GLASTONBURY
TOWN COUNCIL

Recording of Meetings Policy

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Table of Contents

1. Introduction 3

2. Scope 3

3. Aims 4

4. Recordings by the Council 4

5. Recordings by any other person or body 6

1. Introduction

i. Glastonbury Town Council is committed to the principles of openness and transparency and encourages members of the public to attend all meetings of the council, its committees, and sub-committees.

ii. It therefore supports the rights to record, film and to broadcast meetings of the Town Council as established under the Openness of Local Government Regulations 2014.

2. Scope

i. For the purpose of this policy the term “record” means any form of audio, visual or electronic recording.

ii. This policy is applicable to meetings of this Council and its committees in line with Standing Order 3L.

iii. This policy is also applicable to the Council’s sub-committees.

iv. This policy is applicable to advisory committees, and working groups only where the Chair of the meeting agrees to its proceedings being recorded. There is no lawful right to record these meetings, which are not “public meetings” in law as they do not make decisions, but only undertake research and make recommendations.

v. This policy applies to the live streaming, recording, storage and distribution of recorded meetings held in the Council Chamber or elsewhere.

vi. This policy applies to all persons attending Town Council Meetings including Councillors, staff, invited speakers, observers, presenters, and members of the public – both as visitors in the public gallery and as contributors to the meeting.

vii. Although there is a statutory right to photograph and record Council meetings, the proceedings of that meeting must not be disrupted by the use of media tools and must not inhibit community involvement in the proceedings.

viii. Where the press and public are excluded from a meeting or part of a meeting owing to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, recording of that meeting or that part of the meeting will not be permitted.

ix. The adopted Minutes of the Public Council Meetings remain the official record of the meeting. The live streaming and recordings are to promote broader access to meetings only and for information purposes only.

3. Aims

i. This policy aims to provide guidance for the live streaming and transparent management of recordings of Council meetings by both members of the public and the Council itself.

4. Recordings by the Council

i. Town Council Meetings are usually held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Glastonbury.

ii. Town Council Meetings will be live-streamed/recorded, when the technology allows, and can be viewed on the Town Council's YouTube Channel.

iii. It is the intent that the camera position will only provide vision of the Chair, Deputy Chair, Councillors, designated staff, and presenters/speakers who are present at the meeting.

iv. It is not intended that there be either live or recorded footage of the public, however, there may be incidental capture. Members of the public should inform the Clerk if they do not wish to be filmed so they can be directed where to sit out of the camera view.

v. Presenters and Members of the Public who address Council shall be live-streamed and recorded.

vi. To ensure those present at Town Council Meetings are aware that Council Meetings will be live-streamed and recorded, at the commencement of each meeting the Chair shall notify those present, including members of the public, that the meeting is being live-streamed and recorded in accordance with this policy.

vii. Town Council Staff shall be responsible for the operation of the live streaming and recording equipment.

viii. The Chair has the discretion and authority at any time to direct the termination or interruption of the live-streaming and recording of the meeting if he or she considers it prudent or advisable to do so.

ix. Opinions and statements expressed and made during a Town Council Meeting are those of the individuals making them.

x. Glastonbury Town Council does not accept any responsibility for any verbal statements made by the public during meetings which may be inaccurate, incorrect, or defamatory.

xi. This policy does not extend to confidential meetings closed to the public, Confidential Meetings shall not be live-streamed or recorded. Should a meeting be adjourned for a confidential session, a motion of Council is required.

xii. The Town Council will make every reasonable effort to ensure that a live stream and recording is available. There may be situations where due to technical difficulties the live streaming and recording will not be available. If such circumstances occur, the Chair shall advise those present that live streaming and recording is not available. In the event the technical difficulties are not identified during the meeting, this information will be displayed on the Town Council's website and/or the Town's social media venues for notification.

xiii. Viewing live streaming or recordings of Council Meetings over the internet consumes data. The user is responsible for any charges that a service provider may impose for data usage, particularly over a mobile internet connection. Council does not accept any responsibility or liability for any loss, damage, cost or expense that may be incurred as a result of viewing live streaming or recording of Council Meetings.

