



Press and Social Media Policy

The following guidance explains the way press releases and other forms of official Council communications are issued on behalf of Clanfield Parish Council and sets out basic guidelines.

One voice

The Parish Council has a corporate approach to media relations. All press releases are issued by the Parish Council. The Parish Council is, of course, one organisation and aims to present that image to the public by issuing press releases corporately. This ensures that the Parish Council speaks with one voice and that messages are consistent, effective and focused.

The Parish Council

The Clerk has responsibility for exercising editorial judgement about the timing, content and newsworthiness of all Parish Council press releases in consultation with the Parish Council Chairman and Parish Councillors. Their combined professional expertise helps to ensure that appropriate standards are set and maintained for all news releases and that they are kept within the law.

Quotes

The Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Parish Council may be quoted if they are speaking on behalf of the Parish Council as a whole or on behalf of a committee. If another member of the Council is approached by the press for a quote or comment, then the councillor should make it very clear that they are not speaking on behalf of the Council but as an individual. The Parish Clerk will make every effort to clear quotes with parish councillors before news releases or statements are issued. However, responses to issues in the news are often needed urgently. If a comment needs to be issued urgently, a quote will be cleared with the Parish Council Chairman.

Online communications, collectively referred to as social media

Social media is a collective term used to describe methods of publishing on the internet. This policy covers all forms of social media and social networking sites which include (but are not limited to):

- Parish Council Website
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Instagram
- Nextdoor Clanfield
- Clanfield Online
- LinkedIn

The Clerk will be responsible for managing the Council's day to day activity on social media. Social media attributed to the Parish Council will be used to:

- Post minutes and dates of meetings
- Advertise events and activities in the locality
- Share news stories • Advertise councillor and staff vacancies
- Retweet, like or share information from partners i.e. EHDC, HCC, Community First, SLCC, HALC, NALC, Police, CAB etc.

- Post relevant information about local community groups / clubs / associations / voluntary bodies
- Announce new information
- Positively promote the Parish Council, Councillors and the Parish through information, photos and video
- Consult with residents
- Gather useful information about local events and activities

Guidance for Councillors

All Councillor Communication including emails must adhere to the Members' Code of Conduct. Councillors are asked not to post comments on Council activity on Social Media. Councillors must not use their Council email address for non-Council business including activity or any form of social media.

Councillor Email's

The value of sharing ideas using Councillor designated email is recognised however:

- Clanfield Parish Council email addresses must not be used for expressing personal opinions to outside bodies.
- Emails from the Clerk seeking opinions and views on a matter from all councillors, on an individual basis, should be replied to directly without copying in all recipients of the email.
- Parish Council email addresses should not be used as discussion forums for matters outside the control of the Parish Council.

The harvesting of email addresses from a compromised computer system can be lucrative to criminals. The following recommendations will help to limit the Council's liability.

- All emails being sent to recipients outside the Council shall avoid unnecessary use of third party email addresses and personal details. Not only should these details be redacted from the content unless it is clearly necessary that they form part of the communication, but long distribution lists shall be hidden by the use of 'Blind Carbon Copy' ('bcc') should be used in lieu of 'Carbon Copy', ('cc'). Recipients will only see email addresses of other recipients in the 'to' and 'cc' fields.
- Webmail access to Council emails is the most secure. The use of email software on computers or mobile devices is permitted but should only be set to use 'IMAP' protocol, as this leaves the master email data on the server. 'POP3' should not be used as this will result in the emails being copied to the users' device and deleted off of the mail server; should the users' device fail then the emails will be irretrievably lost.
- When email software is used on non-Council owned equipment it must be configured to restrict the amount of history that will be stored locally on the device. Should the device be compromised or lost the amount of information that is accessible will be restricted accordingly.
- Any loss or compromise to any device processing Council information must be reported to the Clerk.