

SWALLOWFIELD PARISH COUNCIL



POLICY ON FILMING, RECORDING & REPORTING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

*Adopted at the
Parish Council Meeting held on
8th April 2025*

REVISION HISTORY

Revisions

8 th April 2025	First adopted
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1 INTRODUCTION

The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 (2014 SI 20195), 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 etc of any part of the 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 policy applies 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 and the Parish Council has resolved that Councillors will not interact with social media when attending Council meetings.

2 ARRANGEMENTS PRIOR TO A MEETING

- 2.1 It would be appreciated if requests to take photographs or to record meetings, either by members of the public or by the media, were, wherever possible, made to the Parish Clerk before the meeting. Contact details below.
- 2.2 Any photography or recording will take place from a fixed position in the meeting room so as to reduce disruption to the proceedings and any equipment required should be set up before the meeting starts.
- 2.3 It would be helpful for the request to include the following information:
 - Which meeting is to be attended
 - The name, organisation (if applicable) and contact details of the person making the request
 - What equipment it is intended will be used to determine what facilities might be required

3 PROCEDURES AT A MEETING

- 3.1 The Chair will ask if anyone is recording the meeting.
- 3.2 The Chair will determine whether any reporting activity is disrupting the meeting in any way or is not respecting the public's right to privacy and, as a consequence, may ask an individual to cease their activity.

- 3.3 Swallowfield Parish Council has no objection to quiet inconspicuous filming, photography, tweeting and blogging using 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 as it is likely to be disruptive.
- 3.4 Members of the public who attend a meeting as an observer and are not taking part in the proceedings should not be photographed, filmed or recorded without the consent of the individuals concerned.
- 3.5 If during the meeting a motion is passed to exclude the press and the public, because confidential or exempt information is likely to be disclosed, then all rights to record the meeting are removed and the operator of the equipment will be required to stop.
- 3.6 If a meeting is adjourned by the Chair then the operator of the equipment will be required to stop at the point of adjournment.
- 3.7 Photographs, audio and visual recordings should not be edited in a way that could lead to misinterpretation of the proceedings. This includes refraining from editing the views being recorded in a way that may ridicule or show lack of respect.
- 3.8 Anyone acting in a disruptive manner will be asked by the Chair to stop doing so and if they continue will be asked to leave. Government guidance gives the following examples of disruptive activity:
- Moving to areas outside the areas designated for the public without the consent of the Chair
 - Excessive noise in recording or setting up or re-siting equipment during the meeting
 - Intrusive lighting and use of flash photography
 - Asking people to repeat statements for the purposes of recording
- 3.9 Those filming etc are reminded that requirements of general law apply to their activities for example
- The requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 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 reporting at its meetings.

Contact:

Parish Clerk, clerk@swallowfieldpc.gov.uk, 0118 988 5929