xiv. Live streams and recordings of Council Meetings are the property of Glastonbury Town Council and cannot be reused or reproduced without the approval of the Town Clerk. If requested, permission may be granted to produce or reproduce the recordings posted on YouTube, provided that the copied material is not modified or altered and

ownership of the material is attributed to Glastonbury Town Council.

xv. The Chair of the meeting has the discretion to request the termination or suspension of the recording if continuing to record would prejudice the proceedings of the meeting. This would include:

- Public disturbance, disruption, or suspension of the meeting.
- The meeting agreeing to formally exclude the press and public from the meeting due to the exempt/confidential nature of the business being discussed, in accordance with statutory procedures.
- For any other reason which the Chair considers reasonable in the circumstances.

xvi. Recordings may be removed from the Council's YouTube Channel before the minimum retention period if it is deemed all or part of the content of the recording is, or is likely to be, in breach of any statutory provision or common law rule, for example: Data Protection and/or Human Rights legislation or provisions relating to confidential or exempt information. It is anticipated, however, that meetings will be conducted lawfully and that the need to remove recordings will occur only on an exceptional basis.

5. Recordings by any other person or body

i. The recording and reporting on meetings of the Town Council is subject to the law and it is the responsibility of those doing the recording and reporting to ensure compliance. This will include the Human Rights Act 1998, the UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the laws of libel and defamation.

ii. The Council expects that the recording will not be edited in a way that could lead to misinterpretation or misrepresentation of the proceedings or infringement of the Town Council's values or in a way that ridicules or shows a lack of respect for those in the recording.

iii. The Town Council will require any recording in breach of these rules to be removed from public view.

iv. There is a lawful right to record meetings of the Council, its committees, and its subcommittees. However, there is no such lawful right to record meetings of advisory committees nor working groups. Recording of these meetings, which are not considered "public" as they do not make decisions, shall be at the discretion of the Chair of the meeting. Their decision shall take into account the topic being discussed, the views of the members of the advisory committee or working group, and the impact on the meeting of a recording taking place. Their decision is final and there is no right of appeal.

v. The Town Council will have no liability for material published by any other person unless it is itself undertaking the publication through its offices.

vi. The specific filming of children or young people under the age of 18 who are present cannot take place unless their parents/guardians have given their written consent. This provision also applies to vulnerable adults whereby the consent of a responsible adult is required, i.e. a medical professional, carer, or legal guardian. Where the permission is given, filming of these people can take place.

vii. People seated in the public seating area should not be photographed, filmed or recorded without the consent of the individuals concerned.

viii. Use must not be made of an image or recording if consent is refused by a member of the public featured in that recording or image.

ix. All those filming a meeting must only focus on recording Councillors, officers, and the public who are directly involved in the conduct of the meeting.

x. The Town Council is not liable for the actions of any person making a recording at a Council meeting which identifies a member of the public or for any publication of that recording.

xi. A person or persons making a recording has no right to interrupt a Council/Committee meeting by asking questions or making comments for the purpose of the recording or any other purpose.

xii. A person or persons recording has no right to ask Councillors, officers, or any members of the public who have been given permission to contribute orally to the meeting to repeat a statement for the purposes of the recording.

xiii. The Chair of the meeting has absolute discretion to stop or suspend recording if, in his/her reasonable opinion, continuing to do so would prejudice proceedings at the meeting or if the person recording is in breach of these rules.

xiv. If the Clerk of the meeting feels that any photography, audio or visual recording is disrupting the meeting in any way then the operator of the equipment will stop.

xv. If use continues the Chair or Clerk will ask the person to leave the meeting. If the person refuses to leave then the Chair may adjourn the meeting or make other appropriate arrangements for the meeting to continue without disruption. If a meeting is adjourned by the Chair then the operator of the equipment should stop any recording or photography at the point at which the meeting is adjourned.

xvi. If during the meeting, a motion is passed to exclude the press and public, on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the general interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, then all rights to record the meeting are removed and the operator of the equipment will be required to stop recording and /or photography.

xvii. Regarding filming Officers of the Council, the Council is obliged to comply with the Health and Safety Regulations to provide a safe workplace. If the Council received a complaint from their employees that the recordings were being used to harass or threaten staff (or Members) then the Council may take action by warning those recording, not allow recording, and potentially involve the Police.