

Press and Media Policy

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1.0	January 2025	n/a
2.0	April 2026	Reviewed

The right to record, film and to broadcast meetings of the council, committees and sub committees has been established following the creation of the Local Government Audit and Accountability Act 2014, and the subsequent introduction of the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 on 6 August 2014.

Summary

This document outlines the Parish Council's policy for media engagement, specifying the roles of the Chairman and Clerk in making official statements, and the procedures for submitting press releases. It emphasises the need for written confirmation of verbal submissions, restricts commentary to factual matters agreed in meetings, and prohibits disclosure of confidential or legally sensitive topics. The policy further addresses the rights and responsibilities regarding filming and recording meetings, with due consideration for Data Protection regulations.

Protocol

The purpose of this policy is to define the roles and responsibilities within the Parish Council for working with the media and deals with the day-to-day relationship between the Council and the media.

Representations to the press on behalf of the Parish Council will be submitted by the Chairman and Clerk and wherever possible it will take the form of a written statement.

Other Councillors wishing to submit press releases will do so either via or with prior authorisation from the Chairman or Clerk. It should take the form of a written statement, a copy of which should be sent to the Clerk for recording.

In the event that a verbal addition or submission is made by any Councillor this will, wherever possible be confirmed in written format before publication.

The Council will only comment on matters of fact or matters agreed at Council meetings and representations will be in accordance with the Parish Council's decision.

No representations will be made in matters which are discussed in closed session i.e. where press and public have been excluded under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. Furthermore, no representations will be made on any item or of a nature that may reasonably cause the Parish Council to be subject to litigation.

Meetings or parts of meetings from which the press and public are excluded by reason of the confidential business to be transacted may not

be filmed or recorded.

The Parish Council will respect the rights of individuals and others and will have particular regard to Data Protection issues when issuing press releases.

Whilst those attending meetings are deemed to have consented to the filming, recording or broadcasting of meetings, those exercising the rights to film, record and broadcast must respect the rights of other people attending under the Data Protection Act 1998. In particular, those wishing to film or record are asked to focus on council proceedings and not on those members of the public in attendance. Vulnerable adults and minors should not be filmed or recorded.

In the event that Councillors have direct dealings with the press on any matter which may reasonably be construed as being associated with the Parish Council must make it clear that they are not commenting as a representative of the Parish Council or reflecting its views.

The law governing communications in local authorities can be found in the Local Government Acts 1986 and 1988. The Parish Council must also have regard to adopted Code of Conduct and other legislation.

The Parish Council's adopted Standing Orders should be adhered to.

The Parish Council is accountable to the local community for its actions and this can only be achieved through effective two-way communications. The media – press, radio, TV, internet – are crucially important in conveying information to the community so the Council must maintain positive, constructive media relations and work with them to increase public awareness of the services and facilities provided by the Parish Council and to explain the reasons for particular policies and priorities.

The Parish Council asks those recording proceedings not to edit the film or recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation of the proceedings or infringe the core values of the Parish Council. This includes refraining from editing an image or views expressed in a way that may ridicule or show lack of respect towards those being filmed or recorded.

The Parish Council will display its requirements as to filming, recording and broadcasting at its meeting venues, and those undertaking such activities will be deemed to have accepted them whether they have read them or not.

The Parish Council may itself photograph, film, record or broadcast its meetings for clarity and can retain, use or dispose of such material in accordance with its retention and disposal policies.