



**ALL SAINTS
PARISH COUNCIL**
*Creating a Parish where the
community feels as one*

All Saints Parish Council Communications Policy

Document History	Revision Date	Minute
	This version V3.0 – REFORMATTED March 2026 and ADOPTED at the Council meeting held on 3 March 2026	Minute (OM26/098 g)

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1 Introduction

This policy covers the general communication protocols for All Saints Parish Council for both employees and councillors. All elements of verbal, non-verbal, visual and written communication will be subject to the terms of this policy.

The use of electronic communication is ever-increasing, and the risks associated with the exposure associated with such communication need to always be considered.

2 General Principles

- Communications from the Council will always be factual, relevant and polite.
- All official Council communication will be overseen by the Parish Clerk.
- Councillors are expected to abide by the Members' Code of Conduct and data protection legislation in all their work on behalf of the Council.
- Always ensure that the communication is directed to the correct person(s).
- Communication will, under normal circumstances, be in English.
- Personal councillor information must not be sent on to other people or groups outside of the Council, unless approved by the Council or a relevant individual. This includes names, addresses, email address and phone numbers.
- Communication will not contain content that is knowingly unlawful, libellous, defamatory, abusive, threatening, obscene, sexually oriented or racially offensive.
- As more information becomes available electronically, it is vital that all information is treated sensitively and securely.
- Be aware of your personal body language when interfacing face-to-face with parishioners and other external people.
- Always attempt to gain a positive outcome. Think "Win-Win"!
- All Saints Parish Council does not have a political stance, nor does it allow any political promotion.

3 Email Communication

- All Council communication via email should be made through the official All Saints email server and should be from a registered councillor/clerk email address. The use of personal email addresses for Council business is not permitted.
- Always re-read an email before sending to ensure that the spelling and grammar are correct, and that the topic is adhered to. If in doubt, request support from a colleague.
- Do not expose email addresses when sending emails externally to a list of people, use the BCC (Blind Carbon Copy) feature.
- Council emails must always be finished with the approved email signature block and logo, where possible. It is accepted that some mobile platforms do not easily accept logo attachments, but this should be the exception.

3.1 General Council email

- The Parish Clerk is responsible for dealing with emails received and passing on any relevant mail to councillors or external agencies for information and/or action.

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- All communications on behalf of the Council will usually come from the Parish Clerk, and/or otherwise will always be copied to the Parish Clerk.

3.2 Councillor emails

- Individual councillors may communicate directly with parishioners in relation to their personal views and, if appropriate, copy to the Parish Clerk. It should be made clear that any such views expressed are made in an individual capacity and not on behalf of the Council.
- Any emails sent to the Parish Clerk or councillors in their official capacity will be subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act. These procedures will ensure that a complete and proper record of all correspondence is kept.
- Councillors are expected to maintain an awareness of the confidentiality of information that they have access to and not to share confidential information with anyone.
- Care must be taken regarding the use of the ‘carbon copy’ (cc) facility.
- Only use the ‘Reply to all’ option when required.

4 Social Media

The use of Social Media should be kept to a minimum and the only social media posts allowed are those approved by the Council and posted by the approved monitor.

Any individual office or councillor that posts on social media must do so under their own name and if the topic encroaches on Council business, they must state that the opinions raised are their personal views and not those of All Saints Parish Council.

5 Documentation

Documents that are prepared for dissemination outside the council, including documents stored on the All Saints websites, should follow the prescribed template and should be shared in accessible PDF format. This means using Title, Heading and Paragraph styles in MS Word then saving the document in PDF format. This document is an example.

Care should be taken that the same font is used throughout the document where possible. This should be an easy to read font and Calibri is preferred.

All documents should have their title, version, status (Draft, Approved or Published) date and page number in the footer using the prescribed format. Ideally, draft documents should have a Draft watermark.

Document filenames should be suffixed with the version number e.g. v1.1

6 Websites

All Saints Parish Council websites will be monitored by the council’s webmaster.

The websites will not contain any political information.

7 All Saints Parish Council Logo

All official documentation i.e. external communication, policies, SM posts, agendas, minutes, etc. shall have the Parish Council Logo at the top of the first page of the document.

8 Press Releases

All written releases to the press will be made by the Parish Clerk.

If a councillor or the Clerk is approached by the press either directly or by telephone, the preferred Council protocol is for the councillor/clerk to take the communication details of the individual from the press, inform the council and a consolidated response will be developed by the council.

This policy does not prevent a councillor from making personal statements on local issues. Any councillor doing so must impress that any statement made is their personal view unless it has prior approval from the Council.

9 Security

Neither the Clerk nor the councillors may divulge any council information without full approval from the Council or the Clerk.

Any perceived breach of security e.g. scamming, SPAM, etc, must be reported to the webmaster and Parish Clerk at the earliest possible opportunity.

10 Misuse and Consequence

Any council employee or councillor will be subject to discipline, which may result in dismissal, if it is proven that they have misused the Council's communication protocols in any way.

+++END+++