

SHIPLEY TOWN COUNCIL

INTERIM PUBLICITY POLICY

Part 1: Newsletters

- a) In accordance with the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity, Shipley Town Council will not issue newsletters, newssheets or similar more frequently than monthly.
- b) The Town Clerk will edit the newsletters, newssheets and similar, in consultation with the Chairman of the Council and the chairs of committees when news content includes matters within the remits of committees.

Part 2: Websites

- a) Shipley Town Council will procure and maintain a website to provide public access to the documents listed in the Council's Publication Scheme. The Council will seek to comply with the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 by 23 September 2020. In accordance with Section 8 of the 2018 Regulations, the Council will provide an accessibility statement on its website and keep the statement under regular review.
- b) A temporary website has been established to hold key information and documents during the procurement of the compliant website.

Part 3: Social Media

- a) Town Council social media accounts will be created and managed by the Town Clerk. A Facebook page and Twitter account will be created for the Town Council. Other social media accounts will only be created by resolution of the Council. No councillor will have access to the administration of the social media accounts, except the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council, who will have access for special purposes only. The special purposes are prolonged staff absence (which would otherwise disrupt council business), a local or national emergency or a data security incident.
- b) The accounts will be set up using the Town Clerk's office e-mail address
- c) Only information regarding the Town Council and those public and community affairs relevant to Shipley will be published.

- d) The accounts will only link to pages of government organisations and organisations or causes of relevance to the town, except where expressly permitted by resolution of the Council.
- e) Business, commercial and economic matters of general interest and relevance to the town or promoting local economic development may be published but not advertisements for individual businesses or private profit.
- f) No religious, partisan or political opinion will be expressed, except for the agreed policy of the council, as evidenced by resolution.
- g) Tweets and posts on the Facebook page will be available for all to see.
- h) The Town Council's logo will be the profile picture for everyone to see.
- i) Photo Albums will be open for everyone to view.
- j) Photographs uploaded will not have direct view of any child's face without the prior consent of their parent or guardian.
- k) The accounts will be maintained by the Town Clerk who will remove messages which include abusive language content, content which is potentially libellous and content which contravenes the Equality Act 2020 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- l) If matters raised cannot be responded to by the Town Clerk and require further consideration by the Town Council, the Town Clerk will bring this to the attention of the Council or the relevant committee, as appropriate.
- m) Event dates will be created for any Town Council event taking place. Other events taking place in the town may be promoted where they are of general benefit to the town.
- n) People will be encouraged to follow and like the accounts and to like and share the content.
- o) If followers are repeatedly abusing the Town Council's accounts, they will be removed and restricted from interacting with the accounts.
- p) Use of social media accounts by council officers and councillors will be covered in a separate policy.
- q) Private messages will be sent in response to anyone sending an initial private message to the Town Council accounts. If a basic response does not satisfy the enquiry, then the person will be asked to e-mail or write to the Council by post. Any posts raising issues/questions/comments that cannot be answered with basic information will be considered separately via e-mail or post.

- r) The Town Clerk will be given delegated authority to apply this policy and to make minor amendments, if required, to be reported to Council at least annually.

Part 4: The Newsgathering Media

- a) Shipley Town Council is committed to the provision of accurate information about its governance, decisions and activities. Where this information is not available via the Council's Publication Scheme, contact should be made with the Town Clerk, in his absence, the Chairman of the Council.
- b) The Council shall, where possible, co-operate with those whose work involves gathering material for publication in any form including use of the internet: the media.
- c) This policy explains how the Council may work with the media to meet the above objectives in accordance with the legal requirements and restrictions that apply.

Legal requirements and restrictions

- d) This policy is subject to the Council's obligations which are set out in the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the Local Government Act 1972, the Local Government Act 1986, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 2018, other legislation which may apply and the Council's standing orders and financial regulations. The Council's financial regulations and relevant standing orders referenced in this policy are available via the Council's publication scheme.
- e) The Council cannot disclose confidential information or information the disclosure of which is prohibited by law. The Council cannot disclose information if this is prohibited under the terms of a court order, by legislation, the Council's standing orders, under contract or by common law.
- f) Councillors are subject to additional restrictions about the disclosure of confidential information which arise from the code of conduct adopted by the Council, a copy of which is available via the Council's publication scheme.

Meetings

- g) A meeting of the Council and its committees is open to the public unless the meeting resolves to exclude the public because continued presence at the meeting is prejudicial to the public interest due to the confidential nature of the business or other special reason(s) stated in the resolution. In accordance with the Council's standing orders, persons may be required to leave a meeting of the Council and its committees, if their disorderly behaviour obstructs the business of the meeting.

- h) Where a meeting of the Council and its committees include an opportunity for public participation, media representatives may speak and ask questions. Public participation is regulated by the Council's standing orders.
- i) The photographing, recording, filming or other reporting of a meeting of the Council and its committees (which includes e.g. using a mobile phone or tablet, recording for a TV/radio broadcast, providing commentary on blogs, web forums, or social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook and YouTube) which enable a person not at the meeting to see, hear or be given commentary about the meeting is permitted unless: (i) the meeting has resolved to hold all or part of the meeting without the public present or (ii) such activities disrupt the proceedings or (iii) paragraphs 9 and 10 below apply.
- j) The photographing, recording, filming or other reporting of a child or vulnerable adult at a Council or committee meeting is not permitted unless an adult responsible for them has given permission.
- k) Oral reporting or commentary about a Council or committee meeting by a person who is present at the meeting is not permitted.
- l) The Council shall, as far as it is practicable, provide reasonable facilities for anyone taking a report of a Council or committee meeting and for telephoning their report at their own expense.
- m) The Council's standing orders will confirm if attendance by the public, their participation, photographing, recording, filming or other reporting is permitted at a meeting of a sub-committee.

Other communications with the media

- n) This policy does not seek to regulate councillors in their private capacity.
- o) The Council's communications with the media seek to represent the corporate position and views of the Council. If the views of councillors are different to the Council's corporate position and views, they must make this clear.
- p) The Town Clerk or in his absence, the Chairman of the Council, may contact the media if the Council wants to provide information, a statement or other material about the Council.
- q) Subject to the obligations on councillors not to disclose information referred to in paragraph 5 above and not to misrepresent the Council's position, councillors are free to communicate their own position and views.