



## **PROTOCOL FOR AUDIO RECORDING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS**

### **1. Background**

1.1 The Council has agreed to introduce a scheme for the audio recording of Council meetings. These recordings will be retained in line with the provisions of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 ie for a period of 6 years from the date of the meeting and will be made available to the public on request or via download from the Council's website in either MP3 or WAV format.

1.2 Audio recording of meetings are made to improve accessibility to meetings and to provide greater clarity on how decisions are reached. While an audio recording of a meeting may be produced, the minutes of the meeting are still the formal legal record of that meeting and of any decisions taken. The Council is required to ensure that minutes are an accurate record of the proceedings and the audio recording of meetings could assist to ensure this requirement is fulfilled.

1.3 This protocol has been produced to assist in the operation of the scheme and to ensure that the Council remains compliant with its obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Human Rights Act 1998.

### **2. Provisions**

All meetings recorded as part of the scheme will be subject to the following provisions:

2.1 It will be at the discretion of the Council or Committee as to which meetings are recorded. Due to technical limitations it will not be possible to record meetings outwith the Council HQ.

2.2 Prior to commencement of the meeting the Chairman of the meeting will announce that the meeting will be recorded. The Chairman will make the following statement:

"I would like to remind everyone present that this meeting will be recorded and that the recording will subsequently be available for public listening".

2.3. The Proper Officer has the authority to request termination or suspension of the recording of a meeting if continuing the recording would prejudice the proceedings of the meeting. (As needed, delegations from the Proper Officer will be in place). This would include:

- Public disturbance or other suspension of the meeting;
- Exclusion of the public and press;
- Any other reason agreed by the Council or Committee as detailed in Standing Orders

2.4 Exempt and confidential agenda items will be recorded whilst complying with the provisions of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, and with appropriate employment legislation.

2.5. Meetings will be recorded onto the Council's digital media recorder in MP3 or WAV format. Copies of the recording will only be made available in this format and no transcripts will be provided other than in exceptional circumstances to comply with access requirements for any person who is unable to hear an audio recording.

2.6 The Proper Officer can decide not to publish a recording, or part thereof if in they consider it necessary to do so because all or part of the content of the recording is or is likely to be in breach of any statutory provision or if there is inappropriate language or defamation. It is anticipated that this need should only arise in exceptional circumstances.

2.7 In any correspondence notifying potential public speakers of a forthcoming meeting the following advice should be included:

“Please note that an audio recording of the meeting may be made and that the recording will be publicly available following the meeting including publication via the Council's website. If you do not wish your speech to be recorded please contact <<insert details>> to discuss your concerns.

The Council will not publish recordings of speakers if they do not wish to appear in the recording of the meeting.”

2.8. Notices to the effect that the meeting may be recorded should be placed on the front of each agenda and on signs displayed inside and outside the meeting room.

**AUDIO RECORDING NOTICE**

**Please note that this meeting may be recorded and subsequently made available to the public for listening purposes.**

2.9. The recording system will only record from the Council's microphones in the Council Hall. Elected Members should ensure that their microphone is activated and speak clearly into the microphone at all times. Public speakers will also be required to speak clearly into the microphone provided.

2.10 Standing Orders of the Council clarify the admissibility of a recording in challenging/adoption of a minute.

Lorna Meahan  
Proper Officer