



## WOODPLUMPTON PARISH COUNCIL

### COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

#### **Electronic Communication Policy.**

The use of electronic communication enables the Parish Council to interact in a way that improves the communications both within the Council and between the Council and the people, businesses and agencies it works with and serves. The Council has a website and uses email to communicate - in addition to a quarterly Newsletter.

The Council will always try to use the most effective channel for its communications. Over time the Council may add to the channels of communication that it uses as it seeks to improve and expand the services it delivers. When these changes occur, this Policy will be updated to reflect the new arrangements. **The content of the policy is revisited annually at the May Parish Council meeting.**

Communications from the Council will meet the following criteria:

- Be civil, tasteful and relevant;
- Not contain content that is knowingly unlawful, libellous, harassing, defamatory, abusive threatening, harmful, obscene, profane, sexually oriented or racially offensive;
- Not contain any personal information. If it is official Council business it will be moderated by the Clerk to the Council;

#### **Parish Council email.**

The Clerk to the Council has their own Council email address [wparishclerk@gmail.com](mailto:wparishclerk@gmail.com)

The email account is monitored mainly during office hours, Monday to Friday and we aim to reply to emails within 3 working days. An 'out of office' message will be used for holidays or periods of prolonged absence.

The Clerk is responsible for dealing with emails received and passing relevant emails to Members or external agencies for information and / or action. All communications on behalf of the Council will usually come from the Clerk.

Emails requiring data to be passed on, will be followed up with a Data consent form or an email requesting that the sender acknowledges that their email may be forwarded. Councillors must not forward personal information on to other people or groups outside of the Council, this includes names, addresses, email and contact details.

Councillors should also be careful only to cc essential recipients on emails i.e. to avoid use of the 'Reply to All' option if at all possible, but of course copying in all who need to know and ensuring that email trails have been removed.

Individual Councillors are at liberty to communicate directly with parishioners but they should ensure that the Clerk is copied in to any correspondence. These procedures will ensure that a complete and proper record of all correspondence is kept. **NB** any emails copied to the Clerk become official and will be subject to The Freedom of Information Act.

Members should not act on behalf of the Council or express their personal views.

#### **Parish/Town Council Website.**

Where necessary, we may direct those contacting us to our website or the County Council website to access the required information, or we may forward the question to the Chairman or another Councillor for consideration and response.

The Council may, at its discretion, publish news articles from local community groups on the website. The news article must contain the contact details of the group and all enquiries should be directed directly to the group.

#### **Telecommunications**

The Clerk may be contacted by telephone during normal office hours **Mon – Fri 09.00 – 17.00.**

An answer phone will be used outside these times and calls will be returned as soon as practicable.