

# Live-Streaming Policy

As it is not possible to review and edit live-streams before publication, it is necessary to take extra precautions to minimise the risks of filming something inappropriate.

The risks of live broadcasting include (among other things):

- the inclusion of bad language or offensive comments
- derogatory, libellous, or politically sensitive comments
- detailed and inappropriate identification of children
- undue invasion of people's privacy or right to anonymity
- undue prominence of a product, logo, or business premises
- unexpected coverage of accidents or injuries
- inappropriate, graphic, and insensitive behaviour

Some of these risks are difficult to prevent, but this policy outlines basic considerations to help manage particular risks. These should be combined with our general filming considerations (see the final section).

## **Planning a live-stream**

It is important to consult with the Council's Communications team before conducting live streaming. This will help the team assess any foreseeable problems and decide if live-streaming is likely to cause any unacceptable risks.

There are certain things that can help to reduce risks. For example:

- approach event organisers in advance to discuss filming
- avoid events that contain controversial or sensitive subjects
- minimise the length of time you are live-streaming
- avoid any unplanned interaction with members of the public
- assess if normal filming would be more appropriate than live-streaming.

## **Public privacy**

People have a right not to appear on film without their permission. If you want to focus on a particular individual or group of people, you should obtain their permission beforehand to ensure that they are willing. It is sometimes impossible not to inadvertently film people who might be walking across a scene or standing in the background (this is particularly the case when filming events with audiences). If somebody takes offence at being included in this way, you should respect their wishes without questioning their decision.

## **Children**

Children cannot legally consent to be filmed; you should first obtain the permission of the child's parent/guardian. If you do receive parental consent for a child to appear on film, you should first plan what the child will say or do and provide them with advice such as: not to identify themselves other than using their first name and not to say something that could cause them embarrassment or incrimination.

## **Strong language and offensive behaviour**

Listen out for nearby sounds when you are filming. The main risk of recording strong language or offensive comments comes from bystanders, passers-by, song lyrics, graffiti, or slogans on clothing. An added risk comes from the person filming who might inadvertently use strong language in shock or frustration at something e.g. tripping over.

Avoid unplanned interactions with members of the public when you are live-streaming. Bear in mind that some people might maliciously use strong language or exhibit offensive behaviour if they recognise that you are live-streaming.

If you encounter any prolonged use of strong language or offensive behaviour, the safest approach is to stop filming immediately.

## **Impartiality**

It is important to demonstrate impartiality at all times. This can often be achieved by careful planning to avoid filming anything that is likely to contain politically sensitive material. If somebody in your film breaches this rule in any way, it may be appropriate for you to clarify that the views expressed do not belong to the City Council. Do not issue an apology on behalf of somebody else. An inappropriate apology or correction could exacerbate the problem.

## **Political sensitivity**

Avoid filming protests, demonstrations, or politically motivated entertainment as they are likely to contain sensitive material. If an unplanned protest begins while you are filming, you should stop your live-stream until you have been able to assess the situation and make a careful decision about any risks.

## **Product prominence**

When choosing a location from which to live-stream, you should consider ways to avoid undue prominence of logos, products or businesses. For some events, it might be impossible to avoid glimpses of sponsors' logos or businesses in the background. In these cases, you should avoid lingering shots of any particular logo or business. If you intend to film prolonged footage of a person speaking/performing, you should ensure that there is no excessive branding/advertising in the background or on their clothing.

## **Defamation**

If we broadcast anything that harms the reputation of an individual, a group, or an organisation we may run the risk of being sued for defamation. The risk exists regardless of who makes the defamatory comments. If such a problem occurs, it may be appropriate for you to clarify that the views/actions do not belong to the City Council. Do not issue an apology on behalf of someone else. An inappropriate apology or correction could exacerbate the defamation or create a new one.

## **Accidents and serious events**

If an accident or serious event occurs during your live-stream, you should stop filming immediately. Do not be tempted to keep the live-stream running for the purposes of documenting what is happening. If you feel that something should be documented or filmed for the purposes of evidence, you should make a personal decision about this and do so only with your own equipment/account.

## **Flashing images**

If you are proposing to live-stream an event that you know will use an exceptional amount of flashing lights and images, consider including a warning in advance for those who have photo-sensitive epilepsy.

## **General filming considerations**

- Do not block or obstruct any public or private rights of way
- Do not film anything likely to cause offence or danger to anyone
- Respect any requests by anyone not to appear in the film
- Request permission from private landowners
- Do not film people, businesses or private buildings without consent
- Do not film children without consent from a parent or guardian.

If you have any questions about this policy, please contact the Communications Team - [communications@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:communications@winchester.gov.uk)