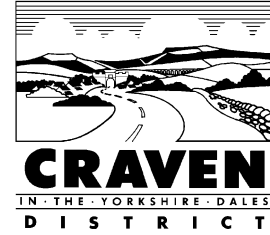


## SPECIAL POLICY COMMITTEE 18<sup>th</sup> March 2015



## AUDIO/VISUAL RECORDING MEETINGS

Report of the Corporate Head (Business Support)

Ward(s) affected: ALL

1. **Purpose of Report** – To present proposals to make audio recordings of public meetings of the Council and Committees and publish the recordings on the Council Website.
2. **Recommendations**
  - 2.1 Members are recommended to approve the audio recording of public meetings of the Council and Committees and to the publishing of the recordings on the Council Website.
  - 2.2 Recordings to commence from the Annual Meeting of the Council.
  - 2.3 The retention period of the recording be three years from the date of the meeting.
3. **Report**
  - 3.1 On the 6<sup>th</sup> August 2014 the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations came into force.
  - 3.2 These Regulations amend the Local Government Act 1972 to permit entry to all public Council meetings for the purposes of reporting and to allow the results of that reporting to be published or disseminated. 'Reporting' includes recording, filming and providing commentary on proceedings, and allows for the use of a wide range of methods including social media.
  - 3.3 Council has adopted a Protocol for Audio/Visual Recording and Photography at Meetings and this attached as Appendix A.
  - 3.4 It is proposed that following the spirit of the Regulations the Council should itself commence audio recording of public meetings of the Council and the publishing of the recordings on the Council website. The proposal would promote greater openness and could also help to protect the interests of the Council by providing a reference against which statements taken from third party recordings could be checked.

# AGENDA ITEM 5

- 3.5 A number of other authorities currently publish audio recordings of the meetings including Selby District Council locally.
- 3.6 A digital audio recorder can be linked into the existing microphone system in the Belle Vue Suite whilst separate omni-directional microphones should provide adequate sound quality in other meeting rooms.
- 3.7 It is not-proposed to record any part of the meeting to which the press and public have been excluded.
- 3.8 The proposed retention period for recordings is three years.

## 4. **Implications**

- 4.1 **Financial and Value for Money (vfm) Implications** – The cost of purchasing a suitable digital and audio recorder and associated equipment is estimated at under £400.
  - 4.2 **Legal Implications** – Councils are permitted to make and publish recordings of their meetings.
  - 4.3 **Contribution to Council Priorities** – The proposal will support the Council's priority 'Working with Communities'
  - 4.4 **Risk Management** – No significant risks have been identified.
  - 4.5 **Equality Analysis** – The proposal will improve access to Council decision making processes.
5. **Consultations with Others** – All Councillors, Democratic Services and the Development Control Manager.

6. **Access to Information: Background Documents** – Not applicable.

7. **Author of the Report** – Andrew Mather, Member Services Manager  
[amather@cravendc.gov.uk](mailto:amather@cravendc.gov.uk) 01756 706226

Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.

8. **Appendices** –  
Appendix A: Protocol for Audio/Visual Recording and Photography at Meetings.

# AGENDA ITEM 5

## Appendix A

### **Protocol on Audio/Visual Recording and Photography at Meetings**

The Council is committed to being open and transparent in the way it conducts its decision making. The Council allows recording at Council and committee and sub-committee meetings which are open to the public, subject to the recording being conducted under the direction of the Chairman of the meeting. The Council understands that some members of the public attending its meetings may not wish to be recorded. The Chairman of the meeting will facilitate this by ensuring that any such request not to be recorded is respected by those doing the recording. The rules which the Council will apply are:

1. Anyone wishing to record should contact, prior to the start of the meeting, the Democratic Services Officer whose details are set out on the Agenda.
2. The recording must be overt (i.e. clearly visible to anyone at the meeting) but non-disruptive.
3. Anyone visually recording a meeting is requested to focus only on recording councillors, officers and those members of the public speaking to the meeting.
4. Any member of the public has the right not to be recorded. Agendas for meetings will make it clear that recording can take place. If any member of the public speaking at the meeting does not wish to be recorded, they must let the Chairman of the meeting know.
5. Any children or young people under the age of 18 who are present at the meeting are not to be filmed unless their parents/guardians have given their written consent.
6. The Chairman of the meeting has the 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. The circumstances in which this might occur include:
  - recording is disrupting the proceedings of the meeting;
  - there is a public disturbance or a suspension of the meeting;
  - the meeting has resolved to exclude the public for reasons which are set down in the Council's constitution;
  - a member of the public participating in the meeting objects to being recorded;
  - where it is considered that continued recording may infringe the rights of any individual.
7. 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 with the law. This will include the Human Rights Act, the Data Protection Act and the laws of libel

## AGENDA ITEM 5

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. The Council would expect any recording in breach of these rules to be removed from public view. The Council will have no liability for material published by any other person unless it is itself undertaking the publication through its offices.

A failure to follow these rules may lead to a request to record being refused at subsequent meetings of the Council, its committees and sub-committees. Please contact, in advance of the meeting, the Democratic Services Officer whose details are set out on the Agenda if the recording you wish to do involves equipment which is larger than a smart phone, tablet or compact camera or if you have special requirements .