

Draft Communication policy

The Parish Council's audiences are potentially wide and varied and may include:

- Parishioners of the civil parish
- Winchester City Council councillors, officers and staff
- Hampshire County Council councillors, officers and staff
- Hampshire Constabulary
- The Member of Parliament
- The Police and Crime Commissioner
- John Keble School
- All Saints Church
- Hursley Village Community Association (HVCA)
- IBM
- Parish Hall Committee
- Neighbourhood Watch teams
- Hard-to-reach groups, including young people and particularly those who do not have access to the Internet
- The media
- Voluntary groups and organisations
- The business community
- Other public sector organisations (e.g. health and fire authorities)
- Visitors and those who work in the area

The focus in this policy, however, is communication with parishioners of the civil parish.

The main content that needs to be communicated by the Parish Council is:

- a) Largely static information about its membership, powers and responsibilities.
- b) Changing information about its activities and debates. This is largely recorded in the agenda and minutes and therefore the agenda and minutes are fundamental to this policy.

The purpose of communication between Parish Council and Parishioners is:

- a) To ensure that the Parish Council's role and powers are widely and clearly understood.
- b) To engage Parishioners in decision making.
- c) To maintain an understanding of the range of views that exist within the Parish on matters that come within the Parish Council's purview.
- d) To ensure that any decisions or actions of the Parish Council are promptly reported to parishioners.

The Parish Council will actively seek opportunities to communicate and engage with parishioners and will maximise use of existing channels.

Digital communications

Media currently include the Hursley Parish Council Website - <https://hursleypc.org.uk/>, the Hursley Village Community Association website <https://www.thehvca.co.uk/> and related social media service 'Slack'; and e-mail. The Parish Council will circulate as much information as possible using these media, recognising that not everyone uses each of these services to the same way. Consequently the Parish Council will adopt a multi-channel approach. In particular, all Parish Council agendas and minutes will be disseminated as widely as possible using these facilities.

Other readily available media are Facebook and WhatsApp both of which are used by various groups within the parish. Opinions on particular issues can be quickly identified using facilities such as Survey Monkey. The Parish Plan exercise is generating a list of e-mail addresses of Parishioners. The use of each of these resources will be kept under review.

In the longer term the Parish Council will work with other interested parties to develop an integrated approach to digital communications within the single constraint that the content of that portion of the website that is dedicated to the Parish Council must always remain within the Parish Council's control.

Circulation of agenda and minutes in non-digital form

As far as possible, the Parish Council will ensure that agendas and minutes are available to those who do not make use of the internet. Agendas are posted on noticeboards and printed copies of the minutes are available on request from the Clerk.

Noticeboards

Agendas, names and addresses of councillors and the areas for which they are responsible are posted on notice boards around the parish. Noticeboards will also display other notices generated by the Parish Council as well as relevant information from other public bodies.

Leaflets and Notices

From time to time, the Parish Council will distribute printed information to all addresses within the Parish, co-ordinating wherever possible with HVCA leaflet drops.

Church Parish Magazine

A brief report of the issues recently dealt with by the Parish Council will be submitted to each edition of the Parish Magazine and identified as a report from the Parish Council.

Parishioners' questions

Every agenda will continue to contain an opportunity for parishioners to attend meetings of the Parish Council and ask questions. Henceforth this will be extended to include questions received in writing or by e-mail. The Parish Council will routinely remind parishioners of this opportunity to raise question or make proposals. Questions and answers, proposals and responses, will be recorded in the minutes.

Annual Parish Meeting

The Parish Council will continue to arrange an annual meeting to which all parishioners are invited. This is a meeting where all groups and organisations within the Parish are invited to report to parishioners.

Annual report

The Parish Council will produce a written annual report and pay for it to be included as a four-sided spread in the Parish Magazine. Copies of the report will also be available from other outlets.

Parish Plan

The Parish Council is supporting the creation of a Parish Plan which will involve considerable consultation with parishioners and will provide an opportunity, within the plan, to make further provision for communication within the parish.

MGA
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