

Rottingdean Parish Council

Open communication

1. The aim of this policy is to encourage open communication between all Parish Councillors, the Clerk and Parishioners. It is also designed to limit any personal risk to councillors in mis-communication.
2. We recognise that as Parish Councillors we are constantly communicating with Parishioners and each other. With the development of social media, councillors are contactable at any hour and response mechanisms have also become more flexible, including the facility of immediacy. This can potentially result in ill thought-through communication or a failure to consult where appropriate or even in the dissemination of inaccurate or misleading information, despite our best intentions.
3. It is sometimes difficult to identify where formal communication is more appropriate than the stating of personal views. Where formal communication is required we should follow the procedure set out below.

Correspondence / email

- The main point of contact should be the Clerk;
- Where councillors receive emails or letters which should be managed on a formal basis these should be copied to the Clerk so that actions taken can be tracked;
- No individual councillor should be the sole custodian of correspondence or information in the name of the Parish Council, a working group or a sub-committee;
- All official correspondence should be sent from the Clerk in the name of the Council using Council headed notepaper;
- Council headed note paper should not be used in any other correspondence e.g. private communication with Parishioners or fellow councillors;
- Wherever possible emails and correspondence should show who is copied into the correspondence.

Communication with Parishioners

- Unless a Councillor is certain that they are reporting the view of the Council they must make it clear that they are expressing a *personal view*.

Communication with the Press and publicity

- All communication with the press and other publicity should be agreed with the Chair or (in his/her absence) the Vice-Chair of the Parish Council and the Clerk prior to being issued;
- Unless a Councillor has been authorised to speak to the media on an issue, Councillors should make it clear where they are stating a *personal view* and ask that any such sound bites should be clearly reported as such.

Communication via social media

Reviewed: May 2019

Agreed at Council meeting on 2 June 2019

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The Parish Council has a Twitter account to inform local organisations and residents of the work of the Parish Council. If any Parish Councillor would like to 'tweet' they should inform the Parish Clerk who will tweet the information if appropriate subject to paragraph 2 above.