

**STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS**

**PROFORMA**

Cabinet Meeting .....25th June 2015

1. Title of Item/Report

The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014

2. Record of the Decision

Consideration was given to a report on the protocol regarding the public reporting and commentating on public meetings of the Cabinet and of the Council, after six months operation.

At its meeting on the 4 September 2014, Cabinet received a report regarding the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 (“the Regulations”).

The Regulations came into force on 6 August 2014 and (amongst other things) they allowed the public to report and commentate on public meetings of local government bodies (including principal councils and Town / Parish Councils).

Persons attending public meetings of full Council, Cabinet, a Committee or Sub-Committee, must therefore be permitted to report on those meetings.

“Reporting” meant:-

- Filming, photographing or making an audio recording of proceedings at a meeting.
- Using any other means of enabling persons not present, to see or hear proceedings at the meeting as it takes place or later, or
- Reporting or providing commentary on proceedings at the meeting, orally or in writing, so that the report commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later, to persons not present.

The Government had produced a Plain English Guide regarding the Regulations. The guide advised Councils to adopt a policy on filming of Members of the public, and a general policy or protocol for members and officers about persons who wanted to exercise their rights under the

Regulations.

The protocol approved by Cabinet for use in relation to its public meetings was attached to the report.

As a result of a separate report to Council, full Council also approved the protocol for use in connection with its public meetings, and public meetings of its committees and sub-committees.

Arising from this, it was agreed that the protocol would be reviewed after six months operation.

Following approval, the protocol was circulated to Members and Officers and placed on the Council's website.

Since then there had, however, been no occasions at any of the public meetings of the Cabinet, Council, Committees or Sub-Committees when the protocol had been called into use.

Accordingly, Cabinet was asked to reaffirm the protocol for continued use, if needed, at future public meetings of Cabinet.

A separate report would be submitted to Council on 22 July and Council would be informed of Cabinet's decision.

As a result of previous reports to the Members Advisory Panel, Cabinet and Council, public meetings of Cabinet, Council, Planning and Licensing Committees were being filmed and broadcast via YouTube, starting with the Annual Meeting of Council on 3 June.

It was agreed that the filming and broadcasting of these meetings would also be reviewed after six months of operation. There would therefore be further reports to Cabinet and Council.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The report and protocol be noted.
2. The protocol be confirmed for use in relation to future public meetings of Cabinet.
3. Full Council be advised of Cabinet's decision.

3. Reasons for the Decision

To ensure compliance with the previous decision to review the protocol after six months' operation.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

None

6. Details of any Dispensations

N/A

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

3rd July 2015

Proper Officer  
29 June 2015