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MULTI LOCATION (HYBRID) MEETING AND RECORDING OF MEETINGS POLICY

1 Introduction

1.1 Pontypool Community Council is committed to openness, transparency and effective public participation in its meetings. This policy sets out the Council's arrangements/attendance for multi-location meetings and the photographing, filming, recording, broadcasting or transmitting of meetings.

1.2 The policy applies to meetings of the Council, its Committees and Sub-Committees, except where the press and public are lawfully excluded because the business is confidential or exempt.

2 Multi-Location Meetings

2.1 The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act (2021) and the Local Government Act (1972) Schedule 12 enables meetings to take place through a variety of arrangements, including multi-location meetings. These may include meetings where all participants are in the same physical location, meetings where one or more participants join remotely, meetings with a mix of in-person and remote attendees, or meetings held wholly through remote means.

2.2 Multi-location meetings will remain formal Community Council meetings and will be conducted in accordance with the published agenda and summons, Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and all relevant Council policies.

3 Setting Up and Managing Remote Access

3.1 The Council will use Microsoft Teams for remote attendance. The Clerk and/or Chair will host the meeting using an appropriate Council Microsoft account. The meeting link will not be published on the agenda. Councillors, members of the public and press wishing to attend remotely must request the access link from the Clerk in advance of the meeting.

3.2 Members of the public wishing to attend virtually should contact the Clerk (or Deputy Clerk in Clerk's absence) at least two working days before the meeting. The Clerk will keep a record of expected virtual attendees to help manage access and reduce security risks.

3.3 Attendees joining remotely will wait in the Teams waiting room before being admitted. The Clerk or Chair may mute or remove anyone whose conduct disrupts the meeting. At the start of the meeting, attendees will be muted unless invited to speak by the Chair.

3.4 Councillors attending remotely must display their name so that members of the public can identify them. Any Councillor who has declared an interest in an agenda item may be placed in the waiting room for the duration of that item and readmitted once the item has concluded.

3.5 The Clerk or Chair may share documents using the screen-share function and may permit others to do so where necessary. Anyone wishing to speak should use the raise hand function or otherwise indicate to the Chair that they wish to speak. The chat function will normally be disabled during the meeting.

3.6 Voting will be conducted by a show of hands where video is enabled and verbally confirmed for those joining by telephone. The Chair may address members individually. Where a secret ballot is required, members will submit their vote individually to the Clerk.

4 Rights to Record, Photograph, Film or Broadcast

4.1 For the purposes of this policy, "record" includes any form of audio, visual or electronic recording, including filming, photography, broadcasting, live streaming, blogging and social media reporting.

4.2 The Council supports the principle that public meetings may be recorded, photographed, filmed or broadcast, provided that this does not disrupt proceedings, inhibit public participation, breach confidentiality, or infringe legal rights including rights under data protection, human rights, libel and defamation ~~law~~ legislation.

4.3 Recording is not permitted during Establishment Committee meetings, confidential or exempt items, or any meeting or part of a meeting from which the press and public have been lawfully excluded.

5 Notice and Consent

5.1 Where a meeting is to be recorded, the Council will display a notice in a conspicuous place outside the meeting room and may also make an announcement at the beginning of the meeting. Any member of the public who

objects to being recorded, photographed or filmed should advise the Clerk in advance where possible.

5.2 People seated in the public seating area should not be filmed, recorded or photographed without their consent. Use must not be made of an image or recording where consent has been refused by a member of the public featured in that image or recording.

5.3 The specific filming or recording of children under the age of 13, young people or vulnerable adults may only take place where the appropriate parent, guardian, carer or responsible adult has given written consent.

6 Recording by Members of the Public or Press

6.1 Any person wishing to record a meeting is asked to contact the Clerk at least three days before the meeting, stating which meeting the request relates to, their name and contact details, any organisation represented, the equipment to be used, and the intended use or publication of the recording.

6.2 The Clerk may identify an area from which recording may take place and, where advance notice is given, will seek to provide reasonable facilities where practicable. All equipment should be set up before the meeting starts, remain under the operator's control, be clearly visible, and be used from a static position unless otherwise agreed.

6.3 Recording must be conducted in a non-disruptive manner. A person recording has no right to interrupt the meeting, ask questions or comments for the purpose of the recording, or ask councillors, officers or members of the public to repeat statements.

6.4 Filming elsewhere in the building outside the meeting room is not permitted. Flash photography or lighting may be restricted where it affects the ability of others to view the meeting, causes disruption, or raises health and safety concerns.

7 Disruption, Confidentiality and Suspension of Recording

7.1 The Chair has discretion to stop or suspend recording where, in their reasonable opinion, continuing to record would prejudice proceedings, disrupt the meeting, breach this policy, infringe the rights or privacy of any individual, or be otherwise inappropriate in the circumstances.

7.2 If recording disrupts the meeting or a pre-meeting agreement is breached, the operator will be asked to stop. If recording continues, the Chair or Clerk may ask the person to leave. If necessary, the Chair may adjourn the meeting or make alternative arrangements so that the meeting can continue without disruption.

7.3 If the meeting is adjourned, recording must stop at the point of adjournment. If the meeting resolves to exclude the press and public because the business is confidential or exempt, all recording rights cease for that part of the meeting.

8 Recordings by the Council

8.1 The Council may itself film, record, photograph or broadcast meetings and may retain, use or dispose of such material in accordance with its data retention policy. Where the Council records its own meetings, this does not prevent any other person from also recording, provided they comply with this policy and the law.

8.2 Recordings made by the Council may be made available on the Council's website for the period set out in the Data Retention Policy. Recordings may be removed before the end of that period where all or part of the content is, or is likely to be, in breach of statutory or common law requirements.

8.3 The minutes of a Council meeting remain the statutory and legally binding formal record of Council decisions.

9 Responsibility and Liability

9.1 Anyone recording or reporting on a meeting is responsible for ensuring that their actions comply with the law, including the Human Rights Act (1998), the UK GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation), Data Protection Act (2018) as amended by the Data Use and Access Act (2025) and the laws of libel and defamation.

9.2 The Council expects that recordings will not be edited or used in a way that could lead to misinterpretation or misrepresentation of proceedings, ridicule those recorded, or conflict with the Council's values. The Council may request that recordings made in breach of this policy are removed from public view.

9.3 The Council is not liable for the actions of any person making or publishing a recording of a Council meeting, unless the Council itself is responsible for the publication through its own offices.

10 Meeting Notices

10.1 Public notice for recorded meetings**:** "The Council, members of the public and the press may record, photograph or film for live and/or subsequent broadcast this meeting only when the public and press are not lawfully excluded. Any member of the public who attends a meeting and objects to being recorded, photographed or filmed should advise the Clerk (Deputy Clerk in the Clerk's absence) in advance, who will instruct that they are not to be included in the recording, photographing or filming."

10.2 Opening statement: "This Council supports the rights of anyone to record this meeting but advises that anyone recording must not disrupt the meeting and should obtain any necessary legal advice to understand the rights of members of the public who may be present and who do not wish to be recorded or filmed."