

Protocol for webcasting of formal council meetings

Webcasting of public council and committee meetings

Introduction

The City of Wolverhampton Council is committed to involving local residents in decision making, however some residents may sometimes not be able to attend the meetings they are interested in. To ensure that those residents can still get involved, the Council films and streams, live, many of its meetings ('webcasting'). These can then be watched online as the meeting happens or up to six months after the meeting (after 6 months, a recording of the webcast can be ordered via Democratic Services).

How do we webcast and how long will the recording be available?

Fixed cameras are located in the Council Chamber and in Committee Room 3 at the Civic Offices to provide the webcasting facility.

The webcast of any of the meetings will be available on the Council's website for a period of 6 months and, after that, copies of recordings may be available upon request.

Are there any meetings or parts of meetings which the Council may not webcast?

The City of Wolverhampton Council wants to make sure meetings are webcast as far as possible to ensure full engagement with the public. However, there are instances where it may not be appropriate to webcast a meeting or parts thereof, for example:

- **When an individual, who is presenting at a public meeting, specifically requests not to appear on the public webcast, and we agree with the request.** We will always seek to accommodate such requests and work with that individual to agree an approach that is satisfactory to all parties. Any such part of a meeting that has not been broadcast will not appear online or be available following the meeting. If you are watching from home, you will see a notice appearing on the screen to let viewers know what is happening.
- **In considering whether or not to record contributions by children at meetings** the Council will, for those aged 16 or over check with the young people themselves that they are content to be filmed and, subject to that, record and broadcast them. For children younger than 16, or those who are otherwise thought vulnerable, we will record only with the consent of the appropriate parent or guardian. If we are in any doubt we will stop the webcast whilst children are speaking.
- **When Councillors at a meeting pass a resolution to exclude the press and public because there is likely to be disclosure of exempt or confidential information.** This will happen in situations where national rules allow the Council to exclude the press and public. You will be notified if

watching from home that the webcasting has ceased for this part of the meeting and why. The Council will only do this if they have good reason as it will always try to conduct its business in public.

- **Signage of webcasting and other filming and recording at meetings**

Agendas relating to those meetings that The City of Wolverhampton Council webcasts include a statement to alert the public to the webcast as well as the rights of the public generally to film, record, photograph and use social media to report from the proceedings, as follows:

WEBCASTING NOTICE

- This meeting will be filmed by the Council for live and/or subsequent broadcast on the Council's website. The whole of the meeting will be filmed, except where there are confidential or exempt items, and the footage will be on the website for 6 months. A copy of it will also be retained in accordance with the Council's data retention policy.
- If you make a representation to the meeting, unless you have specifically asked not to appear on the webcast, you are taking positive action to confirm that you consent to being filmed. You have been made aware of the broadcast and entering the Council Chamber or meeting room you are also consenting to being filmed by The City of Wolverhampton Council and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purposes.
- If you do not wish to have your image captured, you should sit in the public gallery area.
- In addition, the Council is obliged by law to allow members of the public to take photographs, film, audio-record, blog or tweet the proceedings at public meetings. The Council will only seek to prevent this should it be undertaken in a disruptive or otherwise inappropriate manner.
- If you have any queries regarding webcasting or the recording of meetings by the public, please contact Democratic Services on 01902 555046.

The Role of the Chair

The Chair of the meeting will make an announcement at the beginning of the meeting to make sure everyone understands that the meeting will be webcast and that they may also be filmed by others in the Chamber.

The Chair of the meeting has the discretion to request the termination or suspension of the webcast if continuing to webcast would prejudice the proceedings of the meeting.

This would include:

- a. Public disturbance or other suspension of the meeting;
- b. Exclusion of public and press being moved and supported;
- c. Any other reason supported by the Council/Committee.

Archived webcasts or parts of webcasts shall only be removed from the Council's website if the Borough Solicitor considers that it is necessary because all or part of the content of the webcast 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 exercise this power will occur only on an exceptional basis.

Any elected Member who is concerned about any webcast should raise their concerns with the Scrutiny and Systems Manager.

Note: This protocol is provided to assist in the conduct of webcasting and to ensure compliance with the Council's obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018, the General Data Protection Regulation, and the Human Rights Act 1998.