Frindsbury Extra Parish Council

Communication policy

Aims

1. To establish clear, easy to use channels of communication between the Parish Council and the parishioners and vice versa.
2. To provide information on important matters in a timely manner so as to facilitate and encourage informed comments from interested individuals and groups.

Parish Council Correspondence

1. The point of contact for the Parish Council is the Clerk, and it is to the Clerk that all correspondence for the Parish Council should be addressed. The Clerk will then forward this to the relevant person/committee.
2. The Clerk should deal with all correspondence following a meeting.
3. All official correspondence should be sent by the Clerk in the name of the council using council letter headed paper.
4. Where correspondence from the Clerk to a councillor is copied to another person, the addressee should be made aware that a copy is being forwarded to that other person (e.g. copy to …).
5. All correspondence to the Parish Clerk will be acknowledged within 3 days of receipt and followed up within 20 working days or an explanation will be sent stating why this cannot be achieved.
6. If Email is used then an acknowledgment will be sent via Email.
7. If a parishioner wishes a matter to be raised at a Parish Council meeting then the Parish Clerk will need to be notified 14 days prior to the next Parish Council meeting, otherwise the request will be deferred to the next months meeting.
8. No individual Councillor or Officer should be the sole custodian of any correspondence or information in the name of the Parish Council, a committee, sub-committee or working party. In particular, Councillors and Officers do not have a right to obtain confidential information/documentation unless they can demonstrate a 'need to know'.

Communications with the Press and Public

1. The Clerk will clear all press reports, or comments to the media, with the Chair of the council or the Chair of the relevant committee.
2. Press reports from the council, its committees or working parties should be from the Clerk or an officer or via the reporter's own attendance at a meeting.
3. Unless a councillor has been authorised by the council to speak to the media on a particular issue, Councillors who are asked for comment by the press should make it clear that it is a personal view and ask that it be clearly reported as their personal view.
4. Unless a councillor is absolutely certain that he/she is reporting the view of the council, they must make it clear to members of the public that they are expressing a personal view.
5. If councillors receive a complaint from a member of the public, this should be dealt with under the Council's adopted complaints procedure, or via a council agenda item.

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Councillor Correspondence to external parties (including letters, verbal or electronic communication)

1. As the Clerk should be sending most of the council's correspondence from a councillor to other bodies, it needs to be made clear that it is written in their official capacity and has been authorised by the Parish Council.
2. A copy of all outgoing correspondence relating to the council or a Councillor's role within it, should be sent to the Clerk, and it be noted on the correspondence, e.g. "copy to the Clerk" so that the recipient is aware that the Clerk has been advised.
3. Emails should be kept to a minimum and, together with other forms of communication, should be worded in an appropriate manner.
4. Only those authorised, may add posts to Facebook/Instagram etc. in the name of Frindsbury Extra Parish Council.

Methods of Communication

Parish Council information will be made available and up-dated :

- On the Parish website
- On Parish noticeboards
- Parish Council meeting agendas will be published 3 days prior to a meeting on the website.
- Parish Council meeting minutes will be published after being signed off at the next Parish Council website.
- Parish Councillors' names are available on the Parish Council website and on the Parish Council noticeboards and Contact can be requested through the Clerk.

Approving committee: Frindsbury Extra Parish Council Meeting

Date of committee meeting: 27th February 2024

Policy Effect from: 28th February 2024

Date document reviewed: 27th January 2026