

Project Documentation (Part B)

RECORDING OF COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

**Incorporating business case, project
brief and project management
document**

Part A – Document Control

Part B – Business Case, Project Background and technical issues

Part C – Project Brief

Part D – Project Management Document

Version no: 1

Date: 16 April 2014

Part A - Document Control

A 1 - Key personnel

Title	Project Initiation Document
Author	Sarah Evans
Approver	Angela Tebbutt
Owner	Sarah Evans
A 2 - Project Organisation Structure	
Sponsor – Angela Tebbutt, Head of Communications	
Owner – Deliver options for recording Council and Committee meetings	

A 3 - Version history

Version	Date	Summary of changes	Changes marked
1	160414		

A 4 - Distribution

Name	Area
Sarah Evans/Angela Tebbutt	Communications
Christine Marshall	Strategic Director
Christian Coltart	Communications

A 5 - References

Doc reference	Document title
Council Minute CO50/13 – 111213	
PFA Report – 160414	Recording of Council and Committee Meetings

Part B – Business Case, Project Background / technical issues

B 1 - General

Council Minute CO50/13 states :

- (1) This Council supports the principles of openness and transparency in its workings;
- (2) To improve the openness and transparency of Council meetings and to enable more local residents to hear their elected representatives, officers look into the feasibility of recording and publishing audio recordings of full Council meetings and other meetings of the Council and its committees on the website on a trial basis and bring a report containing the costings and other implications to the next meeting of the Council after the Budget meeting in February;
- (3) That officers compile a report, also to be brought to the next meeting of the Council after the budget meeting or the next convenient meeting after that, setting out the feasibility and costings of videoing and webcasting council and committee meetings.

B 2 –Service / Service / Function

Recording meetings will provide enhanced public access to Council and Committee decision-making

B 3 – Strategic fit

Enhanced access to Council and Committee decision-making to enable people to experience meetings in their own home at a time to suit their own commitments.

Meets Council's commitment to providing services online and aims for greater website usage.

Enables customers who live beyond the town area, work shifts, are housebound, live in remote areas to experience decision-making without the need to travel or make logistical arrangements to attend meetings.

Monitoring of viewing/listening figures to be regularly assessed as to usage to enable continued assessment of value for money

There is no budget allocation for this service.

B 4 - Options appraisal

Options presented for Committee consideration are :-

- (a) A six month trial of audio recordings be taken of Full Council meetings and these be uploaded to the website within 48 hours of the meeting and at the end of the trial, feedback on quality and public interest be reported to the next available Policy, Finance and Administration Committee. There are no capital or revenue costs associated with this option.
- (b) A one-off trial by Company A be arranged to video and webcast the July or October Full Council Meeting at a cost as shown in Appendix D (exempt) and feedback be reported to the next appropriate meeting of the Policy, Finance and Administration Committee.
- (c) Company A be appointed to video and webcast all meetings of the Full Council and Committees at a one-off non-recurring charge to the revenue an annual revenue cost as detailed in Appendix D (exempt) to include 24 months archive. Discount is available for a 2-5 year contract.
- (d) Company B be appointed to video and webcast all meetings of the Full Council and Committees at a one-off capital cost and an annual revenue cost as detailed in Appendix D (exempt).
- (e) Further to the reasoning in paragraph 3.7 the project is taken into the Transformational Change Programme to align this initiative to our wider digital offering and directly understand what customers would like to see and shape the solution around this need.
- (f) There be no change to the current arrangements.

B 5 - Achievability

Option chosen by Members to be instructed immediately following approval

B 6 - Legal Issues (if applicable)

It should be noted that the Council is under no legal obligation to record or broadcast its meetings. It also should be noted that the approved minutes are the statutory record of the meeting and would have precedence of any audio/visual recording made.

Exclusion of the press and public will continue to be permitted under the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) where confidential or exempt matters are to be discussed. Coverage of such items will be in such a way that recordings are able to be stopped/restricted when these matters are

discussed. From a practical point of view, it is suggested that all exempt items should be at the end of the agenda. This is then easier to manage not only from a recording point of view, but also less disruptive for the public and the press as they do not have to go out and then come back in again.

There is a need to consider the increased risk of audio/visual recordings being used as evidence against the benefits of greater public engagement which the technology delivers. If it is decided to proceed with publishing recordings then further advice may be needed.

Should a recording proposal be approved the procedure rules in the Constitution may need to be reviewed and it is proposed that a Recording Protocol be put in place.

B 7 Specification

For audio recording, existing equipment and services to deliver.

For visual recording and broadcasting, quotations received from 2 webcasting companies which broadly specify requirements. Costs are set out Appendix D (exempt)

Further detail available in the PFA Committee report of 16 April 2014

B 8 - Financial Implications
As Appendix D (exempt)

B 9 – Project Scoring Matrix

(1 or 2) +1+1+3+1+1 = 8 or 9 points therefore formal methodology not necessary

Scoring – for your project – calculate the points			
Criteria	1 Point	2 Points	3 Points
Cost £ (budget, time and human resource)	<£10k	£10k - £50K	>£50K
Timescale	< 6 months	6 – 12 months	> 12 months
Impact if project failed on the organisation	Minor disruption	Moderate	Major
Melton's Track Record	Done Successfully Many Times Before	Done Successfully Once or Twice Before	New Area of Working
Stakeholder Interest (internal and external)	Minimal	Moderate	Major
Project Complexity	Straight-forward	Moderately Complex	Highly Complex

Projects scoring 6 – 10 points - Formal methodology **not** necessary
 Projects scoring > 10 points - Formal methodology **is** necessary

Note

The business case **must** be submitted initially to the Programme Board and will allow schemes to be prioritised and feasibility to be assessed.

