



# ECCLESFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

*Serving the Community since 1894*

## **PRESS AND SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this policy is to guide both Councillors and Officers of the Council in their relations with the Press and Media, in such a way as to ensure the smooth running of the Council.

The policy has been prepared to ensure consistency in the Council's dealing with the Press and Media and details who is authorised to speak on behalf of the Council. It has been drafted to ensure that the views and policy of the Council are presented accurately.

In providing information to the Press and Media, Councillors and Officers representing the Council will abide by the "Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity" published by the Department for Communities & Local Government.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/localgovernment/pdf/1878324.pdf>

The overriding principle of this policy is that all elements of the Press and Media will be treated equally. Above everything else, a Councillor must observe Ecclesfield Parish Council's Code of Conduct whenever they conduct the business of the authority, conducts the business of the office to which they have been elected or acts as a representative of the authority.

### **Clerk and Officers of the Council**

All news releases made on behalf of the Parish Council will be authorised by the Clerk after consultation with the Chairman of the Parish Council or the relevant Chairman of a Committee.

All communications made by the Clerk, Administration Officer or Proper Officer, will relate to the stated business and day to day management of the activities or adopted policy of the Council. They are not expected or authorised to speculate on matters that have not been considered by the Council.

## **Members of the Council**

- A Councillor must not disclose information that is of a confidential nature. This includes any discussion with the press on any matter which has been discussed under confidential items on Council or Committee agendas or at any other private briefing.
- A Councillor should not act on behalf of the Council without the approval of Full Council.
- A Councillor should act with integrity at all times when representing or acting on behalf of Ecclesfield Council

## **Meetings of Council and Committees**

Facilities will be provided at meetings for the Press to take notes of the proceedings.

There is a Recording of Meetings Policy in place and a copy is available for the public and press to read before the start of the meeting.

As provided in the Council's Standing Orders both the Press and Public may be excluded from a meeting whilst certain confidential matters (In accordance with the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as amended by Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A the Public and press may attend the meeting).

## **Social Media Policy**

The use of digital and social media now has a clear and compelling impact on all areas of local government enabling better and more direct contact between the Parish Council, the people and businesses it serves and the agencies that it works with.

This Social Media Policy aims to describe how the Parish Council will use social media to improve and expand the ways in which it communicates internally, with its local residents, local businesses and the various government (local and central) agencies that it deals with.

The Parish Council has a corporate presence on the web and an email channel which it uses to communicate with people who live in, work in and visit the Parish Council.

The Parish Council will always try to use the most effective channel for its communications. We may ask those who contact us for their preferred channel of communication when we deal with them. Over time the Parish Council may add to the channels of communication that it uses as it seeks to improve and expand the services it delivers. When these changes occur this Social Media Policy will be updated to reflect the new arrangements.

The Parish Council, at its discretion, allow and enable approved local groups to have a presence on its website for the purpose of presenting information about the groups activities. The Parish Council reserves the right to remove any or all of a local groups information from the website if it feels the content does not meet the Parish Council expectations.

**Adopted by Council 9.1.2020**

**Review date: April 2023**