

Policy & Planning Meeting – 18th August 2014

Item 7 – Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations

On August 6th 2014 the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 came into force. These amend the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 in order to permit members of the public to film, audio-record, take photographs or use social media such as tweeting or blogging to report Council and Committee meetings, whilst they are open to the public. Enclosed for information is the relevant section from the Government's Plain English guide to the Regulations.

Purbeck District Council have adopted a Policy and Protocol on the recording of Council Meetings and this has been adapted for use by the Town Council to provide guidance for any member of the public who wishes to record a Town Council Meeting.

Currently recording is prohibited without express permission of the Council under Standing Order 70. It is therefore proposed that the wording of that Standing Order be amended as follows:

70. The Clerk shall afford to the press and public reasonable facilities for the reporting of any proceedings at which they are entitled to be present. Filming, audio-recording, taking photographs and the use of social media are permitted, in compliance with the Town Council's adopted policy and protocol.

The Council is due to revise its Standing Orders later in the current council year and the matter can be reviewed at that point.

Action required:

To adopt the Policy and protocol on recording, photography and use of social media at meetings of the Council.

To suspend Standing Order 79, to enable Standing Order 70 to be amended to read as follows:

70. The Clerk shall afford to the press and public reasonable facilities for the reporting of any proceedings at which they are entitled to be present. Filming, audio-recording, taking photographs and the use of social media are permitted, in compliance with the Town Council's adopted policy and protocol.

Martin Ayres
Town Clerk

August 2014