



3rd July 2026

UPDATED REPORT AS REQUESTED BY ELECTED MEMBERS IN RELATION TO LIVE STREAMING AND RECORDING OF MEETINGS

Overview

This report has been prepared in advance of the Special Meeting to consider the deferred notice of motion on the webcasting and recording of Council meetings. Its purpose is to, as requested, address matters raised during the discussions to date on the motion.

Webcasting and recording

The proposed approach is based on the webcasting and recording of all public meetings of Council, that is meetings currently held in public where the media and members of the public are entitled to attend. This includes the Plenary Council meeting, the Metropolitan and Municipal District meetings and the Strategic Policy Committee meetings. This approach is therefore designed to address the needs of five key venues within the Council's operations.

Plenary meeting Council Chamber in Dooradoyle, Metropolitan District in Merchant's Quay and the three Municipal District Meetings in Newcastle West, Adare-Rathkeale and Cappamore-Kilmallock.

The proposed approach costed below includes live webcasting, recording for archives, public access to past sessions, and operational support. Integrating existing audio-visual systems into the new platform is vital for maintaining audio and visual quality.

If it is decided to proceed with the recording of meetings, a procurement process will be necessary to source a supplier for the system. However, to support the Chamber to make an informed decision, an estimated costing has been obtained.

All costings provided below are based on a hardware leasing model. This approach means that the Council does not need to purchase equipment outright; instead, the necessary webcasting hardware is leased as part of the service agreement. This will support technological refresh and upgrades over time.

Under this model, the webcasting hardware, software platform, monitoring, and ongoing support are all delivered as a bundled managed service. This ensures a streamlined, comprehensive solution, with the supplier responsible for maintaining equipment, providing technical support, and managing the platform throughout the contract period.

Estimated Cost

All pricing is subject to confirmation through formal procurement process. The estimated price is obtained using a 5-room configuration as set out above and each room will have to be surveyed as part of the procurement process.

2025 has been selected as the relevant year. The estimated cost is based on 251 hours of Council meetings (including Strategic Policy Meetings) during 2025 in all 5 Chambers.

Hours over and above that sample of 251 will increase the estimated costing.

The recurring costs include platform licenses, monitoring, archive, and support. The estimated annual cost based on the sample year is €65,249 per annum including VAT.

The actual cost will be obtained once a decision has been taken to implement webcasting and recording. A procurement process will then commence involving a survey of the venues and the preparation of a pricing document.

Proposed Managed Solution

The above solution is a proposed management solution to mitigate the inadvertent disclosure of personal data, potentially defamatory or inappropriate statements.

An example of a managed online meeting recording system is available on the following link: [Home - Roscommon County Council Webcasting](#).

The proposed mitigation strategy will provide for the Meetings Administrator to oversee the post meeting review of the recording and, where necessary, the redaction of specific statements from the version published online. Any such redaction will be undertaken solely for defined governance and legal reasons, for example where potentially personal, confidential or defamatory material has been inadvertently disclosed during the meeting. Editing will be exceptional, proportionate, and documented, and will not be used to alter the substantive record or proceedings of the meeting.

Members should note that the original, unredacted recording will continue to be retained by the Council as part of its records and may be accessible or releasable in accordance with applicable legislation, including the Freedom of Information Act and Data Protection legislation as amended.

At the commencement of the meeting, the Meetings Administrator will indicate whether the proceedings, in whole or in part, are being webcast and recorded. The Agenda will also include a notice regarding webcasting and recording which shall be read aloud by the Meetings Administrator at the beginning of the meeting, for example:

"This meeting is being webcast for live or later recording via the Council's website. Please note that the Council is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2014 and the Data Protection Act 1988 - 2018. Data collected during this webcast will be retained in accordance with statutory requirements. By entering the Council Chamber and occupying seats around the meeting tables,

you consent to being visual and audible recording together with the potential use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting purposes. Members of the public and media are requested to remain within designated areas to avoid inadvertently being recorded.”

Additional mitigation strategies will include fixed camera angles, prominent signage, recording policy and protocol, elected member and staff briefings and a retention period for recordings.

Standing Orders

Standing orders will have to be amended if the motion is adopted. This will require a minimum of 21 members to vote in favour of its amendment.

Legal Advice

Elected Local Authority Members in Ireland have qualified privilege, not absolute privilege like TDs or Senators. This protects them from defamation claims for statements made in good faith during their duties, but the protection is lost if malice is proven. The statutory code of conduct under Section 169 of the Local Government Act 2001 helps minimise risk. According to Section 19(1) of the Defamation Act 2009, qualified privilege fails if the plaintiff proves malice by the defendant.

