



BRIMSCOMBE & THRUPP PARISH COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Adopted on: 4 April 2017

AIMS:

To establish clear, easy to use channels of communication between the Parish Council Members, the Parish Clerk, the Parishioners, Third Parties and vice versa.

To provide information on important matters in an appropriate manner so as to facilitate and encourage informed comment from interested individuals and groups.

INTRODUCTION:

Each Parish Councillor has a legal duty to represent, without bias, the interest of the whole community. They will endeavour to do their best and are available to help parishioners with regard to matters relating to the parish of Brimscombe & Thrupp.

If the matter is important, then correspondence needs to be sent to the Parish Clerk who will ensure that this will be brought before the Parish Council and dealt with in a suitable and professional manner.

It is the Parish Council's intention to comply with the following:-

CORRESPONDENCE:

All correspondence relating to the parish should be addressed to the Parish Clerk in the first instance. This will ensure that the matter is recorded and passed to the relevant person or organisation as soon as practicably possible.

If a parishioner wishes a matter to be formally discussed at a Parish Council meeting, then the Parish Clerk must be notified at least 14 days prior to the meeting to enable the item to be placed on the Agenda.

Emails relating to Parish Council business must be circulated internally only and care must be taken with the information contained therein as it can be accessible under the Freedom of Information Act.

All emails to external third parties (including District Councillors) relating to Parish Council business must be copied to the Parish Clerk.

If you are making representations to a third party as a Parishioner you must not sign off any correspondence as a Parish Councillor as this can be construed as being on behalf of the Parish Council and may be subject to a conflict of interest.

The Parish Council is a collective body and no singular Councillor can make representations on behalf of it, this responsibility lies with the Parish Clerk as the Proper Officer.

You may not enter into any third party negotiations / contracts without the approval of the Parish Council.

Given that most of our communications are via email, we should be aware of the fact that emails can have a "tone". People will remember the emotional tone of an email longer than the content. Consider this: Just because you write in a certain way doesn't mean its received the same way.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS:

- The Parish Council will meet at 7.30pm on the first Tuesday of the month (apart from the month of August when no meeting is held)
- The Annual Meeting of the Parish Council will be the May meeting when Councillors will elect the Chair and appoint the Vice Chair for the forthcoming year.
- The Annual Parish Meeting will take place prior to the Parish Council Meeting on the first Tuesday in May (apart from an election year when the dates maybe subject to change) in each year.
- The Parish Council will meet in the Main Hall at the Brimscombe & Thrupp Social Centre, unless otherwise notified.
- A 15-minute discussion period for parishioners will be held at the beginning of the Parish Council meeting

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING:

The Annual Parish Meeting is held so that parishioners can have the opportunity to listen to the progress of the Parish Council over the last year and have the opportunity to debate local issues and celebrate local events and activities.

PRESS RELATIONS:

The Public Relations Officer is the Parish Clerk. Normally only the Clerk and Chairman are given the authority to issue press releases and comments to the local media.

NOTICEBOARDS:

The following items will be displayed:

- The Parish Council meeting notice will be displayed at least three days in advance of the meeting.
- Notice of the annual audited accounts will be displayed when appropriate
- Notices for Parishioners will be displayed as and when appropriate.

PARISH MAGAZINE:

Appropriate notices will be published as and when required.

PARISH WEBSITE:

The following items will be permanently available:

- Parish Councillors names and contact numbers
- Parish Council meeting dates for the year
- The approved Parish Council Minutes
- All information required in accordance with The Transparency Act 2013

SOCIAL NETWORKING (Twitter, Facebook etc.):

Members of staff or councillors using social networking through their personal or professional lives must not comment on the activities of the Parish Council to ensure that the Code of Conduct is not breached.