



## Rodborough Parish Council

### Communications Policy

#### Aims

To establish clear, easy to use channels of communication between Rodborough Parish Council ("The Council") and the Parishioners, and vice versa.

To provide information on important matters in a timely manner so as to facilitate and encourage informed comment from interested individuals and groups.

#### Introduction

Each Parish Councillor has a duty to represent without bias the interests of the whole community. They will always try to do their best and are available to help you with regard to matters relating to the Parish of Rodborough. They may be contacted by telephone or email and a contacts list is displayed in the Commoner, on the website at [www.rodborough.gov.uk](http://www.rodborough.gov.uk) and on the Council notice boards.

These boards are:

Rodborough Parish Council's official notice board is outside Rodborough Community Hall which displays full information.

Community notice boards with limited information:

Full sized boards:

- Butterrow West, outside Rodborough Community Hall
- On Dudbridge Road, next to the traffic lights and cycle track crossing
- by Rodborough Tabernacle
- at Lightpill by the bus lay-by opposite Bath Road Trading Estate
- on the corner of Kitesnest Lane and Little Fishers
- on Butterow Hill near the bench
- outside Rodborough Community School, Rodborough Hill

Smaller boards maximum 4xA4

- by the Pike House on Walkley Hill (limited information due to size)
- near the lay-by on the Common by Bearpools (limited information due to size)
- inside Sainsburys (limited information due to size)

Community notices only

- on the Cross at Swells Hill (for community notices only).

The following items will be kept up to date and displayed continuously on both larger notice boards and website: -

- Parish Councillors with contact telephone numbers and address
- Council meeting dates for the year

Notice of the annual audited accounts will be displayed within statutory timeframes

Council meeting agendas will be posted three days in advance of the meeting on the website and on main notice board.

Full Council meeting minutes will be posted within 7days of the meeting

All other notices will be updated as appropriate.

If you feel that the matter is important, then a phone call, email or letter to the Parish Clerk or Deputy Clerk will ensure that this matter is brought to the attention of the Council and dealt with in a timely and professional manner. It is the Council's intention to meet the timescales detailed below (see: Correspondence) but there may be occasions when this is not possible.

### **Council Meetings.**

- The Council will meet on the third Monday of the month, starting at 6.30pm in Rodborough Community Hall
- There may be no Council meetings in August and December
- The Annual Meeting of the Parish Council will be the May meeting when Councillors will elect the Chair and appoint the Vice Chair for the forthcoming year.
- The Annual Parish Meeting (a meeting of the electorate) will take place in May each year
- The Council will normally meet at the Community Hall, Butterow West.
- There will be a 15-minute period at the start of all Full Council meetings for public participation where local parishioners can raise issues.

### **Website**

The following items will be permanently available:

- Parish Councillors names
- Parish Council meeting dates for the year
- The draft Parish Council Minutes (uploaded within one week of the meeting)

- The Council's Publication Scheme (a document which details information which can be requested from the Parish Council)
- Parish Council policies.

The Parish Clerk & Deputy Clerk will ensure that all Parish Council information included on the Website is regularly updated.

### **The Commoner**

The precept will be published in the Commoner when available

The Council Accounts will be published in the August edition of the Commoner.

Articles published in the Commoner do not necessarily represent the views of either the editor or the Council unless this is specifically stated.

### **Correspondence**

All correspondence relating to the parish should be addressed to the Parish Clerk in the first instance. This will ensure that the matter is recorded and passed to the relevant person or organisation as soon as practically possible.

If a parishioner wishes a matter to be raised at a Council meeting, then the Parish Clerk or Deputy Clerk will need to be notified 1 week prior to the Agenda being published. This does not guarantee that the item will be put on the agenda.

### **Social Networking (Facebook etc)**

The Parish Council has a Facebook page (Rodborough Parish Council) which is managed by the Parish Clerk & Deputy Clerk and a councillor as agreed at the Annual Council Meeting who have delegated authority to issue updates and news on behalf of the Parish Council.

The Clerk's can share news and information to the wider parish audience through the Facebook group "Rodborough Local Info".

Members of staff or Parish Councillors using social networking through their personal or professional lives must not comment on the activities of the Parish Council to ensure that the Code of Conduct is not breached. Please refer to the Social Media Policy for further guidance.

The Clerk's will monitor the Parish Council's social media channels but constant monitoring is not possible and the Clerk's will not be able to reply individually to all messages or comments received. However, the Clerk's will endeavour to ensure that any emerging themes or helpful suggestions are passed to the relevant people or authorities.

In order to ensure that all discussions on the Council page are productive, respectful and consistent with the Parish Council's aims and objectives, please follow these guidelines:

- Be considerate and respectful of others. Vulgarity, threats or abusive language will not be tolerated
- Differing opinions and discussion of diverse ideas are encouraged, but personal attacks on anyone, including the Councillors or staff, will not be permitted
- Share freely and be generous with official Parish Council posts but be aware of copyright laws; be accurate and give credit where credit is due
- Stay on topic
- Refrain from using the Council's Facebook page for commercial purposes or to advertise market or sell products

Sending a message/post via Social Media will not be considered as contacting the Council for official purposes and we will not be obliged to monitor or respond to requests for information through these channels. Instead, please contact the Parish Clerk and/or Councillors by emailing direct.

The Council retains the right to remove comments or content that includes:

- Obscene or racist content
- Personal attacks, insults, or threatening language
- Potentially libelous statements
- Plagiarised material; any material in violation of any laws, including copyright
- Private, personal information published without consent
- Information or links unrelated to the content of the page
- Commercial promotions or spam

The Parish Council's response to any communication received not meeting the above criteria will be to either ignore, inform the sender of the policy or send a brief response as appropriate. This will be at the Council's discretion based on the message received. Any information posted on the Facebook page not in line with the above criteria will be removed as quickly as practically possible. Repeat offenders will be blocked from the Facebook page. The Council may post a statement that 'A post breaching the Council's Social Media Policy has been removed'. If the post alleges a breach of a Council's policy or the law the person who posted it will be asked to submit a formal complaint to the Council or report the matter to the Police as soon as possible to allow due process.

### **Press Relations**

- The Press Officer/s for the Council will be designated at the Annual Parish Council meeting
- The Press Officer/s will check all items with the Clerk before sending items out
- When Parish Councillors provide information to the local media it needs to be made clear whether they are speaking on behalf of the Parish Council or as individuals.

## **Annual Parish Meeting**

The Annual Parish Meeting is held so that local parishioners can have the opportunity to listen to the progress of the Council over the last year and have the opportunity to debate local issues and celebrate local events and activities.

## **Involvement in Partnerships**

Where appropriate the Parish Council has and will continue to liaise with other various organisations such as neighbouring parishes, District and County Councils, Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Councils, Gloucestershire Rural Community Council, Police safety teams etc.

## **Alternative Formats**

The Parish Council will provide information in other formats on request, eg audio, large print, other written languages etc.

## **Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)**

Please refer to the Parish Council's policies on GDPR for more information on how your personal data is managed.

## **Review**

This document will be reviewed every 5 years.

## **Comments**

Any comments or queries regarding this document should be made to the Parish Clerk or Deputy Clerk.

Adopted: 20/11/06 Communications Policies.doc Page 3 of 3 Amended: 19/10/09

Reviewed 19/11/12

Reviewed 17<sup>th</sup> October 2016.

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