

Webcasting Procedure

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Contents

| | | |
|----|---|---|
| 1 | Purpose | 3 |
| 2 | Applicability..... | 3 |
| 3 | Roles and responsibilities..... | 3 |
| 4 | Room preparation..... | 4 |
| 5 | Training..... | 4 |
| 6 | How to request that a meeting is webcast..... | 4 |
| 7 | Notification, consent, minutes, etc..... | 4 |
| 8 | Guidance for Chairmen | 5 |
| 9 | Guidance for participants..... | 5 |
| 10 | Terminating a webcast | 6 |
| 11 | Publication, storage and retention | 6 |
| 12 | Copyright | 6 |

1 Purpose

- 1.1 A webcast is a live or recorded transmission of a video on the internet. It is not edited prior to broadcast and can be viewed by anyone with access to the internet, both during the live broadcast and for as long as it is available.
- 1.2 Webcasting has been introduced by the Council to broadcast meetings of particular public interest. This is of significance to Councillors as there is a potential for the public to be more widely involved in the democratic process, and for the business of the Council to be made more transparent. It also means that the actions, opinions and positions taken by Councillors may be more closely scrutinised by the public.
- 1.3 The purpose of this procedure is to outline the process for choosing which meetings are webcast and to offer guidance to those involved.

2 Applicability

- 2.1 This procedure applies to requests from officers and Councillors to webcast any public meeting. It is anticipated that such requests will most usually be in respect of the following:
 - Council;
 - Executive;
 - Planning Committees;
 - Licensing Committee and Sub-Committees.
- 2.2 Resources must be allocated effectively and a request to webcast a meeting will only be agreed where the cost of doing so is considered to be justified by the likely public interest.
- 2.3 This procedure does not apply to requests to webcast private meetings or conferences. Anyone wishing to webcast a private meeting will need to make their own arrangements to do so.

3 Roles and responsibilities

- 3.1 References to specific officers or Councillors include deputies, staff acting on their behalf/instruction, etc, as the context requires.
- 3.2 The Head of Strategic Support has overall responsibility for ensuring that webcasting is managed appropriately in accordance with this procedure.
- 3.3 The Democratic and Electoral Services Manager is responsible for the day-to-day management of this procedure.
- 3.4 All officers and Councillors are responsible for familiarising themselves, and ensuring that they comply, with this procedure.

4 Room preparation

The Council's webcasts are managed in-house and officers will be responsible for installing and operating computer, camera and microphone equipment for the meeting. (This can only be where the location has suitable internet capability.)

5 Training

Appropriate training will be offered from time to time.

6 How to request that a meeting is webcast

6.1 A request to webcast a meeting must be made by email to the Head of Strategic Support by no later than 17:00 at least three clear working days before the meeting (ie excluding the date of the request and the date of the meeting).

6.2 The person requesting the webcast must be able to demonstrate that there is sufficient public interest to justify webcasting the meeting, for example because an item:

- has a significant level of objection and/or support;
- is subject to a petition;
- is subject to extensive media coverage (including social media).

6.3 The Head of Strategic Support will consult with the Leader of the Council, the Opposition Leader and the Chairman of the relevant committee in deciding whether the meeting should be webcast.

7 Notification, consent, minutes, etc

7.1 All meeting notices will contain a paragraph to the effect that the Council webcasts certain meetings and that the meeting in question might be webcast, in which event speakers will normally be videoed, but may ask not to be videoed (although their contribution will always be audio recorded).

7.2 The Head of Strategic Support will notify all known participants that the meeting in question is to be webcast, and publish an appropriate notification to the public, as soon as possible and in any event at least one working day before the meeting.

7.3 The Chairman of the committee will make an announcement at the commencement of the meeting that it is being webcast and will also be available for future viewings. Meeting participants will be able to request that they are not videoed (although all participants will be audio recorded), and will be deemed to have agreed to consent to be videoed and to the future use of the video if they are present and do not object.

7.4 Posters will be displayed in the meeting venue to inform attendees that the meeting is being webcast.

7.5 No exempt or confidential agenda items should be broadcast.

7.6 The agreed written minutes of a meeting remain its official record.

7.7 All other rules of procedure as outlined in the Council's Constitution apply.

8 Guidance for Chairmen

Chairmen should:

- remind everyone at the outset that the meeting is being broadcast and will be available subsequently on the internet;
- remind any participant (for example an interested party registered to address a planning committee) that they will be videoed, and give them the opportunity to request that they are not;
- make clear the different elements of the agenda, such as what is for information or a decision, or a vote;
- where the webcast will be suspended for exempt or confidential items, explain when and why this will happen;
- consider explaining some meeting procedures if these might not be obvious to viewers;
- consider introducing speakers more fully and formally than usual so that viewers know who they are and what role they play in the proceedings;
- if a participant says something inappropriate, offensive, defamatory, etc, immediately ask them to apologise.

9 Guidance for participants

9.1 Officers and Councillors are reminded that must comply with relevant Codes of Conduct.

9.2 Participants should be mindful of public perception of their demeanour:

- moving or fidgeting whilst speaking can reduce the picture quality and it may be hard for the camera to follow;
- bending over to speak into a microphone looks awkward on screen and is unnecessary, so sit or stand normally (as appropriate), speaking clearly such that the microphone can pick your voice up;
- make sure that you turn your microphone on before speaking and off when you have finished;
- don't watch the broadcast live on your own equipment as this may create sound interference;
- be aware that your own equipment may appear on camera, so be mindful of what you display on its screen;
- be aware of the range of the camera view – moving, talking with colleagues, etc, can be distracting (particularly if you are adjacent to or behind someone who is speaking) - it is safest to assume that you are in vision at all times;

- be direct, to the point and as brief as possible;
- you may have to be more clear about some of the information that you give so that it is clear to a lay person what you are doing and why you are doing it - avoid jargon and 'council speak';
- heckling doesn't work well on a webcast as it is usually only the Chairman and the Councillor who has the floor who can be seen and heard - other comments are often unintelligible as they are off microphone.

10 Terminating a webcast

The Chairman of the meeting has the discretion to terminate or suspend the webcast if, in his/her opinion, continuing to broadcast would prejudice the proceedings of the meeting. For example:

- if the meeting is suspended due to a public disturbance;
- at the point when it has been agreed that the public and press are to be excluded;
- when the Chairman and committee agree that further webcasting would prejudice the proceedings of the meeting.

11 Publication, storage and retention

11.1 The Council will use YouTube or similar channel to host its webcasts.

11.2 The Council will embed and provide a link to the video of all new webcasts via a custom webpage on its website. This webpage will be available for the webcast to be live streamed and will be available for three months, after which it will be removed.

11.3 The webcast will continue to be available on its YouTube or like channel at the discretion of the Communications Manager.

11.4 The Council will also provide a link to its webcasts in its archive of committee meetings indefinitely (as provided by mod.gov) at the discretion of the Communications Manager.

12 Copyright

The Council is the author of the webcast whether live or archived and owns the copyright. Any person, including a Councillor, who wishes to use it they must first obtain the permission of the Council – for assistance, it is unlikely that the Council would refuse permission if the broadcast is to be used for legitimate and positive purposes such as information or training. (Nb websites such as YouTube and Vimeo state in their terms and conditions that you must be the copyright owner and have the permission of all those involved in order to upload videos to their sites.)