

**To the Chair and Members of the  
Council**

**AUDIO VISUAL RECORDING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS – UPDATE REPORT**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. This report provides an update to Council on arrangements for the audio visual recording of future Council meetings.

**EXEMPT REPORT**

2. This report is not exempt.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

3. That Council note:-
  - i. The current position in respect of arrangements for the audio visual recording of Council meetings; and
  - ii. The implementation date of 24<sup>th</sup> November 2015 for the audio visual recording of future Council meetings.

**WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?**

4. Recording Council meetings will offer the citizens of Doncaster an accessible resource and allow them to view proceedings even if they are unable to attend in person. It allows the Council an opportunity to demonstrate openness, transparency and accountability to the residents of Doncaster.

**BACKGROUND**

5. At its meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2015 Council agreed to progress with arrangements for the audio visual recording of Council meetings. Following this meeting further discussions have taken place with the current provider of the Council's Chamber Voting and Conference system Nuway Audio Visual regarding installation of the equipment and training to meet the Council's requirements and this will take place during October.
6. Further consideration has also been given to the process of publishing the recordings once they have been captured digitally. The most cost effective option at this time appears to be publishing on the Council's website and uploading the recordings to the Council's YouTube channel. As agreed at

Council recordings will be published without any editing so that they can reflect a true record of the meeting. However, there may be an occasional need to provide some editing e.g. if exempt information was inadvertently released. Discussions with other authorities have indicated that these occasions are very rare.

7. Once the equipment has been procured and installed training will be undertaken by officers on use of the equipment and the process for downloading recordings to the Youtube Channel. Liaison will also take place with political groups prior to implementation to enable them to consider issues around conduct and the implications of being filmed.
8. It is anticipated that the necessary arrangements will be in place for the 26<sup>th</sup> November Council meeting.

### **OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

9. Council considered the options for filming and broadcasting Council meetings on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2015 including webcasting and audio visual recordings.

### **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION**

10. Council agreed that recording Council meetings and making the recordings available for viewing is an important initiative which will increase transparency and potentially increase public participation in local democracy. As there is no legal requirement to live broadcast Council meetings, Council agreed to provide audio visual recordings of meetings which would be available after Council meetings. This would enable consideration to be given to the benefits and value before consideration was given to the live webcasting of Council meetings, which is a more expensive option.

### **IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES**

11. This is an update report however, the issue of providing an audio visual recording of Council meetings is likely to have greatest impact on "Working with our partners we will provide strong leadership and governance".

	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Implications</b>
	<p>All people in Doncaster benefit from a thriving and resilient economy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Mayoral Priority: Creating Jobs and Housing</i></li> <li>• <i>Mayoral Priority: Be a strong voice for our veterans</i></li> <li>• <i>Mayoral Priority: Protecting Doncaster's vital services</i></li> </ul>	

	<p>People live safe, healthy, active and independent lives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Mayoral Priority: Safeguarding our Communities</i></li> <li>• <i>Mayoral Priority: Bringing down the cost of living</i></li> </ul>	
	<p>People in Doncaster benefit from a high quality built and natural environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Mayoral Priority: Creating Jobs and Housing</i></li> <li>• <i>Mayoral Priority: Safeguarding our Communities</i></li> <li>• <i>Mayoral Priority: Bringing down the cost of living</i></li> </ul>	
	<p>All families thrive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Mayoral Priority: Protecting Doncaster's vital services</i></li> </ul>	
	<p>Council services are modern and value for money.</p>	
	<p>Working with our partners we will provide strong leadership and governance.</p>	<p>Providing audio visual recordings of Council meetings will improve openness and transparency and contribute to improved governance arrangements.</p>

## RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

12. To ensure there is an awareness that any meetings are to be recorded notification will be included as part of the relevant agendas. The Chair will also inform attendees at the start of the meeting that all or part of the meeting will be recorded. Elected Members and the public will be advised that by entering the Chamber they are consenting to being filmed and that those images and sound recordings may be made available on the Council's web site and /or for training purposes.
13. Members may need to be mindful of their conduct and behaviour whilst recording is taking place and how this may be perceived by members of the public viewing the proceedings. Liaison will take place with political groups prior to any recordings to remind identify some issues for Members to take account of whilst being filmed.

## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

14. The Council has the legal power to record meetings by virtue of both S111 Local Government Act 1972 and S1 Localism Act 2011 (the general power of competence).

15. The Openness of Public Bodies Regulations 2014 allows members of the public and others the freedom to record Council meetings using whatever means they choose.
16. It is not proposed at this time to broadcast a live transmission of meetings, however, later publication is planned. A party who believes that they have been libeled during a meeting would have an action against both the person making the statement and the Council as “broadcaster”. The Council will need to be wary of this going forward and will need to consider editing such content “out” of any published recordings.
17. It will be necessary to make attendees at meetings aware of the recording and potential broadcast of the meeting.
18. The Council’s contract with Nuway will require amending and any changes must be carried out in accordance with Contract Procedure Rules

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

19. The supplier of the PA and Conference system installed within the Chamber has quoted £3,650 plus VAT to enable the facility to record meetings and the provision of training. The purchase, installation and training costs will be met from existing Members support budgets. Costs of maintenance and repair will be included as part of the current Chamber system contract and so will continue to be funded from existing budget.

### **PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS**

20. A procurement waiver from Contract Procedure Rules has been completed and agreed to enable Nuway Audio Visual (the current providers of the Council Chamber and conference system to commission and install the necessary equipment as part of the current arrangements.

### **HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

21. There are no specific Human resource implications associated with this report.

### **TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS**

22. A Business Case relating to the webcasting and audio visual recording of Council meetings was approved by the ICT Governance Board (IGB) in June 2015 and the ICT resource requirements to deliver this project have been allocated and reflected in the Technology Forward Plan.
23. ICT will need to work with the third party supplier to finalise the storage requirements/agree the optimum video resolution, but based on the estimated file size/number of meetings per year and assuming a 12 month retention period for the local back-up copies, there are no anticipated issues with utilising existing capacity within the Council’s Storage Area Network (SAN) for this purpose.

24. The additional hardware to be supplied by the third party supplier will be accommodated in the existing server rack used for the Council's Chamber Voting and Conference system.
25. It is understood that any occasional editing of the videos can be achieved using the online video editor provided by YouTube and as such it will not be necessary to procure any additional software for this purpose. Facilities also exist to provide subtitles and closed captions, where required.
26. Publishing the video/audio content to the internet, via the Council's YouTube channel, will reduce the dependency on Council systems for accessing video and audio files of meetings and should ensure accessibility for citizens from multiple devices.

## **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

27. The proposal to provide an audio recording of Council meetings enable's greater access to local decision making to those who may not otherwise be able to attend Council meeting e.g. due to disability.

## **CONSULTATION**

28. Consultation has taken place with the relevant departments of the Council in producing this report.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

29. Report to Council 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2015 Audio And Visual Recording Of Council Meetings

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