



Meeting Date:	29th July 2020
Report Subject:	Communications Policy
Contact:	Clerk/Chairman

Ref: 3 – Communications Policy

BACKGROUND:

This policy sets out clear, easy to use channels of communication between the Parish Council and parishioners and vice versa.

CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION:

1. Councillors

Every parish councillor has a duty to fairly represent the interests of the whole community. They will endeavour to be available to help parishioners regarding matters affecting them or the parish. Councillors' email addresses and telephone numbers are displayed on the Council website. (www.highcliffewalkford-pc.gov.uk)

2. Council Meetings

Unless otherwise agreed the Parish Council meets at 6.30pm on the last Wednesday of each month. The majority of Council meetings take place in the Old School House, 254 Lymington Road, Highcliffe. The Council also seeks periodic opportunities to meet at other venues within the parish. Venues and details of all meetings are published on the Council's website and on local noticeboards approximately one week ahead of each meeting.

At the start of each meeting a short period is allowed for members of the public to raise matters of interest or concern.

The Annual Parish Meeting takes place in May, normally on the third Wednesday. Details will be published on the Council's website and on local Noticeboards.

3. Media

A parish councillor is appointed as Public Relations Officer (PRO) at the Annual Meeting of the Council. All press releases are the responsibility of the PRO who will liaise with the Parish Clerk on all such releases.

4. Noticeboards

In addition to details of Council meetings, village noticeboards will be used to display important news items and contact details for the Parish Clerk.

Other notices such as the annual audit of accounts will be displayed as and when appropriate.

Noticeboards are to be found at:

- The Old School House, 254 Lymington Road, Highcliffe
- Saufland Stores

5. Website

The Council's Website contains all details of Council meetings, agendas and minutes. Details of meetings with agendas are inserted at least 5 days before the meeting. Our aim is for draft Minutes to be available on the website within 5 days of each meeting.

The website also contains:

- News items
- Council meeting dates
- Councillors' details including contact details
- The Chairman's Annual Report
- The Council's 4 year Business Plan
- All Council policies
- Summarised Annual Accounts

6. Public Meetings

In addition to the statutory Annual Parish Meeting in May, the Council will convene public meeting to discuss and hear views about matters of significance. One such item is the setting of the annual precept prior to which a public discussion forum is held to inform councillors of perceived priority areas for the year ahead.

7. Working groups

From time to time the Council establishes working groups to consider projects/issues in greater detail than is practicable at Council meetings. Whenever appropriate these Groups will include volunteer members of the public.

8. Correspondence

All correspondence should in the first instance be addressed to the Parish Clerk who will ensure it receives prompt attention from the appropriate people.

Any request for an issue to be raised formally at the Council meeting must be submitted to the Parish Clerk by noon on the day before the meeting.

REVIEW

The Parish council reviews all its policies on an annual basis.