

KESSINGLAND PARISH COUNCIL



COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Adopted: April 2019

Review Date: May 2023

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COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This policy sets out the general principles and good practice that Parish Councillors are expected to follow in respect of communication with Parish Council Office Staff.
- 1.2. The Parish Council as a corporate body is legally responsible for the wellbeing of all Council staff whether employed or voluntary and failure to comply with the requirements of this policy will render the Council liable to prosecution under Section 37 of the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and any subsequent legislation and guidance.
- 1.3. This policy also reinforces principles and requirements set out in other Employment Related Policies adopted by the Council including:
 - Equalities Policy
 - Whistleblowing Policy
 - Data Protection Policy
- 1.4. The policy relates to the following means of communication with the Parish Council Office on Parish Council related business:
 - Email or text
 - Telephone (landline / mobile)
 - Face to face
- 1.5. The Parish Council office is open 5 days a week – Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays). In order to ensure the efficiency of the Parish Council Office, the following measures will be put in place:
 - Restricted staff contact hours limited to between 11am -1pm Mondays to Fridays
 - The Administrative Assistant will in the first instance answer telephone calls.
 - No phone / text / email contact out of office hours unless under exceptional circumstances.
 - If the Clerk / Administrative Assistant is unable to answer the phone for whatever reason, Councillors are to leave an answerphone message or send an email.
 - Emails and calls will be answered when it is expedient for staff to do so.
 - Visits to the Parish Council Office should be by appointment.

2. Scope of the Policy

- 2.1. This policy serves to provide a framework for communication with Parish Council Office staff in order to promote a positive working environment that is efficient and effective.
- 2.2. Telephone calls, texts or emails of a vexatious, abusive, obscene, discriminatory, racist, harassing, derogatory or defamatory manner must be recorded and reported to the Chair of the Personnel Working Group at the earlier opportunity.
- 2.3. Similarly, receiving numerous, trivial, detailed but routine questions or calls, with or without a specified timeframes will be considered unreasonable. Making excessive demands on the time and resources of staff with repeated or lengthy phone calls is extremely disruptive and affects productivity.
- 2.4. The use of personal mobiles, home phone numbers and emails must be reserved for emergency situations only and care must be taken not to breach the Data Protection Act.
- 2.5. Telephone calls to / from the Parish Council are automatically logged and monitored on a monthly basis and any excessive breaches will be reported to the Chair of the Personnel Working Group.