



NORTHERN MIDLANDS COUNCIL

POLICY MANUAL

LIVE STREAMING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

Originated Date:	Adopted 21 August 2023, Min. ref. 23/0281
Amended Date/s:	Amended 9 December 2024, Min. ref. 24/0413 Amended 19 January 2026, Min.26/024
Applicable Legislation:	<i>Local Government Act 1993</i> <i>Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025</i>
Objective	The objective of this policy is to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. provide information and procedures for the audio live streaming and recording of open ordinary Council meetings for the public to access; and2. promote transparency, accessibility and greater community awareness and confidence in the integrity and accountability of Council meeting practices, and the conduct of their elected representatives.
Administration:	Governance
Review Cycle/Date:	Within 6 months of commencement of new Council term.

1 INTRODUCTION

The *Local Government Act 1993* and the *Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025* make provision for the operation and conduct of Council meetings. Whilst the legislation identifies how these processes can occur, there are some lower level procedures required to be set out by Council. This policy stipulates those procedures.

The *Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025* do not preclude live streaming of Council meetings or making recordings of meetings available on-demand.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with Councils *Meeting Procedures Policy*.

2 POLICY STATEMENT

This policy outlines Council's commitment to transparent and accessible decision making processes with the introduction of audio live streaming and recording of ordinary open council meetings.

3 SCOPE

This policy applies to formal Council meetings (ordinary meetings, special meetings and Annual General meetings). This policy does not apply to closed sessions of Council or Committee meetings of Council.

Live streaming of Council meetings does not authorise any Councillor to attend meetings remotely ~~and it is noted~~ Regulation 45 of the *Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025* requires Councillors to attend a meeting in person and Council may not determine that a councillor may attend a meeting in any manner that does not consist of in person attendance.

4 PROCEDURES

4.1 MEETINGS TO BE LIVE STREAMED AND RECORDED

Ordinary and Special Council Meetings held in Council's Chambers at 13 Smith Street, Longford will be audio streamed and recorded and made available on the internet via Council's website www.nmc.tas.gov.au.

A link to the YouTube streaming service will be made available on Council's website for ease of access as soon as possible and generally no later than four business days after the Council meeting (not including the day of the meeting).

Closed Council Meetings will not be live streamed or recorded.



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The Chairperson and/or General Manager have the discretion and authority to direct the live streaming and/or recording be interrupted or terminated at any time if they believe it is advisable to do so, for example where the content of the debate is misleading, defamatory, a breach of privacy, unlawful or potentially inappropriate to be published.

There may be situations where the live stream recording of Council meetings is not available due to technical issues. Council takes no responsibility for and cannot be held liable for the live streaming, or access to it, through Council's website or the YouTube service being unavailable due to technical issues beyond Council's control. Technical issues may include the availability of the internet connection, device failure or malfunction, unavailability of social media platforms or power outages.

Council will make every effort to ensure the smooth operation of live streaming of Council meetings.

The recordings made by Council officers will not replace written minutes of Council meetings. The recordings may be used by Council Officers when preparing minutes.

4.2 DISCLAIMER

4.2.1 Meeting Agendas are to include at the start a notice that Council meetings will be live streamed using audio technology and that audio recordings will be made available to the public online after the meeting.

4.2.2 Public Notices will be placed in prominent positions outside and within the Council Chambers to inform the meeting is being audio live streamed and recorded, a persons image and/or voice may be broadcast and by remaining in the public gallery during the meeting or participating during the meeting, their consent to being live streamed and recorded is assumed.

