish council cannot advise on general law and accepts no liability for any material created by those filming, recording or photographing a meeting.