



# Long Stratton Town Council

Pavilion, Manor Road Playing Fields, Long Stratton  
Norwich NR15 2XR

Chairman: Mr Kelly Lunness. Clerk: Mrs B Buck

Tel: 01508 530524 Email:

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## Communications Policy

### 1. Correspondence/Information to the Town Council

The point of contact for the Town Council is the Clerk, and it is to the Clerk that all correspondence for the Town Council should be addressed.

The Clerk will deal with all correspondence making the Council aware of important correspondence at the following Council meeting.

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

### 2. Communications with the Press and Public

Press reports from the Town Council, Committees, Working Parties etc will be from the Clerk or an officer in conjunction with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman or; via the reporter's own attendance at a meeting.

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 they are absolutely certain and have the agreement of the Chairman or Vice-Chairman they are reporting the view of the Town Council.

Members are encouraged to avoid giving such comments by directing the press either to the Chairman of the relevant committee or the Chairman of the Council or, preferably, the Clerk.

The Council will be informed of every press release at the earliest opportunity and preferably before the press report is published.

### 3. Councillor Correspondence to Other Agencies

All personal correspondence as a Town 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 Town Council.

A copy of all outgoing correspondence relating to the Town 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.

All correspondence to other agencies on behalf of the Council must be sent by the Clerk.

#### **4. Communications with Town Council Employees**

The Clerk is employed as the Council as a corporate body and as such no individual Councillor can instruct the Clerk to carry out a piece of work. The Clerk is the line manager for all other Council employees and as such all work to be carried out by staff will be instructed by the Clerk only.

Telephone calls should be:

- kept to a minimum
- appropriate to the work of the Town Council

Meetings with the Clerk or other officers:-

- Where possible an appointment should be made
- Meeting should be relevant to the work of the Council
- Members should be clear about the matters they wish to discuss
- Office opening hours to be adhered to unless by prior agreement with the Clerk.  
(Please be aware there may be meetings/ training requirements that would prevent officers being available during office hours.)

#### **6. Communications with fellow members**

- If the communication relates to a committee or working party, all members of that committee or working party and the Clerk or minute taker should be copied in. If the communication relates to a full Council meeting, all members should be copied into.

Definition of correspondence includes:

- Letters, memos and other written documents
- Emails, faxes, and other electronic documents
- 'Electronic documents' includes pictures, documents, spreadsheets and data of all kinds generated by a computer system or software including contributions to websites or similar.
- Text Messages and the like

#### **8. E-mails**

- E-mails and replies to e-mails should be given the same consideration as would be given to any other form of formal correspondence
- E-mail is not the appropriate medium for a discussion – that is for a formal meeting.
- 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
- E-mails to other agencies should be copied to the Clerk and only when the member has permission to email an agency directly.
- Members should acknowledge their e-mails when requested to do so.

#### **9. Complaints made to members**

If Members have a complaint or receive a complaint about the conduct of the Council, a councillor or employee 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 Town Council agenda item. The person's name and address should be on record but in accordance with GDPR policy.

Approved 13.03.2023