Weldon Parish Council

Media Policy

Introduction

1 Weldon Parish Council ("the Council") is committed to the provision of accurate information about its governance, decisions and activities. Where this information is not available via the Council's publication scheme, please contact the Council's clerk or, in their absence, the Chairman.

2. The Council shall, where possible, co-operate with those whose work involves gathering material for publication in any form including use of the internet ("the media").

3. This policy explains how the Council may work with the media to meet the above objectives in accordance with the legal requirements and restrictions that apply.

Legal requirements and restrictions

4. This policy is subject to the Council's obligations which are set out in the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the Local Government Act 1972, the Local Government Act 1986, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 1998, other legislation which may apply and the Council's standing orders and financial regulations. The Council's financial regulations and relevant standing orders referenced in this policy are available via the Council's publication scheme.

5. The Council cannot disclose confidential information or information the disclosure of which is prohibited by law. The Council cannot disclose information if this is prohibited under the terms of a court order, by legislation, the Council's standing orders, under contract or by common law. Councillors are subject to additional restrictions about the disclosure of confidential information which arise from the code of conduct adopted by the Council, a copy of which is available via the Council's publication scheme.

Meetings

6. A meeting of the Council and its committees is open to the public unless the meeting resolves to exclude them because their presence at the meeting is prejudicial to the public interest due to the confidential nature of the business or other special reason(s) stated in the resolution. In accordance with the Council's standing orders, persons may be required to leave a meeting of the Council and its committees, if their disorderly behaviour obstructs the business of the meeting.

7. Where a meeting of the Council and its committees include an opportunity for public participation, the media may speak and ask questions. Public participation is regulated by the Council's standing orders.

8. The photographing, recording, filming or other reporting of a meeting of the Council and its committees (which includes e.g. using a mobile phone or tablet, recording for a TV/radio broadcast, providing commentary on blogs, web forums, or social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook and YouTube) which enable a person not at the meeting to see, hear or be given commentary about the meeting is permitted unless

(i) the meeting has resolved to hold all or part of the meeting without the public present or
(ii) such activities disrupt the proceedings or
(iii) paragraphs 9 and 10 below apply.

9. The photographing, recording, filming or other reporting of a child or vulnerable adult at a Council or committee meeting is not permitted unless an adult responsible for them has given permission.

10. Oral reporting or commentary about a Council or committee meeting by a person who is present at the meeting is not permitted.

11. The Council shall, as far as it is practicable, provide reasonable facilities for anyone taking a report of a Council or committee meeting and for telephoning their report at their own expense.

12. The Council's standing orders will confirm if attendance by the public, their participation, photographing, recording, filming or other reporting is permitted at a meeting of a sub- committee.

Other communications with the media.

13. This policy does not seek to regulate councillors in their private capacity.

14. The Council's communications with the media seek to represent the corporate position and views of the Council. If the views of councillors are different to the Council's corporate position and views, they will make this clear.

15. The Council may contact the media if the Council wants to provide information, a statement or other material about the Council. Under normal circumstances the Chairman will act as the Council's Media Officer.

16. Subject to the obligations on councillors not to disclose information referred to in paragraph 5 above and not to misrepresent the Council's position, councillors are free to communicate their position and views.

Reviewed and Adopted by Weldon Parish Council on 20th May 2024