



NORTH TAWTON TOWN COUNCIL

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This is a document that sets out North Tawton Town Councils approved and agreed practices. Any deviation must be by resolution of the full Council.

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North Tawton Town Council

Policy for Livestreaming of Town Council Meetings.

Livestreaming is a live digital stream of a meeting broadcast via the internet. **Webcasting** is a broadcast via the internet but is not necessarily live.

Introduction

Under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 any person who attends any council meeting is permitted to report on the meeting whilst the meeting is open to the public. To “report” means:

- to film, photograph, make an audio recording of meeting proceedings.
- use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear the meeting as it takes place or at a later time.
- or to report, or to provide oral or written commentary about, the meeting so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place, or at a later time to persons not present

A person present at a meeting may only provide a report as defined above, ***as it takes place*** with prior permission of the Council. For example, no other person will be able to livestream the Council Meetings without the permission of the Council.

To facilitate the openness of local government, North Tawton Town Council has resolved to livestream all its meetings to its own Facebook Page where they will be accessible to the public. At the start of each meeting to be recorded, an announcement will be made by the Chair, to inform members of the public that livestreaming is taking place and that the Public Period, if any, will be in accordance with the Town Council’s policy on this. A ‘Filming in Operation’ notice will appear on the meeting agenda front page and displayed inside the meeting room.

A digital copy of livestreamed meetings will be retained on the Council’s own Facebook Page, and will also be uploaded onto the Town Council’s website, in its original format with no editing or alternation having been made to it. This does not prohibit the sharing of the livestream post on Facebook after the meeting. For this reason, it must be made clear to any staff, Council members and the public before the meeting is commenced that livestreaming is taking place and that the information might then be shared by third parties without permission from the Council. The Council cannot be held responsible for the further sharing, editing, or alteration of the Livestream footage. The Town Council are also not responsible for any comments made on Facebook posts relating to the livestreamed meeting.

No exempt or confidential agenda items shall be Livestreamed, and no part of any meeting will be Livestreamed after the Council has voted to exclude the press and public because there is likely to be disclosure of exempt or confidential information. Anything that is outside

of the scope of the meeting will not be filmed. This includes reaction shots, walkouts etc. The camera operator will always direct the screen / camera shot towards the Chair.

As soon as the Town Council Meetings have finished, all livestream recordings will then be stopped. The livestream film will then be kept on the Council Facebook page, and on the North Tawton Town Council Website, as a point of reference and to give an accurate historical recording of the meeting.

- ***The only formal (and legally recognised) record of any council meeting are the written minutes.***
- ***Any follow-up after the Town Council Meetings have taken place should be via the standard publication of The Minutes of the meeting and questions directed to the Town Clerk, the Deputy Clerk or Chair.***
- ***Reporting on a meeting, as defined above, is not permitted where the meeting, or part of it, is closed to the public due to the confidential nature of proceedings.***
- ***Those wanting to film must liaise with council staff before the start of the meeting, as should those not wishing to appear on film. Filming and photography will only be permitted from the area designated.***
- ***Young people under the age of 18 will not be filmed.***

North Tawton Town Council will not respond to any comments before, during or after the livestream as it appears on Facebook.

Should the Livestream be halted for a technical reason the Clerk will inform the Chair at the earliest opportunity.

Response to unauthorised sharing, replication and editing

- The action to be taken will include reporting to the appropriate body or social media outlet. If necessary Legal Advice will also be taken.
- Only livestreaming via the North Tawton Town Council's Facebook Page, solely for the purpose of allowing viewing by those unable to attend in person and will also ensure proof of an original and unedited footage.
- If any individual, company, or organisation, conducts any unauthorised sharing and editing, especially if this is with malicious intent, of the digital footage online or otherwise, they will then be held accountable accordingly.
- Edited footage can give a false, inaccurate and prejudicial impression of the original meeting, and any sharing, livestreaming, editing and copying of material, as stated, is

not authorised by North Tawton Town Council. Legal action will be taken as and where necessary.

Protocol for Reporting, Filming, Recording or Photography by members of the public and press

- Members of the public are permitted to film or record any council meetings that are open to the public. The Town Council may reasonably ask for the filming to be undertaken in such a way that it is not disruptive or distracting to the good order and conduct of the meeting.
- No flash photography or additional lighting should be used without prior consent.
- Anyone wishing to report on the meeting should notify the Clerk or Chair so that they can be afforded reasonable facilities.
- The law permits any person to film, record, photograph or use social media to report on the proceedings of a meeting of the Council or its committees when they are open to the public. This does not extend to live verbal commentary.
- Improper conduct or any disruptive behaviour could result in expulsion from the meeting, under Section 2a, 2b and 2c of Standing Orders. The Chair has the discretion to terminate or suspend the Livestream if, in their opinion, continuing to Livestream would prejudice the proceedings of the meeting.