



## **PRESS & MEDIA POLICY**

### **1. Introduction**

This policy describes how members (councillors) and the Parish Clerk should act when in contact with the press or media. This includes their use of social media (e.g. blogs, Facebook, X/Twitter) as well as print and broadcast media.

Policies on attendance at meetings are covered by the Council's Standing Orders.

Policies on sharing existing information are covered by the existing Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme, and Privacy Policy.

### **2. Responding to Press and Media Enquiries**

#### **2.1. Requests for Factual Information**

Members and the Parish Clerk should refer enquirers to relevant policies, agendas, and minutes available on the Council's website where possible. Members must notify the Parish Clerk of any responses given, ensuring that no additional comments are made.

For other requests:

- The Parish Clerk will respond in accordance with the Freedom of Information Policy and Privacy Policy.
- If necessary, the request will be placed on the agenda for discussion at the next Council meeting.
- In urgent situations, the Parish Clerk will consult the Chairman and Vice-Chairman to determine whether an immediate response is in the best interests of residents.

The Parish Clerk will keep members informed of all requests and responses.

#### **2.2. Requests for Opinions**

Neither members nor the Parish Clerk should express opinions on behalf of the Council unless the matter has been discussed and minuted at a Council meeting. Such requests should be referred to the Parish Clerk for inclusion in a future meeting agenda.

Members may share personal opinions but must:

- Clearly state that their views are personal and do not represent the Council.
- Adhere to the Members' Code of Conduct.

### **2.3. Requests for Interviews**

Requests for interviews on behalf of the Council should be declined unless previously agreed at a Council meeting.

## **3. Issuing Press and Media Statements**

### **3.1. Council Statements and Publicity**

The Council must discuss and approve any official communication to the press or media. This includes the purpose, content, timing, and method of publication.

- If a draft statement is required, the Parish Clerk will circulate it for review to ensure it aligns with the Council's position.
- If conflicting opinions arise, the matter must be discussed in a Council meeting before publication.
- In time-sensitive cases, where prior discussion is not possible, the Parish Clerk (after consulting the Chairman and Vice-Chairman) may draft a statement for publication. However, this is only permitted for previously discussed and approved topics.

The Parish Clerk will inform members of all media-related actions.

### **3.2. Sharing Third Party Information**

The Council may receive factual, publicly available, and non-confidential information from third parties that could be beneficial to residents.

- Such information should be referred to the Parish Clerk.
- The Parish Clerk may publicise it using appropriate channels, ensuring that the Council does not appear to endorse any specific views.

## **4. Compliance and Review**

All Members and staff must adhere to this policy.

This policy It will be reviewed every 5 years or earlier if required by changes in legislation.

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