

O. Protocol for Members of the Public wishing to report on Meetings of Harrow Council

1. Members of the public are entitled to report on public meetings of the Council, except for any part of the meeting where the public have been excluded under Rule 12 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules because confidential or exempt information is likely to be disclosed. In this context 'members of the public' includes members of the Council.
2. Reporting means:-
 - a. filming, photographing or making an audio recording of the proceedings of the meeting;
 - b. using any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear proceedings at a meeting as it takes place or later; or
 - c. reporting or providing commentary on proceedings at a meeting, orally or in writing, so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later if the person is not present.
3. Oral commentary by someone in the meeting room while the meeting is taking place is not permitted. This is to prevent the business of the meeting being disrupted.
4. Anyone wishing to take photographs or video record by means of a handheld camera or other device is asked to inform a Democratic Services officer before the meeting so that they can be seated appropriately to avoid disruption to other members of the public.
5. Members of the public are asked to remain seated throughout the meeting as standing up and walking around could distract from the business in hand. In addition there should be no disruptive behaviour e.g. excessive noise in recording, intrusive lighting and flash photography.
6. No recording is permitted when the press and public have been excluded under Rule 12 of the Access to Information Rules and any recording equipment should not be left in the room.
7. Democratic Services will ensure that agendas for, and signage at, meetings make it clear that filming / recording can take place. By attending the meeting, the public are consenting to being filmed / recorded. However, those recording meetings are requested to respect the privacy of members of the public in attendance by focusing on the councillors and officers taking part in the meeting.