

NEWTON AND NOSS PARISH COUNCIL
MEDIA and FILMING POLICY

This policy explains how the Parish Council may work with the media to meet the objectives below, in accordance with legal restrictions which apply.

Objectives

1. It is generally important and democratic that the Parish Council has good relations with local media but it makes sense for only a couple of key members of the Parish Council to become spokes people, in consultation with other Councillors. That way, statements, comments or occasional interviews can be agreed quite quickly, as most media outlets have tight deadlines.

2. The first point of contact is often the Parish Clerk. She is used to answering factual queries but as some media enquires often have a more controversial nature, the Clerk can then liaise with either the Chairman (or in his/her absence the Vice Chairman) and designated Media Liaison Councillor, who can provide advice on appropriate comment. A record should be kept of written statements to the media.

The Media Liaison Councillor can provide press releases for Parish activities deemed to be newsworthy. The press release may be agreed, if deemed appropriate, at Parish Council meetings or by the Chairman (or Vice Chairman in his/her absence), if decided that a full Parish Council is not needed to relay comment.

2. The Parish Council will, where possible, co-operate with those whose work involves gathering material for publication in any form including use of the Internet.

Legal requirements and restrictions

3. This policy is subject to the Council's obligations which are set out in the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the Local Government Act 1972, the Local Government Act 1986, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 1998, other legislation which may apply and the Council's standing orders and financial regulations. The Council's financial regulations and relevant standing orders referenced in this policy are available via the Council's publication scheme or from the Parish Council's website at www.newtonandnoss-pc.gov.uk.

4. The Council cannot disclose confidential information or information the disclosure of which is prohibited by law. The Council cannot disclose information if this is prohibited under the terms of a court order, by legislation, the Council's standing orders/financial regulations, under contract or by common law. Councillors are subject to additional restrictions about the disclosure of confidential information which arise from the code of conduct adopted by the Council, a copy of which is available via the Council's publication scheme or from the Parish Council's website at www.newtonandnoss-pc.gov.uk.

Meetings

5. A meeting of the Council and its committees is open to the public unless the meeting resolves to exclude them because their presence at the meeting is prejudicial to the public interest due to the confidential nature of the business or other special reason(s) stated in the resolution. In accordance with the Council's Standing Orders and Filming Policy, persons may be required to leave a meeting of the Council and its committees, if their disorderly behaviour obstructs the business of the meeting.

6. Where a meeting of the Council and its committees include an opportunity for public participation, the media may speak and ask questions. Public participation is regulated by the Council's Standing Orders

Filming/recording

A more detailed protocol on filming and recording of Newton & Noss Parish Council Meetings is set out in the addendum.

7. The photographing, recording, filming or other reporting of a meeting of the Council and its committees (which includes e.g. using a mobile phone or tablet, recording for a TV/radio broadcast, providing commentary on blogs, web forums, or social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook and YouTube) which enable a person not at the meeting to see, hear or be given commentary about the meeting is permitted unless (i) the meeting has resolved to hold all or part of the meeting without the public present or (ii) such activities disrupt the proceedings or (iii) paragraphs 9 and 10 below apply.

9. The photographing, recording, filming or other reporting of a child or vulnerable adult at a Council or committee meeting is not permitted unless an adult responsible for them has given permission.

10. Oral reporting or commentary about a Council or committee meeting by a person who is present at the meeting is not permitted.

11. The Council's standing orders will confirm if attendance by the public, their participation, photographing, recording, filming or other reporting is permitted at a meeting of a sub-committee.

Other communications with the media

13. This policy does not seek to regulate Councillors in their private capacity.

14. The Council's communications with the media seek to represent the corporate position and views of the Council. If the views of Councillors are different to the Council's corporate position and views, they will make this clear.

15. Subject to the obligations on Councillors not to disclose information referred to in paragraph 5 above and not to misrepresent the Council's position, Councillors are free to communicate their position and views

Contacts for Media:

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Chairman; Mrs Alison Ansell 01752 873382

Media Relations Councillors; Vice Chairman Mr. Alan Cooper 01752 872827 and Ms, C. Adams 07963 613309

Reviewed and adopted by Newton & Noss Parish Council 12 May 2016

ADDENDUM to the Media Policy of Newton & Noss Parish Council

Protocol on the filming and recording of Parish Council Meetings

The right to record, film and to broadcast meetings of Local Councils, committees and sub committees was established following the Local Government Audit and Accountability Act 2014. The “Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014” became active legislation in August 2014. This is in addition to the rights of the press and public to attend such meetings. This document sets out the protocol for the filming and recording of the meetings of Newton & Noss Parish Council.

Subject to the exceptions referred to below or if the meeting has resolved to exclude the public, any person (including the press) who attends a Council meeting may report on the proceedings of the meeting.

Reporting is defined as

- **filming, photographing or making an audio recording of proceedings at a meeting;**
- **using any other means of enabling people not present at a meeting to see or hear proceedings as it takes place or later;**
- **written reporting or commentary on the proceedings during or after a meeting or oral reporting or commentary after the meeting.**

The rights of the Council to exclude the press and public from parts of Council meetings for contractual and staff confidentially reasons remain unaffected.

Members of the public are permitted to film or record Council meetings, to which they are permitted access, in a non-disruptive manner. The Chairman of the meeting has the authority to stop a meeting and take appropriate action if any person contravenes these principles or is deemed to be recording in a disruptive manner.

The use of digital and social media recording tools, for example Twitter, blogging or audio recording will be allowed as long as it is carried out in a non-disruptive way and only to the extent that it does not interfere with any person’s ability, including where he or she has a disability, to follow the debate.

While those attending meetings are deemed to have consented to the filming, recording or broadcasting of meetings, those exercising the rights to film, record and broadcast must respect the rights of others people attending under the Data Protection Act 1998. This will include the particular rights of any children or vulnerable adults attending the meeting.

A separate area has been designated to accommodate those members of the public who do not wish to participate in the meeting and who object to being filmed, recorded, photographed or otherwise reported about and for children/vulnerable adults where the relevant responsible adult has not given consent for them to be filmed, recorded or otherwise reported about.

Those who wish to film, record, photograph or otherwise report on the proceedings should avoid those who are sitting in the separate area.

Where individuals sit in the designated area, they are reminded that those filming or taking photographs may wish to record the entirety of the public in a “panning” shot which could inevitably include those sitting in the designated area.

With respect to Open Forum, a person is free to film, record, photograph or otherwise report about individuals participating in such a session whether they are sitting in a designated section or not.

Any person or organisation choosing to film, record or broadcast a meeting of the Council or a committee is responsible for any claims or other liability from them so doing.

The Council asks that those recording proceedings do not edit the film or recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation of the proceedings, or infringe the core values of the Council. This includes refraining from editing an image or views expressed in a way that may ridicule, or show lack of respect towards those being filmed or recorded.

The Council will display requirements as to filming, recording and broadcasting at its meeting venues and those undertaking these activities will be deemed to have accepted them whether they have read them or not.

The Council may itself photograph, film, record or broadcast at its meetings and can retain, use or dispose of such material in accordance with its retention and disposal policies.