

SOUTHOE AND MIDLOE PARISH COUNCIL

Filming, Photography and Recording at Parish Council Meetings

The Parish Council supports the principles of openness and transparency in its decision-making and permits filming, recording and the taking of photographs at its meetings open to the public. It also welcomes the use of social media (such as Twitter, Facebook and YouTube) to communicate with people about what is happening at meetings.

Whilst no prior permission is required to carry out these activities, as a courtesy and to enable members of the public to be fully informed, anyone proposing to film, record or take photographs of a formal meeting of the Parish Council is requested to advise the Chairman before the start of the meeting and to provide their name and contact details.

The Chairman will have absolute discretion to terminate or suspend any of these activities, if, in their opinion, continuing to do so would prejudice the effective operation of the meeting. The circumstances, in which termination or suspension might occur, could include –

- public disturbance of the meeting or persons undertaking the activities acting in a disruptive manner¹;
- when it is necessary to formally exclude the press and public from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business being discussed; and
- where it is considered that continued recording/photography/filming might impact upon the Parish Council's duty to protect children, the vulnerable and other members of the public who actively object to being filmed, without undermining the broad transparency of the meeting.

In allowing this, the Parish Council expects those recording proceedings –

- (i) not to edit the film/record/photographs in a way that could lead to a misinterpretation or misrepresentation of the proceedings. 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 photographed/filmed/recorded;
- (ii) to comply with the request of any member of the public not to be filmed, recorded or photographed; and
- (iii) not to provide an oral commentary during the meeting as this would be disruptive to the good order of the meeting.

If intending to bring large equipment or wishing to discuss any special requirements please contact the Chairman in advance of the meeting in order, where possible, for any necessary arrangements or adjustments to be made. The Chairman may direct that audio/visual recording or photography must only take place from a specific location in the meeting room.

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 to ensure the meeting will not be unduly disrupted.

¹ Disruptive behaviour is defined as any action or activity which disrupts the conduct of meetings or impedes other members of the public being able to see, hear or film the proceedings.