

## **PROTOCOL FOR AUDIO RECORDING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS**

Melton Borough Council is committed to promoting democracy and increasing its community engagement by enabling more of its citizens to have greater involvement in the democratic process. To help achieve this, the Council has agreed to make audio recordings of Council meetings.

These recordings will be retained in line with the Council's retention guidelines (for a minimum period of 6 years) and will be made available to the public on request or via download from the Council's website in their native format (MP3 files).

This protocol has been produced to assist in the operation of the scheme and to ensure that the Council remains compliant with its obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Human Rights Act 1998.

All meetings recorded will be subject to the following provisions :

1. It will be at the sole discretion of the Chief Executive as to which meetings are recorded. Due to technical limitations it will not be possible to record all meetings during the trial period.
2. Prior to commencement of the meeting the Mayor will announce that the meeting will be recorded. The Mayor should make the following statement or one very similar:

***I would like to remind everyone present that this meeting will be recorded and that the recording will subsequently be available for public listening***

3. The Mayor has the discretion to request termination or suspension of the recording if in the opinion of the Mayor continuing the recording would prejudice the proceedings of the meeting.

This would include :

- (1) Public disturbance or other suspension of the meeting;
- (2) Exclusion of the public and press being moved and supported;
- (3) Any other reason moved and supported by the Council/Committee

4. No exempt or confidential agenda items will be recorded.
5. Meetings will be recorded onto the Council's digital media recorder in MP3 format. Copies of the recording will only be made available in this format and no transcripts will be provided other than in exceptional circumstances to comply with access requirements for any person who is unable to hear an audio recording.
6. The Monitoring Officer can decide not to publish a recording, or part thereof if in they consider it necessary to do so because all or part of the content of the recording is or is likely to be in breach of any statutory provision or common law

doctrine. It as anticipated that this need should only arise in exceptional circumstances.

7. In any correspondence notifying potential public speakers of a forthcoming meeting the following advice should be included:

***Please note that an audio recording of the meeting may be made and that the recording will be publicly available following the meeting including publication via the Council's website. If you do not wish your speech to be recorded please contact the Democracy and Involvement Officer on 01664 502314 to discuss your concerns. The Council will not publish recordings of speakers if they do not wish to appear in the recording of the meeting***

8. Notices to the effect that the meeting may be recorded should be placed on the front of each agenda and on signs displayed inside and outside the meeting room.

#### **AUDIO RECORDING NOTICE**

**Please note that this meeting may be recorded and subsequently made available to the public for listening purposes.**

9. The recording system will only record from the Council's wireless microphones. Elected members should ensure that their microphone is activated and speak clearly into the microphone at all times. Public speakers will also be required to use a wireless microphone.

July 2014