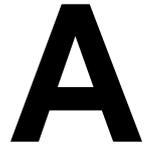


# Crawley Borough Council



## Minutes of General Purposes Committee 31 March 2014 at 7.00pm

### Present:

Councillor L A M Burke (Chair)

Councillors M L Ayling, B K Blake, R D Burrett, D G Crow, S J Joyce,  
P K Lamb, R A Lanzer, C A Moffatt, C G Oxlade and L A Walker

### Also in Attendance:

Mr Barry Jones – Appointed Independent Person (Observing)

### Officers Present:

Allan Hambly	Communications Manager
Manson Kendall	Principal Property Lawyer
Mez Matthews	Democratic Services Officer

### Apologies for Absence:

Councillors C A Cheshire and C R Eade

### 20. Members' Disclosure of Interests

No disclosures of interests were made by Members.

### 21. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on [28 January 2014](#) were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### 22. Use of Social Media, Photography, Filming and Recording at Council Meetings

The Committee considered report [CEX/042](#) of the Chief Executive which sought approval of a protocol on the use of social media, photography, filming and recording at Council meetings, to take effect from 1 April 2014 and inclusion of the protocol in the Council's Constitution.

The Communications Manager highlighted that the decision to approve the protocol would be a recommendation to Full Council at its meeting on 23 April 2014, and as such the protocol could not take effect until the 24 April 2014. The Committee agreed that the recommendation be amended to reflect the correct date.

Several points of clarification were requested in relation to the protocol. To ensure that the protocol was unambiguous, it was agreed that the following minor amendments be made (deleted wording shown as crossed through and additional wording shown in bold):

- That the last paragraph of Section 2 (Filming, Photography and Recording of Meetings) be amended to read as follows: "If a meeting passes a motion to exclude the media and public (**Part B / exempt information**) then, in conjunction with this, all rights to film, video, photograph or record the meeting are removed."
- That the second sentence of Section 4 (Use of Media Devices) be amended to read as follows: "No Councillor in attendance, whether a decision maker or observer, is permitted to use social media or mobile devices ~~in private~~ **when the meeting is in private session** (when the press and public are excluded) ~~or~~ to disclose in any way the content of items under discussion".

(NB. Following comments made at the meeting, legal advice has now been received confirming that the Act relates to all public meetings of the Council as indicated in the protocol).

The Committee was of the view that, where a request to film/record a meeting had been made, the Chair should make an announcement at the beginning of that meeting. The Committee was also of the opinion that notices informing the public about the procedure for filming/recording meetings should be placed on meeting room doors (rather than being placed on chairs).

Although it was not specified in the protocol, it was proposed that any filming should take place from the front of the public gallery so that only Councillors and officers (not public sitting in the gallery) were filmed. The Communications Manager noted the request and it was agreed that such positioning of recording equipment would be at the discretion of officers and the Chair of the relevant meeting.

## RESOLVED

That the Full Council be recommended that the protocol on the use of social media, photography, filming and recording at Council meetings (Appendix A to report CEX/042) be adopted in Part 5 (Codes and Protocols) of the Council's Constitution to take effect from 24 April 2014 subject to the following amendments:

- That the last paragraph of Section 2 be amended to read as follows: "If a meeting passes a motion to exclude the media and public (**Part B / exempt information**) then, in conjunction with this, all rights to film, video, photograph or record the meeting are removed."
- That the second sentence of Section 4 be amended to read as follows: "No Councillor in attendance, whether a decision maker or observer, is permitted to use social media or mobile devices ~~in private~~ **when the meeting is in private session** (when the press and public are excluded) ~~or~~ to disclose in any way the content of items under discussion".

### **23. Annual Review of the Constitution**

The Committee considered report [LDS/081](#) of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services which proposed changes to the Constitution and considered whether changes to the provisions for Call-In and Urgency were required.

It was suggested that the recommendation to Full Council regarding the provisions relating to Call-In and Urgency be amended to make clear that it referred to protection from Call-In and not monitoring or reviewing the Call-In Procedure as a whole. It was also suggested that future annual reports to the General Purposes Committee make explicit which provision was being reviewed, as protection from Call-In was monitored on an annual basis.

#### **RESOLVED**

That the Full Council be recommended that:

- (1) The amendments to the Constitution proposed in Appendix 1 to report LDS/081 be agreed;
- (2) Since the provisions relating to Call-In and Urgency (Protection from Call-In) have not been used during the past twelve months, no change to the provisions is necessary at this stage.

### **24. Closure of Meeting**

With the business of the Committee concluded, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 7.25pm.

L A M BURKE  
Chair