While "malice" isn't defined in the Act, it typically means making a statement without honest belief or with reckless disregard for the truth, or intending to cause harm. Case law elsewhere defines malice as acting knowingly or recklessly regarding a statement's falsehood.

What procedures will be in place if potentially defamatory remarks are made or there is a potential breach of data protection?

Should any potentially defamatory comments or breach of personal data occur, these will be reviewed and removed from public records or broadcasts as soon as possible, in line with processes to assess and remove such material. Notification procedures for any data protection breach will also be complied with. The Council will maintain a documented process for redaction and takedown of content, particularly for inadvertent disclosures during meetings.

As above the full recording will be available for a period in accordance with the retention protocol. If the Council receives a valid Data Protection access request or a Freedom of Information request, it will carefully consider the release of the relevant information, ensuring that any disclosures are in accordance with applicable legislation and guidelines. The Council's approach is always to safeguard individuals' privacy and comply with legal obligations.

Conclusion

If the motion is adopted, standing orders will have to be amended and then a procurement process will commence with the survey of the Chambers. Protocols and procedures for the live stream and recording will have to be drafted along with briefing and familiarisation sessions for members and staff. These protocols will cover such matters as the incorporation of the technology into the meetings process and retention periods for archive purposes.

Notwithstanding any decision on future webcasting and recording of meetings, a recording of the meeting will not be the official minute of that meeting. The minute of the meeting adopted at the subsequent meeting will be the official and legal record of the decisions, actions and statutory

approvals decided at that meeting.

Please see appendix A below for examples of other Councils that have already adopted a system and associated links where recordings are available.

Following discussion at the Special Meeting of Limerick City and County Council held on the 19th May 2026, it was agreed to seek further information in relation the possibility of adding a delay feature to the live-streaming and recording of meetings. Details of this information can be found in Appendix B below.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Farrell', written in a cursive style.

**CIARA FARRELL,
SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICER,
CORPORATE AND CUSTOMER SERVICES.**

Appendix A

Council	Do you livestream, record or use traditional minutes?	If yes Software/Technology used	If livestreamed or recorded are they Council Meetings, Municipal Districts or SPCs?		Link
Donegal County Council	Livestream + Recording	Public-i.tv	Council		Webcast library - Donegal County Council Webcasting
Dublin City Council	Live stream + recording	public-i-tv	Council meetings,	Area Committees, SPCs	Home - Dublin City Council Webcasting
Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council	Livestream + recording Manual drafting of decision minutes. One year archive of webcasts available to the public online	Public-I integrated with MS Teams	Council Meetings	Area Committees	Home - Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Webcasting
Fingal County Council	Live stream + recording	public it tv	Council meetings	Area Committee	Home - Fingal County Council Webcasting
Kildare County Council	Livestream + recording	Youtube	Council Meetings		
Roscommon County Council	Livestream and recording	Public-i-tv	Council	Key meetings	Home - Roscommon County Council Webcasting

Sligo County Council	Livestream + recording	YouTube	Council	Municipal Districts	
South Dublin County Council	Livestream + recording	<u>Public-i-tv</u>	Council	Area Committees	https://sdcc.public-i.tv/core/portal/home
Tipperary County Council	Live stream + recording	<u>Youtube</u>	Council	Municipal Districts	
Westmeath County Council	Livestream – Municipal Districts only. No recordings. Public must email for a link to watch the livestream.	Microsoft Teams		Municipal Districts	n/a
Kerry County Council	Livestream only, members of the public must register for access in advance. Registration links are published on the website	Microsoft Teams	Council Meetings		n/a
Mayo County Council	Recorded but not livestreamed; Attend online by request. Audio only, no video.	Not stated on website	Council	Municipal districts	n/a
Cork City Council	Livestream	<u>public - i-tv</u>	Council meetings		Home - Cork City Council streaming

Carlow County Council	Traditional Manual Minute taking	Microsoft Teams			N/A
Cavan County Council	Traditional Manual Minute taking				N/A
Clare County Council	Traditional Manual Minute taking;	Microsoft Teams			N/A
Cork County Council	Traditional Manual Minute taking; Recently decided not to record	Microsoft Teams			N/A
Galway City Council	Traditional Manual Minute Taking	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Galway County Council	Traditional Manual Minute taking;	Taken in combination with Teams			N/A
Laois County Council	Traditional Manual Minute taking	Microsoft Teams			N/A
Leitrim County Council	Traditional Manual Minute taking;	Microsoft Teams			N/A
Longford County Council	Traditional Manual Minute Taking	N/a	n/a		n/a
Louth County Council	Traditional Manual Minute Taking	N/A	n/a		n/a
Meath County Council	Access to the meetings online via Zoom. No recording	Zoom	Council		n/a

