



ALTON TOWN COUNCIL RECORDING OF MEETINGS POLICY

Policy Adopted: 5th June 2024

Review due: June 2026

Alton Town Council is committed to being open and transparent in the way that it conducts its decision making.

The right to record, film and to broadcast meetings of Alton Town Council was established under the [The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#). This is in addition to the rights of the Press and public to attend such meetings.

Recording, including filming, audio recording, taking photographs, blogging, tweeting, and using other social media is permitted at any Town Council meeting which is open to the public provided that the Chair of the meeting does not consider that there is disruption to the proceedings of the meeting and subject to the following procedure.

The approved minutes of the council remain the formal record of meeting proceedings and are available via the council's website at [Meetings & Minutes – Alton Town Council](#) or by contacting the council's offices by the following means:

Email: info@alton.gov.uk

Telephone: 01420 83986

Address: Town Hall, Market Square, Alton, GU34 1HD

Procedure

Anyone wishing to record a meeting is requested to let the Chairman of the meeting know prior to, or at the start of, the meeting. The recording should be overt (i.e. clearly visible to anyone at the meeting) and must take place from a fixed position in the meeting room approved by the Chair of the meeting to reduce disruption to the proceedings.

At the beginning of any meeting being filmed, the Chair of the meeting will make an announcement to that effect and the Council will ensure that signage at Council meetings makes it clear that recording can take place. If anyone speaking at the meeting does not wish to be recorded, they should let the Chairman of the meeting know. Councillors cannot refuse to be captured within recordings. This is because they hold public office and are required to be seen and heard during proceedings.

Councillors have a right to record the proceedings themselves and while doing so shall adhere to the procedures set out in this document in conjunction with the council's standing orders.

Anyone visually recording a meeting must only focus on recording Councillors, officers and the public who are directly involved in the conduct of the meeting. People seated in the public area should not be photographed, filmed or recorded without the consent of the individuals concerned. Any children or vulnerable persons present at the meeting must not be filmed unless they and their

parents/guardians/carers have given their consent. Any request made by the Chairman regarding respecting the public's right to privacy must be complied with.

Any person wishing to record Council meetings will be responsible for ensuring that any cabling, or electrical equipment they use has been properly tested and installed and adheres to health and safety requirements. The Council will not be held liable for any injuries to the individual or members of the public caused by the recording of its meetings.

The Chairman of the meeting has absolute discretion to request that a person stop or suspend recording if, in the Chairman's opinion, continuing to do so would prejudice proceedings at the meeting or if:

- recording is disrupting the proceedings of the meeting
- there is public disturbance or a suspension of the meeting
- the meeting has resolved to exclude the public and press due to the confidential or sensitive nature of the business to be discussed
- the person filming is moving around while recording
- the Chair of the meeting considers that a defamatory statement has been made
- individuals are requested to repeat statements for the benefit of a recording
- it is considered that the recording infringes upon the rights of any individual who has made a specific request to the Chair of the meeting that they do not consent to being recorded

Should a person recording not comply with any request to cease, the council has the right to take whatever action they deem necessary in accordance with the council's standing orders. This may include removing the person concerned from the meeting or adjourning the meeting to another time.

All devices must be kept on silent for the duration of the meeting. Recording equipment must not be left unattended at meetings. The Council cannot accept liability for any equipment that is lost, stolen or damaged at its public meetings.

The recording must not be edited in any 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.

If the Council resolves to discuss confidential information, and the public and press are excluded from the meeting, all recording equipment must be removed immediately from the room.

The use of flash photography or additional lighting will not be allowed unless this has been discussed with the Clerk in advance of the meeting and agreement reached on how it can be done without disrupting proceedings.

Guidance Notes

The Parish Clerk should be contacted prior to the meeting if the recording involves large equipment or special requirements.

Recording and reporting the Council's meetings is subject to the law and it is the responsibility of those who undertake the recording and reporting to ensure compliance. This will include the Human Rights Act, the Data Protection Act, the Public Order Act Part III (1986 as amended), the Equality Act 2010, the laws of libel and defamation and any subsequent legislation or regulations.

The Council may itself photograph, film, record or broadcast its meetings and may retain, use or dispose of such material in accordance with its retention and disposal policies.