

HOOE PARISH COUNCIL

HOOE PARISH COUNCIL COMMUNICATION POLICY

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Hooe parish council shall operate in an open and transparent manner in the communication between Hooe Parish Council and the residents of Hooe.

1. Parish Council Correspondence

- 1.1 The point of contact for all correspondence to the Parish Council is the Parish Clerk. The Parish Clerk has a legal duty to deal with all correspondence and respond on behalf of the Parish Council.
- 1.2 For the purpose of this Communication Policy the word 'correspondence' shall mean a written letter or email. No individual Councillor shall be the sole custodian of any correspondence or information in the name of the Parish Council, Committee or Working Group.
- 1.3 The Parish Clerk shall respond to correspondence on non contentious matters or that have decision making implications on behalf of the Parish Council. A copy of all correspondence and responses sent shall be circulated to the Parish Council.
- 1.4 Where correspondence falls outside the criteria in 1.3, the Parish Clerk will provide a copy of the correspondence to all Councillors, undertake any research necessary, seek the views of all Councillors, and draft a response for agreement by the Parish Council in accordance with standing orders and delegated authority. All responses will be circulated to the Parish Council.
- 1.5 The Parish Clerk will respond to all correspondence (where possible) within twenty eight days of receipt. Should there be a delay in responding, a holding reply shall be sent to the correspondent.
- 1.6 Where correspondence requires an input, dialogue or approval of a proposed response, all Parish Councillors shall respond within three working days to the Parish Clerk where possible. Such a response may be verbal or written.
- 1.7 Unless permission is given by the sender of the correspondence, details of the name of the sender's information may not be given to any Councillor or any third party as stated in the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations 2018.
- 1.8 All official correspondence should be sent by the Parish Clerk in the name of the Parish Council using letter headed note paper where appropriate.
- 1.9 The Parish Council will reserve the right not to respond to such correspondence already answered by the Parish Council which is of a repeated and repetitive nature.
- 1.10 Any complaint received by a Councillor should be referred to the Parish Clerk and dealt with under the Parish Council's Complaints Procedure as appropriate.
- 1.11 The Parish Clerk shall be expected to investigate, research on any relevant matters on behalf of the Parish Council e.g. planning, community issues, contracts and insurances etc.

2. Internal Communication

- 2.1 All communication of the Parish Council is carried out by email and through the Parish Council's Microsoft 365 account, including all banking to ensure the security of all the Parish Council's information. The Parish Clerk and all Councillors shall communicate via their designated personal council email address provided by the Parish Council.
- 2.2 The Parish Clerk or Councillors shall not use their personal email address for the purpose of Parish Council business.
- 2.3 All Councillors and the Parish Clerk shall respond to all emails sent within two working days (where possible) unless otherwise stated on the email. Such a response may be verbal or written.
- 2.4 The Parish clerk or any Councillor may only delete emails or documents where it is appropriate to do so. The Parish Clerk or any Councillor may not delete Parish Council emails or documents on mass without permission of the Parish Council or unless it is stipulated under the General Data Protection Act 2018.
- 2.5 The Parish Council will reserve the right to recover such emails or documents where inappropriate deletion of emails or documents have taken place. The Parish Council has a duty to retain information and make information available to the public or third parties under the General Data Protection Act 2018, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, and the Transparency Regulations 2015.

3. Communication with the Public

- 3.1 The Parish Council will make available all documents where it is permitted to do so. The Parish Council shall advertise all contact details, meeting dates, agendas of parish council meetings and statutory notices on the parish notice board.
- 3.2 The Parish Council shall report all contact details, meeting dates, agendas, minutes, supporting documents, policies and procedures and statutory notices on the parish council's website.
- 3.3 Local information will be reported by the Parish Council on the Community Notice Boards once erected, located on the recreation grounds, in the village hall, and at the allotments.
- 3.4 The Parish Council will notify residents on the emailing list if unplanned meetings are arranged including Extra Ordinary meetings, Committee meetings, or a change of date to a Council meeting. The public may access all agendas, minutes, policies, and other information direct via the Parish Council's website. The Parish Clerk will notify the County Councillor, District Councillors, and the representative from St. Oswald's church of all meeting dates and documentation by email. Any request for copies of the agendas or minutes must be made in advance of a meeting to the Parish Clerk.
- 3.5 The public may contact the Parish Clerk or a Councillor by telephone, email or in writing to raise any matter for response from the Parish Council. The public may choose to raise a question about a matter on an agenda item at a Parish Council meeting or Committee meeting at the public section of the meeting. The Parish Council may provide a response immediately, make a response to the next meeting, or provide a written response to the resident.
- 3.6 The Parish Council will hold public meetings when appropriate to allow the residents of Hooe to have their say on important issues and to contribute to the forward planning of the Parish Council.

4. Communication with the Press

- 4.1 The Parish Clerk will discuss any reports or comments to the media with the appropriate Councillors or the Chairman.
All press reports shall be sent by the Parish Clerk