



Communications Policy

1. Introduction

Effective communication is vital for the success of Rusper Parish Council. This policy sets out how the council communicates with the public, partners, and the media, ensuring openness, transparency, and professionalism.

2. Aims and Objectives

The Council aims to:

- Promote trust and transparency between the council and residents.
- Provide accurate and timely information about its activities, services, and decisions.
- Encourage community engagement.
- Uphold the council's reputation through responsible communication.

3. Methods of Communication

The Council may use the following methods to communicate:

- Parish Council Website – for agendas, minutes, policies, and news.
- Noticeboards – for statutory notices and meeting information.
- Email – for official correspondence, via council-assigned addresses.
- Social Media – where appropriate, to inform and engage
- Newsletters / Parish Magazine – to update residents on council projects and events.
- Public Meetings – as opportunities for residents to speak and ask questions.

4. Councillors' Communication Responsibilities

- Councillors must represent the corporate position of the Council, not their individual views, when acting on behalf of the Council.
- Only the Clerk, Chair, or a designated spokesperson may issue official public statements or press releases.
- Councillors may respond to constituents but must not make promises on behalf of the Council.

5. Communication with the Clerk

- The Clerk is the Proper Officer and should be the first point of contact for council matters.
- All official communication (e.g. requests for information or complaints) should be directed to the Clerk.

6. Press and Media

- The Clerk or Chair will handle media enquiries.
- Press releases must be approved by the Clerk and reflect council decisions or policy.
- Councillors must not speak to the media on behalf of the Council unless authorised.

7. Social Media

- Posts must be factual, non-political, and respectful.
- Comments that are abusive, discriminatory, or defamatory will be removed and, if necessary, reported.
- Personal social media accounts must not be used to conduct official council business.

8. Confidentiality and Data Protection

- Councillors and staff must not disclose confidential information.
- All communication must comply with the UK GDPR and the Council's Data Protection Policy.

9. Public Participation

- Members of the public are welcome to attend meetings and may speak during the designated public forum.
- Written communications from the public will be acknowledged promptly and responded to in a timely and courteous manner.

10. Review of the Policy

This policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner if required due to changes in legislation or best practice.