

Part 5 – Protocol for audio recording of Council, Cabinet, Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council has agreed to allow its meetings, together with those of the Cabinet, Committees and Sub-Committees to be the subject of audio recording for subsequent transmission and publication on the Council's website.
- 1.2 A recording device specifically for this purpose is located within the Council Chamber and further devices will be placed in committee rooms whenever a meeting of the Cabinet, a Committee or a Sub-Committee is held.
- 1.3 This protocol has been produced to assist the conduct of the recording of meetings and to ensure that in doing so the Council is compliant with its obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Human Rights Act 1998. Accordingly, the following will apply to all meetings to be recorded by the Council.

2. Main provisions

- 2.1 The Chair of the meeting may request that any part of a recording may not be published to the Council's website if, in their opinion, the recording would prejudice the proceedings of the meeting for the following reasons.
 - (i) Public disturbance or other suspension of the meeting;
 - (ii) Exclusion of public and press being proposed and agreed by the Council, the Cabinet, a Committee or Sub-Committee;
 - (iii) Any other reason proposed, seconded and supported by the Council, the Cabinet, a Committee or Sub-Committee and recorded in the Minutes of the meeting.

In such circumstances, Democratic Services will edit the recording prior to publication to the Internet, as directed by the Chair and recorded in the Minutes of the meeting.

- 2.2 The proceedings of exempt or confidential agenda items can be recorded but shall not be published to the Council's website. Any such recordings will be held securely by Democratic Services.
- 2.3 Subject to paragraph 2.4 below, all recordings will be available in mp3 format on the Council's website for a minimum of 12 months from the date of the meeting.
- 2.4 Archived recordings, or parts thereof, shall only be removed from the Council's website if the Monitoring Officer 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 doctrine, for example Data Protection and Human Rights legislation or provisions relating to confidential or exempt information.

If the Monitoring Officer has decided to take such action, they must notify all Members in writing of their decision and include the reasons for this as soon as possible. The Council

anticipates that the need to exercise the power set out above will occur only on an exceptional basis.

- 2.5 Any Member who is concerned about any audio recording that has been made, including any that have not already been published on the Council's website, should raise their concerns with the Monitoring Officer or in their absence, the Deputy Monitoring Officer.
- 2.6 Any concerns raised by a Member or a member of the public in respect of an audio recording being taken at a particular meeting should be brought to the attention of the Chair or a member of Democratic Services in attendance at the meeting.

3. Agenda and Signage at Meetings

- 3.1 On each Agenda for a meeting, and on signs to be displayed inside and outside the Council Chamber and each of the committee rooms, there will be the following notice:-

Audio Recording Notice

Please note that this meeting may be recorded for transmission and publication on the Council's website. At the start of the meeting the Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is to be recorded.

You should be aware that the Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act. Data collected during this recording will be retained in accordance with the Council's Information Management Policy.

Members of the public not wishing any speech or address to be recorded for publication to the Internet should contact Democratic Services to discuss any concerns.

The Council will not publish any part of a recording where members of the public have made it known that they do not wish to appear in any broadcast.

If you have any queries regarding this, please contact the Democratic Services Manager on (01375) 652 107.

4. Meetings of the Planning Committee, Licensing Committee and other 'quasi-judicial' hearings

- 4.1 In any correspondence notifying applicants, licence holders, supporters or objectors, or anyone who has registered to speak at a meeting, of the meeting date on which a particular application will be heard, the following advice will be included if the meeting is to be recorded:

"Please note that meetings of Thurrock Council, its Cabinet, Committees and Sub-Committees may be recorded for subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet site.

"If you do not wish your speech to be recorded for publication to the Internet, please contact Democratic Services to discuss your concerns.

"The Council will not publish any part of a recording where members of the public have made it known that they do not wish to appear in any broadcast"

5. Conduct of Meetings

- 5.1 At the start of each meeting to be recorded, an announcement will be made to the effect that the meeting is being recorded and that the Chair may also terminate or suspend the recording of the meeting, in accordance with this protocol.

This will be confirmed by the Chair making the following statement or one to like effect:

"I would like to remind everyone present that this meeting will be recorded for publication on the Council's website and will normally be available within 3 working days of the meeting."

6. Transcription

- 6.1 The Council will not provide transcripts of the recordings or any extracts from them. The Minutes of the meeting are the official record of proceedings.