Woodbury Parish Council

**(serving Exton, Woodbury and Woodbury Salterton)**

# Communications Policy

**RELATING TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC, OTHER AGENCIES, FELLOW MEMBERS, THE PRESS AND PARISH COUNCIL STAFF**

1. **Correspondence/Information to the Parish Council**

   a. 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.

   b. The Clerk should deal with all correspondence following a meeting.

   c. No individual Councillor should be the sole custodian of any correspondence Or information in the name of the Parish Council, a committee, sub-committee or working party.

2. **Agenda Items for Council, Committees, Sub-Committees and Working Parties**

   a. Agenda items should be clear and concise. They should contain sufficient information for members to make an informed decision.

   b. Items for information should be kept to a minimum on Council agendas.

   c. Where members wish fellow members to receive matters for "information only", this information should be circulated via or cc'd with the Parish Clerk.

3. **Communications with the Press and Public**

   a. Press reports from the Parish Council, Committees, Working Parties etc. should be from the Clerk or appointed Councillor speaking on behalf of the Parish Council or via the reporter's own attendance at a meeting.

   b. Members who are asked for comment by the press or members of the public, should ask that it be clearly reported that it is their personal view.
   Unless you are absolutely certain that you are reporting the view of the Parish Council, make it clear to the members of the public that it is a personal view.

   c. If Members have a complaint or receive a complaint from a member of the public, this should be presented to the Clerk in written format, to be dealt with under the Complaints Procedure, or via a Parish Council agenda item. The person's name and address should be on record.

4. **Councillor Correspondence to Other Agencies**

   a. All personal correspondence as a Parish Councillor to other agencies should make it clear that the views are the expression of the personal opinions of the writer and not necessarily those of the Parish Council.

   b. A copy of all outgoing correspondence relating to the Parish Council or one'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.

5. **Communications with Parish Council Staff**

a. Councillors must not give instructions to any member of staff, unless authorised to do so (this would be two or more members sitting as a committee or sub-committee with appropriate delegated powers from the council and not an individual, regardless of whether or not they are the Chairman of the Council, committee or other meeting).

b. Telephone calls should be kept to a minimum and be appropriate to the work of the Parish Council

c. Emails
- E-mails should be kept to a minimum
- Instant replies should not be expected from the Clerk
- Reasons for urgency should be stated
- Matters for information to the other councillors should normally be directed via the Clerk or they are cc'd into it.

d. E-mails to other agencies should be copied to the Clerk

e. Members should acknowledge their e-mails when requested to do so.

f. Meetings with the Clerk or other officers:-
- Where possible an appointment should be made;
- Meetings should be relevant to the work of the Council ;
- Members should be clear about the matters they wish to discuss.

Adopted by Woodbury Parish Council on 25th September 2023 and reviewed annually