



PINCHBECK PARISH COUNCIL

Recordings of Meetings Policy

1. Purpose of the Policy

This policy sets out the Parish Council's approach to the recording of meetings, including:

- the use of the Council's official audio recording equipment.
- the use of personal recording devices by councillors, members of the public, or the press.

The policy is intended to promote transparency while ensuring meetings are conducted in an orderly manner and in accordance with the law.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- meetings of the Full Parish Council.
- meetings of committees and sub-committees.
- any other formal meeting convened by the Parish Council.

The policy applies to audio recording only. Video recording is not permitted.

3. Legal Framework

This policy has regard to, but is not limited to:

- the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014.
- the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.
- the Human Rights Act 1998.
- relevant guidance issued by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC).

4. Official Parish Council Recording

i. Purpose of official recording

The Parish Council may make audio recordings of meetings using its own equipment for the sole purpose of:

- assisting the Clerk in the preparation of accurate draft minutes.
- supporting the administrative record of the meeting.

Audio recordings are not a substitute for the approved minutes, which remain the formal and authoritative record of the meeting.

ii. Operation

- Official recording equipment is operated under the direction of the Clerk.
- Recording will be announced by the Chair at the start of the meeting.
- The presence of recording equipment will be signposted on the agenda where practicable.

iii. Retention and deletion

- Audio recordings will normally be retained only until the minutes of the meeting are approved, after which they will be deleted.
- Recordings may be retained for longer where required for evidential purposes (for example, in connection with a live complaint, legal proceedings, or a statutory investigation).

5. Recording by Councillors

Councillors may make their own audio recordings of meetings provided that:

- the recording does not disrupt the conduct of the meeting.
- the equipment used is unobtrusive.
- the Chair and Clerk are informed before the meeting begins.

Councillors must not record any part of a meeting held in closed session. Section 8 of this policy applies.

Councillors are responsible for ensuring that any personal recordings they make are used and stored in accordance with data protection legislation.

6. Recording by Members of the Public and the Press

i. General position

Members of the public and the press are permitted to record meetings (audio, video, or photography) in accordance with the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014.

ii. Conditions of recording

Recording by third parties must not:

- disrupt the proceedings of the meeting.
- involve moving around the room while the meeting is in progress.
- involve intrusive lighting, flash, or excessive noise.
- interfere with the Parish Council's own recording equipment.

The Chair may take reasonable steps to ensure that recording takes place in a manner consistent with the orderly conduct of the meeting.

7. Use of Personal Devices

The Parish Council does not accept responsibility for:

- the accuracy, editing, or publication of recordings made by third parties.
- any misuse of recordings made using personal devices.

The Parish Council's approved minutes remain the definitive record of the meeting.

8. Confidential and Closed Session Business

i. Prohibition on recording

Recording is not permitted during any part of a meeting from which the press and public are lawfully excluded.

This prohibition applies to all persons present, including councillors, officers, members of the public, and the press.

ii. Requirement to switch off devices

Where a meeting moves into closed session, all recording devices (including mobile phones, tablets, laptops, and any other audio or video equipment) must be switched off.

Councillors must not make any audio or video recording during closed session, whether using Council equipment or personal devices.

iii. Chair's confirmation

The Chair may require confirmation that recording has ceased before proceeding with closed-session business.

9. Disorderly Conduct

If recording equipment is used in a way that disrupts the meeting, the Chair may:

- request that the behaviour cease.
- require the equipment to be repositioned or switched off.
- take further action in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders.

10. Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically and at least once every four years, or earlier if there is a change in legislation or relevant guidance.