

## **FILMING, VIDEOING, PHOTOGRAPHY AND AUDIO RECORDING AT FIRE AUTHORITY MEETINGS**

The Fire Authority supports the principle of transparency and encourages filming, recording and taking photographs at its meetings that are open to the public. It also welcomes the use of social networking websites (such as Twitter and Facebook) and micro-blogging to communicate with people about what is happening, as it happens.

There is no requirement to notify the Fire Authority in advance, but it should be noted that the Chairman of the meeting will have absolute discretion to terminate or suspend any of these activities if, in their opinion, continuing to do so would prejudice proceedings at the meeting. The circumstances in which termination or suspension might occur could include:

- public disturbance or suspension of the meeting
- the meeting agreeing to formally exclude the press and public from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business being discussed
- where it is considered that continued recording/photography/filming/webcasting might infringe the rights of any individual, and
- when the Chairman, considers that a defamatory statement has been made.

In allowing this, the Fire Authority asks those recording proceedings not to edit the film/ record/photographs in a way that could lead to misinterpretation of the proceedings, or infringe the core values of the Fire Authority. This includes refraining from editing an image or views expressed in a way that may ridicule, or show a lack of respect towards those being photographed/filmed/ recorded.

Those intending to bring large equipment, or wishing to discuss any special requirements are advised to contact the Fire and Rescue Service's Communications Team in advance of the meeting to seek advice and guidance. The use of flash photography or additional lighting will not be allowed unless this has been discussed in advance of the meeting and agreement reached on how it can be done without disrupting proceedings.

At the beginning of each meeting, the Chairman will make an announcement that the meeting may be filmed, recorded or photographed. Meeting agendas will also carry this message.