

Hardingstone Parish Council

Website Governance and Social Media Policy

Website

Service Level Agreement

- 1) All agendas will be available on the website 5 working days prior to the actual meeting.
- 2) All minutes will be available on the website the working day after the draft has been reviewed.
- 3) Any amendments/corrections will be actioned within 10 working days.
- 4) Emails/enquiry forms submitted via the website will be acknowledged within 5 working days at which point timescales for a full response will be given.
- 5) Links to other sites/groups will be reviewed as necessary. See 6 in Management of Content.
- 6) Current accounts and receipts and payments, up to the last day of the previous month will be available to view on the website by the second Thursday of the following month (subject to there being a scheduled full council or F&GP meeting.)

Management of content

The Community Working Group will appoint a sub-group known as The Website Management Group. (WMG).

- 1) The website is password protected & additions/deletions/amendments will be completed by the Clerk & nominated WMG.
- 2) All electronic content by The Council will be factual. Submissions by the public may contain opinions.
- 3) All additions and amendments will be made by The Clerk. Nominated WMG members may be authorised to work on some aspects of updating or enhancement. Any major changes will be brought to full Council.
- 4) Any polls or consultations will be agreed by full council before being added to the website.
- 5) Technical support is provided by 2Commune.com
- 6) Requests by residents/groups to add links to their sites will be considered by The Clerk. The Clerk may consult WMG. Hardingstone Parish Council will not be responsible for the content of any other site. Inappropriate links will be removed.

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- 7) All information contained on the website will remain the property of the Parish Council & cannot be reproduced without the express permission of the full council.
- 8) Any pictures/content the Parish Council add that is taken from outside the council itself will not be added without the express permission of the owner.
- 9) Credit will be added for any pictures/information reproduced from outside the Parish Council.
- 10) The Parish Council will actively encourage feedback & ideas for improvement to the content & layout of the website.

Website provider

The current provider is 2Commune.com. The annual contract will be reviewed each year prior to renewal to ensure value for money & to make sure that we have received the level of service expected.

Social Media

The aim of this policy is to set out a Code of Practice to provide guidance to Hardingstone Parish Councillors, Parish Council staff and others who engage with the Parish Council using social media. This policy sits alongside relevant existing policies which need to be taken into consideration. In the main, Parish Councillors and Parish Council staff have the same legal duties online as anyone else, but failure to comply with the law may have more serious consequences. This policy covers all forms of social media and social networking sites which include (but are not limited to):

- Facebook, LinkedIn and other social networking sites
- Twitter and other micro blogging sites
- Youtube and other video clip and podcast sites
- Blogs and discussion forums

Social media does not replace existing forms of communication. The current Code of Conduct applies to social media activity in the same way it does to other written or verbal communication. Individual Parish Councillors and Parish Council staff are responsible for what they post in a Parish Council capacity. Social media may be used to:

- Distribute Parish Council agendas, post minutes and dates of meetings
- Advertise Parish Council events and activities

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- Announce new information from the Parish Council
- Promote links to news stories on the HPC website
- Advertise Parish Council vacancies
- Share information from partner agencies such as Principal Authorities, Police, Library, Health etc.
- Post or share information from other Parish Council-related community groups such as schools, sports clubs, community groups and charities
- Refer resident queries to the Clerk and all other Parish Councillors

Code of Practice

When using social media, Parish Councillors and Parish Council staff must be mindful of the information they post in a Parish Council capacity and keep the tone of any comments respectful and informative. Parish Councillors' views posted in any capacity in advance of matters to be debated by the Parish Council at a Council or committee meeting may constitute Pre-disposition, Pre-determination or Bias and may require the individual to declare an interest at Council meetings. Anyone with concerns regarding content placed on social media that denigrates Parish Councillors, Parish Council staff or residents should report them to the Clerk of the Parish Council. Online content should be accurate, objective, balanced and informative. Parish Councillors and council staff must not:

- hide their identity using false names or pseudonyms
- present personal opinions as that of the Parish Council
- present themselves in a way that might cause embarrassment to the Parish Council
- post content that is contrary to the democratic decisions of the Parish Council
- post controversial or potentially inflammatory remarks
- engage in personal attacks, online fights and hostile communications
- use an individual's name unless given written permission to do so
- publish the email address of any other Parish Councillor without their written permission
- publish photographs or videos of minors without parental permission
- post any information that infringes the copyright of others
- post any information that may be deemed libellous

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- post online activity that constitutes bullying or harassment
- bring the Parish Council into disrepute, including through content posted in a personal capacity
- post offensive language relating to race, sexuality, disability, gender, age, religion or belief
- conduct any online activity that violates laws, regulations or that constitutes a criminal offence
- publish untrue statements about a person which is damaging to their reputation as doing so is libellous and can result in a court action and a fine for damages
- post copyrighted images or text on social media as it is an offence to do so. Breach of copyright will result in an award of damages against you.
- publish personal data of individuals without permission as this is a breach of Data Protection legislation and is an offence.
- publish obscene material as it is a criminal offence and is subject to a custodial sentence.

Misuse of social media content that is contrary to this and other policies could result in action being taken. This policy will be reviewed annually.

Social Media sites, such as Facebook and Twitter, to be set up and administered by the Clerk. Hardingstone Parish Council website to be administered by the Clerk.

In the absence of the Clerk, another nominated member of the Parish Council will be asked to administer the site.

All content to be added to the site must be approved by the Clerk or other nominated member.

If there is any doubt, the Clerk should check with the Chair or other nominated member prior to posting.

Post only what you would like the world to see. Once you post something, it may continue to be available to view, even after it is removed from the site.

Do not disclose confidential matters or criticise policies or personnel.

Acknowledge queries posted to the Parish Council on the Facebook or Twitter site publicly but respond privately in message form.

If anyone places a post on your site that does not adhere to the rules above, remove as soon as practicably possible. If they continue to place posts that do not adhere to the rules above, use a two strikes and you're out policy, and remove the person from your list of followers and block them to prevent them following again.

