Bures Hamlet Parish Council

Policy for Recording and Use of social media at council meetings

The right to record, film and to broadcast meetings of the council meeting, its committees, sub committees and any joint committees is established under the Openness of Local Government Regulations 2014. This is in addition to the rights of the press and public to attend such meetings.

The Council supports the principles of openness and transparency in its decision making; it supports the video or audio recording by the public and press of meetings that are open to the public, for either live or subsequent broadcast. For the purpose of this policy the term “record” means any form of audio, visual or electronic recording.

At the beginning of each meeting, the Chair will make an announcement that the meeting may be filmed or recorded and will ask if anyone objects to this.

Meeting agendas will also carry this message:
Recording, including filming, audio recording, taking photographs, blogging, tweeting and using other social media websites is permitted at Council meetings which are open to the public - however, anyone wishing to do so is encouraged to make this known to the Clerk prior to the meeting.

This notice will also be on display at the meeting venue.

While those attending the meeting are deemed to have consented to the recording and broadcasting of meetings, the parish council recognises that some members of the public attending Council meetings may not wish to be recorded and their rights under the General Data Protection Regulations and the Human Rights Act must be respected. It will be the responsibility of the individual who is making the recording to ensure that they have received permission from members of the public present, or their guardians. Parish Councillors and officers acting in the public sphere should expect to be held to account for their comments and votes in such meetings. Councils should thus allow the filming of councillors and officers at meetings that are open to the public.

The right to film or record is limited to the duration of the meeting. Recording must not start until the meeting is called to order and must cease when the Chair closes the meeting. Public question time should not be considered as a part of the formal meeting. Those recording must have permission from the members of public who are speaking.

The Parish Council asks those recording the proceedings not to edit the film or recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation of the proceedings, infringe the values of the Council. The person making the recording will remain responsible for any subsequent use or misuse to which the material is put. The Parish Council may also record meetings, and any recording will be kept until the minutes of that meeting are agreed. Once agreed, the recording will be permanently deleted, and no backup will be retained.

The Parish Council is not responsible for any views expressed by the public at meetings and the public should be aware that the opinion of an individual councillor may not represent the views of the council and cannot be used to bind the council.

GUIDANCE FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

1. Filming or recording equipment cannot be left in the meeting room at times when the public is excluded and should not be left unattended at any time.
2. All recording must be clearly visible to anyone at the meeting.
3. Equipment which needs setting up must be in place when the meeting starts.
4. Oral commentary is not permitted.
5. Speakers must not be asked to repeat statements for the purpose of recording.
6. Excessive noise, intrusive lighting, and the use of flash photography are not permitted.
7. Roaming while filming or recording is not permitted – those operating equipment must stay in the public area.
8. Intrusive filming of a specific individual or individuals could be considered harassment and will not be permitted.
9. The Chair has absolute discretion to stop or suspend recording if, in his/her reasonable opinion, continuing to do so would prejudice proceedings at the meeting or if the person recording is in breach of these rules
10. **The minutes of a council meeting remain the statutory and legally binding formal record of council decisions.**

Adopted: November 2022

Reviewed :21st September 2026– next review September 2027