Monaghan County Council	Traditional Manual Minute taking; TEAMS option available	Microsoft Teams			N/A
Offaly County Council	Traditional Manual Minute Taking	N/a	n/a		n/a
Waterford City & County Council	Traditional Manual Minute taking; don't record or live stream meetings				N/A
Wexford County Council	Traditional Manual Minute taking; Offer hybrid meeting option;	Microsoft Teams			N/A
Kilkenny County Council	Traditional Manual Minute taking				N/A

Appendix B

Comparison with South Dublin County Council

South Dublin County Council (SDCC) currently operates a single-chamber webcasting model at an annual cost of approximately €20,000-€25,000, which equates to approximately 150 support hours per annum. It is manually operated by Council staff and is configured in their main Council Chamber only. It does not extend to their Municipal District Offices or other venues.

The costs associated with the Limerick proposal arise from providing livestreaming and recording across multiple venues in the Council's operations, rather than from additional technical capability or live content control features.

Live Delay, Bleeping and Intervention

Clarification was sought on whether live delay or audio bleeping could be made available during meetings.

In scoping the webcasting solution, it was confirmed that live audio bleeping, live censorship and broadcast-style delay are not supported features of this type of platform. Broadcast-style delay systems are typically used in national television and large-scale commercial broadcasting and require bespoke infrastructure, specialist staffing and significantly higher cost. They are not considered proportionate in a local authority context.

Operational control during meetings would rely on pause and mute functionality, together with Standing Orders and appropriate post-meeting governance procedures.

South Dublin County Council has confirmed that it does not operate a live bleeping or real-time editing for its live-streamed meetings. Similar to other Local Authorities, SDCC relies on pause, and mute which are manually operated by Council staff during meetings to address issue with live streaming. As stated in the Corporate Service Senior Executive Officer's report circulated 8th May 2025, the proposed mitigation strategy will provide for the Meetings' Administrator to oversee the post meeting review of the recording in line.

Member Questions and Answers

1. What meetings would be covered?

A. The proposal has been costed on the basis of covering:

- Plenary Council meetings
- Metropolitan District meetings
- Municipal District meetings
- Strategic Policy Committee meetings

Across up to five physical venues currently used by the Council.

2. What options are available, and how much do they cost?

A. Three scope options have been set out on a VAT-inclusive basis:

- Plenary only (single chamber): approximately €18,450-€23,370 per annum
- Plenary + Metropolitan District (two chambers): approximately €35,670 per annum
- All Council meetings (five venues): approximately €65,249 per annum

All figures are indicative and subject to venue surveys and procurement.

3. Why is the full Council option more expensive than other councils, such as South Dublin County Council?

A. South Dublin County Council operates a single-chamber webcasting arrangement only, at a cost of approximately €20,000-€25,000 per annum. Their arrangement:

- Applies to one physical location only
- Does not extend to Municipal District meeting rooms
- Is manually operated, with approximately 150 support hours per annum
- Typically requires two operators per meeting

The higher cost for Limerick arises from extending coverage from one location to five locations, not from additional technical features.

4. Does South Dublin County Council have live bleeping or delay controls?

A. No. South Dublin County Council has confirmed that it does not have live bleeping or live editing capability. As with other councils, it relies on pause, mute and fade-to-black controls during meetings, together with post-meeting governance.

5. Can meetings be delayed or “bleeped” live to prevent inappropriate comments being broadcast?

A. No. Public-I has confirmed that live audio bleeping, live censorship and broadcast-style delay are not supported features. Such systems are broadcast-grade solutions used in national television and major

commercial events and are not considered proportionate or viable in a local authority context. Risk is managed through:

- Operator pause and mute controls
- Meeting procedures
- Post-meeting review and redaction where legally required

6. Can recordings be edited after a meeting?

A. Any post-meeting editing would be exceptional, proportionate and documented, and undertaken only for defined legal or governance reasons, for example inadvertent disclosure of personal data. Editing would not be used to alter the substantive record or proceedings of a meeting. The original, unredacted recording would continue to be retained by the Council in accordance with applicable legislation.