

**PE1731/L**

Stirling Council submission of 24 October 2019

**What is your policy on the audio recording of public council meetings?**

Currently Stirling Council's Standing Orders include the following provision:-

*“Except at the discretion of the Provost, the Council will not allow the taking of photographs, use of mobile telephones, or music players during meetings, or to the radio or television broadcasting or tape recording of meetings. This does not prohibit the Council subsequently webcasting or otherwise recording meetings”.*

**If your council does not permit audio recordings of public meetings, what is the rationale for this?**

The main rationale would be the potential for confidential or private discussions to be recorded by members of the public. If for example a meeting was to adjourn to allow Members to discuss any particular proposals or issues there would be potential for any private discussions taking place in the meeting room to be recorded surreptitiously.

There would also be the question of permission required to record and broadcast statements made by individuals – in terms of Elected Members, Officers of the Council and anyone else who may participate in meetings (such as members of the public or representatives from external organisations).

**What are considered to be the concerns of allowing members of the public to audio record public council meetings?**

As noted above, the concern would be that something potentially sensitive or confidential could be recorded and shared further, when it would be inappropriate to do so. Rather than allowing the public to audio record meetings, it would be more appropriate to require Councils themselves to implement some form of audio recording of meetings, which would allow the Council to hold a 'master version' of the recording of the meeting which would be made available to the public.

**With regards to the actions being called for in the petition, are there any constraints faced by local authorities on what has been proposed?**

Nothing else in addition to those concerns and issues noted above.