4.2.3 Meeting Agendas and Public Notices outside and within the Council Chambers will include the following wording:

"We wish to advise that during this public council meeting we will use audio technology to live stream the meeting to support and inform the community regarding council meetings. After the meeting, an audio recording of the meeting will be published via a link on our website to the YouTube streaming service for a minimum period of not less than 12 months from the day of the meeting. Attendees will be taken to have consented to their voice or statements being live streamed or recorded as described. This consent also extends to any minors accompanying an attendee who is a parent or legal guardian. If you do not consent to being live streamed or recorded, and/or if you intend to disclose any confidential or sensitive information in the course of the meeting, please notify us as early as reasonably possible prior to the commencement of the council meeting. If you require further information or wish to notify us regarding any concerns, please contact the Northern Midlands Council privacy officer at: council@nmc.tas.gov.au; (03) 6397 7303 or you can review the Northern Midlands Council Privacy Policy available at: <https://northernmidlands.tas.gov.au/source-assets/files/Policies/Privacy.pdf>."

4.2.4 The Chairperson will make a statement at the opening of Council meetings advising as follows:

"Ladies and Gentlemen,

Please note this meeting is being audio live streamed and a recording will be made available after the meeting via Council's website in accordance with Council's Live Streaming of Council Meetings policy.

While reasonable care is taken to maintain your privacy while in attendance at the Council meeting, please note that your presence in the Council Chambers and/or voice may be live streamed and recorded, including any statement made during public question time or consideration of planning matters. The content of this meeting is part of the public record, but if any matters do arise which are particularly sensitive or confidential, we will stop the live stream and in certain circumstances, may close the meeting to the public.

All speakers ought to refrain from making any defamatory comments or releasing personal information of another individual without their prior consent.

Council accepts no liability for any damage that may result from defamatory comments made by members of the public.

If you have any questions or concerns, you may contact the Council's privacy officer whose details are on our website.

Thank you"

4.2.5 A disclaimer will be included on Council's website through which the live streaming and recordings will be accessed.



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The disclaimer will be as follows:

“Northern Midlands Council public council meetings are live streamed and recorded.

Recordings of these public meetings will be available through a link from this website for a minimum period of not less than 12 months from the day of the meeting.

At the start of each meeting, the Chairperson or their representative will provide notice that the meeting will be live streamed and recorded. By attending a council meeting, attendees will be taken to have consented to their voice or statements being live streamed and recorded, which may be accessed through a link on this website.

For further information, please refer to our Live Streaming of Council Meetings Policy and our Privacy Policy available at: <https://northernmidlands.tas.gov.au/documents/strategic-annual-plan/council-policies-and-by-laws>.

Need help? Please contact our Privacy Officer at council@nmc.tas.gov.au; or call (03) 6397 7303.”

5. RISK MANAGEMENT

Public Council meetings are an open forum of statements, questions, and answers. Occasionally, comments could be made which may be regarded as offensive, defamatory, inaccurate, or unlawful.

It is acknowledged that live streaming and recording of Council meetings does not increase these risks, however it could increase the impact due to the larger audience as a result of the broadcast. This could increase the likelihood and/or severity of potential liability.

Accordingly, the Chairperson and/or General Manager have the authority and discretion to interrupt or terminate the live streaming and recording of Council meetings if they believe it is advisable to do so. This discretion is to be exercised in exceptional circumstances only and where the Chairperson and/or General Manager are of the view that the debate is misleading, inaccurate, unlawful, defamatory, or inappropriate to be published or where sensitive or confidential information is being discussed.

Parliamentary privilege does not apply to local Council meetings. It should be noted that no protection is afforded to Councillors or Council employees for comments made during meetings.

The opinions or statements made during the meetings are those of the individuals, and not necessarily the opinions or statements of Council. Council does not necessarily endorse or support the views, opinions or information contained in the live streaming and/or recording of meetings.

Council does not accept any responsibility or liability for verbal comments made during meetings which are inaccurate, incorrect or defamatory. The Council does not accept any liability for any loss, damage, cost or expense that may be incurred as a result of viewing, use of or reliance on the information or statements provided in the live streaming or recordings.

6 REVIEW

The policy will be reviewed within 6 months of commencement of the new term of Council, being before 30 April 2027.