

The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014

The Government brought into force The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 effective from 1 August 2014.

The Regulations cover the following 3 main topics:

- Filming and recording of Council Meetings;
- Publicising decisions made under delegated powers;
- Notices, Agendas, Documents and Minutes on the internet.

The most high profile aspect of the Regulations relate to the requirement to allow the filming and recording of meetings. However the other aspects will have implications for the way that the Council operates. A more detailed description of the amendments and proposals for alteration of the Constitution are included in the appendix

The additional work contained in the Regulations should be able to be contained within present resources.

Recommendation

Council is asked to RESOLVE that the amendments to the Constitution, as detailed in the appendix, be adopted.

Background papers

Nil

Affording reasonable facilities for and allowing reporting

1. Any person will be permitted to report on a public meeting of the Council

1.1. Reporting includes:

1.1.1 Filming, photographing and audio recording of proceedings at a public meeting

1.1.2 Use any other means necessary to enable people not present to see or hear proceedings of the meetings

1.1.3 This does not permit any person to provide an on-going audio commentary while the meeting is on-going.

1.2. The Standing Orders in relation to disrupting a meeting apply and in particular there should be no flash photography, requests made during the meeting that people speak up for the purposes of the recording, requests for comments previously made to be repeated for the purposes of the recording; this list is non-exclusive and in addition to the other provisions in relation to the disrupting of meetings and in no way fetters the chairs discretion to determine if behaviour is disrupting a meeting of the Council.

2. Record of Decisions

Where a decision has been delegated to an officer:

Under a specific express authorisation

Under a general delegation and the effect of the decision is to:

Grant a permission or a licence

Effect the rights of an individual

Award a contract or incur expenditure which will materially affect the financial position of the Council

A contract or expenditure will have a material impact on the financial position of the Council where it is in excess of £60,000

Any record of these decisions will include:

The date of the decision

The reasons for the decision

Details of alternative options considered and rejected; and

Where the decision is made under and express authorisation the name of any member who has declared a conflict of interest in relation to the decision.

3. Decision and Background Papers

Decisions and background papers will be made available
At all reasonable hours at the Council Officers
On the Council's website

Where requested, the Council will provide a copy of the written record and background papers subject to payment of the appropriate charge.