



## COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

### INTRODUCTION

This policy aims to establish a protocol for effective communication of the Parish Council's activities and pertinent information to the media and members of the public. This policy is supported by the Councils Communication Procedure and Model Publication Scheme.

- The Parish Council is accountable to members of the public and has a duty to convey its decisions and actions through various media.
- All communication will be conveyed in an open and straightforward manner.
- The Parish Clerk is the Proper Officer of the Parish Council and is responsible for all formal communication between the Council, the press and members of the public.

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Council will facilitate community engagement with the electorate by:

- Publishing its meeting dates, times and venues
- Providing an allocated period of time for Public Participation in meetings
- Consulting with the electorate to gauge public opinion
- Maintaining an up to date website

### METHODS OF COMMUNICATION

The Council will use the following media to communicate its activities:

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>METHOD OF COMMUNICATION</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>
Approved minutes	Website	Parish Clerk
Agendas	Website / Noticeboards	Parish Clerk
Council policies/procedures	Website	Parish Clerk
Annual external audit	Website	Parish Clerk
Adopted Annual Accounts	Website	Parish Clerk
Councillor vacancies	Website / Noticeboards	Parish Clerk
Financial information	Website	Parish Clerk

Other information will be provided in accordance with the Council's adopted Publication Scheme.

## **PROTOCOL**

1. The Parish Clerk is solely responsible for the preparation of notices of Council meetings, agendas and minutes.
2. The Parish Clerk is responsible for the development and maintenance of the Council's website so that it remains current.
3. All correspondence addressed to the Parish Council will be actioned by the Parish Clerk.
4. Information that needs to be considered by the Parish Council or one of its committees will be placed on the first agenda after its receipt.
5. Agendas for Council meetings will be accompanied with sufficient written reports and information to enable Members to make an informed decision.
6. Agendas will be issued electronically so that they are received by Members at least 3 clear days before all meetings of the Council.
7. Agendas and minutes for all meetings of the Council will be published on the Council's website.
8. Other relevant information will be emailed to Members in between meetings.
9. Council information will be made available to members of the public in accordance with the Council's 'Publication Scheme'.

## **REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION**

10. In accordance with Standing Order nos: 20(a) and 20(b) requests for information held by the Council shall be handled in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of handling requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.
11. Correspondence from, and notices served by, the Information Commissioner shall be referred by the Proper Officer to the Council.
12. The Council shall have the power to do anything to facilitate compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
13. In accordance with Standing Order no: 11 neither the Parish Clerk, nor Members, will disclose confidential information that is exempt under the Freedom of Information Act.
14. The agenda and its supporting papers, and the minutes from a meeting where confidential or sensitive information is discussed, shall not disclose or otherwise undermine such information which, for special reasons, is not in the public interest.

**Approved: June 2016**

**Review: June 2017**