**Proposal**

PROTOCOL of RECORDING, FILMING, PHOTOGRAPHING OF PUBLIC PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

This policy is for consideration of the Terrington St John Parish Council for the Protocol on the filming and recording of Terrington St John Parish Council and Committee Meetings

**1. Background**

The right to record, film and to broadcast meetings of Local Councils, committees and sub committees was established following the Local Government Audit and Accountability Act 2014. The “Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014” became active legislation in August 2014. This is in addition to the rights of the press and public to attend such meetings.

This documents sets out the protocol for the filming or recording of the meetings of Terrington St John Parish Council.

**2. Introduction**

2.1 Whilst no prior permission is required to carry out this activity the Parish Council encourages any person wishing to do so to advise the Clerk one week in advance of any meeting published date. The Parish Council will make available on request requirements as to filming, recording and broadcasting in its meeting rooms or venues and those undertaking these activities will be deemed to have accepted them whether they have read them or not.

2.2 Those wishing to carry out these activities are required to respect the facilities made available to them to avoid disruption at the meeting.

2.3 Persons taking part in the public participation section, excluding children and vulnerable adults as indicated above, may be filmed, recorded or photographed or otherwise reported whether they are in a designated area or not. However the Parish Council requests that the wishes of the public who do not wish to be filmed or photographed are respected. Written consent is required from the parent/guardian of children under 18 and vulnerable adults for their protection.

2.4 The Parish Council requests that any recording, filming or otherwise is undertaken in an open and overt manner so that it is clearly visible to anyone attending the meeting.

The public or press undertaking these activities must not act in a disruptive manner.

2.5 The Chair of the meeting has the absolute authority to stop or suspend the meeting and take appropriate action if any person contravenes these principles or is deemed to be using a device in a disruptive manner.

**3. Reporting and commentary**

Reports of a meeting may be via any social media.

3.1 A person can provide written commentary during a meeting, as well as oral commentary outside or after a meeting. However, oral commentary is not permitted during a meeting as it would be disruptive to the good order of the meeting.

3.2 The majority of the Parish Council’s meetings are open to the public. However, where it is agreed to formally exclude the press and public from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed the meeting cannot be recorded. You are not permitted to leave recording equipment in a room where a private meeting is being held.

3.3 The Parish Council may itself photograph, film, record or broadcasting at its meetings and can retain, use or dispose of such material in accordance with it retention and disposal policies.

**4. Disruption**

4.1 The use of social media should be carried out in a non-disruptive manner and only to the extent that it does not interfere with that person’s ability or that of others to follow the debate or discussion. If anyone undertaking these activities acts in a disruptive manner it could result in being excluded from the meeting.

Examples can include:

4.1.1 Moving outside any designated area without the consent of the Chairman

4.1.2 Excessive noise in recording, setting up or placing equipment during debate or discussion

* + 1. Intrusive lighting and use of flash photography

4.1.4 No trailing cables or plugging in to sockets of electrical equipment will be permitted.

* + 1. Interruption of the meeting or asking people to repeat statements for the recording.
    2. There are limits on recording or what people say. The ‘law of the land’ applies, including the law of defamation and the law of public order offences apply.
    3. Freedom of speech within the law should also be exercised with personal and social responsibility, showing respect and tolerance towards the views of others.
    4. The Parish Council expects that those recording proceedings do not edit a recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation of the proceedings or infringe the core values of the Council. This includes refraining from editing an image or views expressed in a way that may ridicule or show a lack of respect towards those being filmed or recorded.

**5. Recommendations**

5.1 The Council encourages anyone wishing to film, record, photograph or broadcast meetings to read the guide to Open and Accountable Local Government- produced by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

5.2 Children and vulnerable adults are not to be filmed, recorded or photographed or otherwise reported about where the relevant responsible adult has not given consent (which in the case of a vulnerable adult is a medical professional, their carer or legal guardian, and in the case of a child, their parent, legal guardian or teacher).

5.3 Part of the public area will be used, if required, for children and vulnerable adults or those public attending who do not wish to be filmed, however, this is within the limitation of the Council Chamber and its layout.

5.4 Persons filming meetings etc. are likely to record personal data of individuals. These persons must take care to ensure that personal data is used in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

6. **Responsibilities**

6.1 The policy is intended to clarify the requirements of the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 for the benefit of employees, Councillors, members of the public and members of the press.

6.2 The Chairman of the Council or Committee meetings will be responsible for its implementation and deal with any disruption associated which disrupts the conduct of meetings or impedes other members of the public being able to see, hear or film, audit record, take photographs and use social media such as tweeting and blogging.

6.3 The Chairman of the Council or Committee will remind those present at the meeting of this Policy. In particular, reminding individuals who wish to film to avoid those who have expressed a wish not to be filmed or children or vulnerable adults without the express permission of the parent or responsible adult.

**7. Disorderly Conduct at meetings**

7.1 The right of the Parish Council to exclude the press and public from parts of Council meetings for confidentiality reasons remains unaffected.

7.1 Members of the public are permitted to film or record Council meetings, to which they are permitted access, in a non-disruptive manner. The Chairman of the meeting has the authority to stop a meeting and take appropriate action if any person contravenes these principles or is deemed to be recording in a disruptive manner.

7.1 The use of digital and social media recording tools, for example Twitter, blogging or audio recording be allowed as long as it is carried out in a non-disruptive way and only to the extent that it does not interfere with any person’s ability, including where he or she has a disability, to follow the debate. Failure to do so will be deemed as ‘Disorderly Conduct’.

8. **Enforcement of the policy.**

8.1 Enforcement of the policy will be undertaken by the Chairman of the Council or Committee meeting as appropriate. Behaviour deemed to be disruptive will be dealt with under ‘Disorderly Conduct at meetings’

8.2 Any person or organisation choosing to film, record or broadcast a meeting of the Council or a committee is responsible for any claims or other liability from them so doing.

Recommended by

Colin Clifton - Chair of Terrington St John Parish Council

May 18th