Part C – Project Brief

The Project Brief sets out the direction, scope and objectives of the project and forms essentially the “contract” between the Project Sponsor and Project Manager as to what will need to be delivered.

C 1 - Project Objectives, outcomes and benefits

Enhanced access to Council and Committee meetings and promotes transparency in Council decision-making.

Meets Council’s commitment to providing services online and aims for greater website usage.

Enables customers who live beyond the town area, work shifts, are housebound, live in remote areas to experience decision-making without the need to travel or make logistical arrangements to attend meetings.

Part D – Project Management

D 1- Key Business Risks/Contingency Plans/Exit Strategy

The risks are mainly reputational and arise from the conduct of the meeting or of individual Members.

Recordings/webcasting of quasi-judicial proceedings such as Planning and Licensing & Regulatory Committees and the consequences of having a 'recording' of proceedings should a decision be questioned by a member of the public. Recordings/webcasting do not make a meeting any more 'public' than it already is, but it does provide a transcript which could allow for a greater level of challenge.

The risk in live transmission that inappropriate words or gestures are broadcast, some of which could breach legislation. For live webcasting this can be overcome by inclusion of a time delay of a few seconds before transmission to ensure that appropriate editing takes place. This requires someone to monitor the meeting to ensure that intervention takes place when needed. The risk of the need to intervene in this way is generally considered low and this could be assisted by training for Members and staff as well as having a protocol in place that enables the Monitoring Officer to have authority to not publish a recording.

The risk of not moving to either live or on demand webcasting is that it may be required by future legislation and the opportunity of wider public access to the statements made at the meeting may be lost.

Equipment failure/untrained staff could lead to lack of continuity in service and loss of public confidence. To help mitigate this, the companies approached offer 24 hour helpdesk support with webcasting and as these sites are externally hosted, they are on hand to assist with any broadcasting difficulties.

There is no legal risk should the Council wish to remain with the current arrangements.

D 2 - Key Stakeholders

This section should identify the key stakeholders, both internal and external to Melton Borough Council, for example:

External Stakeholders

General Public – press release to advise benefits and new arrangements.
Social media feeds to promote usage and how to do etc
Online support for live broadcasting by company.

The Media – Comms section to advise press of benefits and new arrangements. Social media feeds to promote usage and how to do etc

Internal Stakeholders

Finance – None

Legal – see B6 on Legal matters

***For guidance on their management strategies refer back to Step 2 –
Prioritisation, page 16***

D 3 - Communication Plan

- Ad hoc meetings with Strategic Director (CM) and Project Sponsor to consider progress
- Involvement as required of Steria and relevant staff providing connecting services to the project
- On completion of the project, closure report to the Programme Board

D 4 - Project Controls

This section of the PID should highlight the key controls that have been put in place to aid the management of the project. This may include:

Quality Control

The project will be overseen by the Strategic Director (CM) and Project Sponsor

Key Controls for Project Closure

The Project will be certified as complete by the Programme Board and the Approver/Budget holder notified.

The Programme Board should control Closure and confirm in writing its acceptance that the project has been completed in line with the initial PID approval.

Appendix B2, – Standard Risk Management Template

Project Name: Recording Council and Committee meetings

Updated:

Col 1	Col 2	Col 3	Col 4	Col 5	Col 6	Col 7	Col 8	Col 9	Col 10	Col 11
Risk No.	Grade [red, amber, green]	Risk Owner	Cause	Potential Consequences	Current Score	Original Score	Movement [↔,↑,↓]	Current controls [working]	Adequacy of mitigation measures	Planned actions (For key risks only)
1	Amber	AT	Inappropriate conduct of individual Members	Reputational damage				Training, Audio protocol, Hints & Tips document		
2	Amber	AT	Use of recordings at quasi-judicial meetings	Higher level of legal challenge				“		
3	Green	AT	Inappropriate words or gestures in live broadcast	Breach of legislation				“		Time delay on broadcast
4	Green	AT	Not providing meeting recordings	Loss of key statements at meetings				Written minutes taken at meetings	Adequate	
5	Green	AT	Equipment	Lack of service				24 hour		

			failure	continuity				company helpdesk for webcasting/ Website apology for audio		
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Last updated:

Risk Number	This is the unique identification number given to each individual risk
Owner/project	Who is the risk owner and therefore responsible for ensuring the mitigation work is undertaken
Cause	This describes the existing, potential or perceived risk/threat to the project objectives
Consequence	The impact of the cause is often a chain of events that can impact on many stakeholders
Current score and original score	Based on the risk matrix, how is the risk likelihood scored e.g. A, B, C, D or E Based on the risk matrix, how is the impact scored e.g. 1, 2, 3 or 4 The original score is as per the first time it was raised.
Current mitigation	The existing measures that are in place to control /prevent the risk (risk mitigation)
Adequacy	An assessment on the suitability of the current mitigation measures (adequate, poor, good)