

RINGMER PARISH COUNCIL

FILMING, RECORDING AND REPORTING OF MEETINGS HELD IN PUBLIC

Ringmer Parish Council supports the principle of transparency and encourages filming, audio recording and taking photographs at its meetings that are open to the public. It also welcomes the use of social networking websites (such as Twitter and Facebook) and micro-blogging to communicate with people about what is happening, as it happens.

Although not required to do so, anyone intending to record any meeting of the Parish Council or its committees is encouraged to contact the Clerk.

Reasonable advance notice will enable practical arrangements to be made. The Parish Council will ensure that “reasonable facilities” to record meetings are available. It should be noted that the Chair of the meeting will have absolute discretion to terminate or suspend any recording and/or reporting if, in their opinion, it is distracting or otherwise disrupting proceedings at the meeting. Disruptive behaviour includes any action or activity which disrupts the conduct of the meeting or impedes others from being able to see, hear or film etc. the proceedings, for example:

- Excessive noise in recording or re-siting equipment during the debate/discussion,
- Intrusive lighting and use of flash photography,
- Moving to areas outside the areas designated for the public without the consent of the Chair; or
- Asking for people to repeat statements for the purposes of recording.

Termination or suspension of recording and/or reporting might also occur in other circumstances, for example where:

- the meeting is suspended; or
- The meeting agrees formally to exclude the press and public from the meeting due to the confidential/exempt nature of the business being discussed

Ringmer Parish Council expects those recording proceedings not to edit the film/audio record/photographs in a way that could lead to misinterpretation of the proceedings, or infringe the core values of the Parish Council. This includes refraining from editing any record in a way that may ridicule, or show a lack of respect towards those being photographed/filmed/recorded.

The use of flash photography or additional lighting will not be allowed unless this has been discussed in advance of the meeting and agreement reached on how it can be done without disrupting proceedings.

If a meeting needs to be recorded in the light of members of the public starting to record a meeting or made the Clerk aware of intentions to record at the beginning of each meeting, the Chair will make an announcement that the meeting may be filmed, recorded or photographed. If recording equipment is not set up in advance of the meeting, the Chair will suspend the meeting in order to set up and commence recording. In this way all attendees will be aware that proceedings may be recorded.

Written minutes of meetings, once approved by the Parish Council will remain the formal record of all decisions taken.

Recordings of Ringmer Parish Council meetings by those other than the Parish Council are the responsibility of the person making the recording in whatever form, and any breaches of the law which may result are similarly their responsibility.

The Parish Council accepts no liability whatsoever for such breaches