

Document No : KFSSPCo50423



# Kingsfold Fire Safety Policy

Signed: .....  
The Chair of Finance Committee  
Signed: .....  
The Chair-Stantonbury Parish Council

Date: .....  
Date: .....

### Document History

Original adopted	23/06/2017
New Revised Fire Safety Policy reviewed by the Clerk	23/03/2023
Reviewed and signed at Finance Committee	05/04/2023
Adopted and signed at Main Meeting	19/04/2023

## Policy Statement

The issue of Fire Safety is taken extremely seriously and we will strive to ensure that Parish Council and its employees comply with the Regulatory reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

The Parish Council will strive to ensure the safety of all persons who have a legitimate right to be in, on or in the vicinity of the premises from fire and its effects. These include staff, visitors and contractors but exclude fire fighters in the pursuance of firefighting.

Staff should be aware it is a criminal offence not to consider theirs and others fire safety whilst at work and breaches will be dealt with in a robust manner by management.

## Responsibilities

### *The Responsible Person*

The responsible person retains overall responsibility for policy and management of fire and under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 designated as the "Responsible Person". The Responsible Person has delegated the following roles:

Item	Task	Position / Name
1	Ensuring all exits are available and useable during time people are in the premises (recommended daily)	All staff / Councillors
2	Firefighting equipment is in place and undamaged	All staff
3	Staff have received induction training	Clerk
5	The monthly test of the fire alarm	Parish Ranger / Supervisor
6	The monthly test of the emergency lighting	Parish Ranger / Supervisor
7	Completion of the Fire Risk Assessment	Appointed Senior Administrator / Clerk
8	Ensuring the fire alarm, emergency lighting and firefighting equipment (and other safety measures if found) is serviced by a competent person	Ranger Supervisor
9	Ensuring appropriate cleaning of kitchen extract ducts where appropriate	Clerk
10	Ensuring portable electrical appliances are maintained as required (PAT)	Clerk
10	Ensuring fixed electrics are inspected at least once every five years	Clerk
12	Completion of refresher training	Clerk
13	Completion of an annual fire evacuation drill	Clerk

## **All Staff**

All staff members have a responsibility for their own and others fire safety. They should report any possible dangerous issues to the Clerk for action.

Staff are forbidden from carrying out actions that could compromise their or others fire safety and where staff are found to carry out such actions they may be subject to disciplinary proceedings.

The Clerk is the “responsible person” for the Stantonbury Parish Council Office. The Clerk is also the Warden for the Parish office with the Senior Administrator as Deputy.

Our fire action procedure is displayed across the building.

All fire related equipment is regularly serviced and maintained. If any employee/councillor/visitor notices that fire safety equipment is defective or missing, they should report it to the Clerk immediately.

Our Fire Risk Assessment will be reviewed every three years or more frequently if there are any changes that will impact on its effectiveness.

## **Fire Strategy**

The fire strategy is to ensure there is a suitable means of alerting all persons who have a legitimate right to be in the premises to a fire in the early stages and provide sufficient number of exits to allow the safe evacuation to a place of ultimate safety.

The evacuation procedure is for all persons to evacuate immediately.

The type, number and level of fire safety measures will be decided by the Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) and shall be carried out by a competent person.

Whilst management accepts there is a legal duty to ensure there is some persons trained in the use of firefighting equipment they do not encourage the fighting of fires by staff and actively discourages the fighting of fires by any guests unless they have received training. Staff will receive fire safety training but their overriding responsibility is to sound an alarm and initiate an evacuation of the immediate area.

## **Fire Risk Assessment (FRA)**

Management will employ a competent person to assist them with their duties under Article 18 of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 in accordance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

A hard copy of the FRA will be held on site in a safe place.

The FRA is a comprehensive assessment of the building, the processes taking place and the people expected to use it to ensure all relevant people are not at an unacceptable risk from fire or its effects. The assessment considers life safety and not property protection. The assessment will provide a list of Significant Findings. These are items that are likely to present an unacceptable risk to people and will specify:

- what the problem is,
- what existing control measures are in place and;
- what additional measures should be investigated.

Any Significant Finding will be prioritised within the FRA Action plan.

The Responsible Person is responsible for ensuring the Significant Findings detailed in the FRA receive appropriate attention.

## **Testing and Maintenance**

### ***Fire Alarm & Detection***

The level of coverage will be set by the FRA and serviced in accordance with the relevant British Standard (BS5839-6) by a competent person.

The fire detectors will be tested monthly. Records of the tests will be maintained on site for inspection by company personnel, fire risk assessors and enforcement officers.

### ***Emergency Lighting***

The level of emergency lighting will be dictated by the FRA.

The installed system will be tested monthly by the Parish Rangers / Supervisor using a suitable test key or by isolating (using the local light circuit breaker) the lights.

The system will be serviced annually by a competent firm of engineers in accordance with BS 5266 Pt 1:2005.

Records of the tests will be maintained on site for inspection by fire risk assessors and enforcement officers.

### ***Portable Electrical Equipment***

The portable electrical equipment within the building work areas will be checked to ensure it is fit for purpose and in a safe condition. The equipment shall be tested in accordance with HSE guidance.

### ***Portable Firefighting Equipment***

The portable firefighting equipment will be inspected to ensure the equipment appears in good condition, all extinguishers have a safety pin and plastic tag fitted and all equipment is in its appropriate position.

The equipment will be serviced annually by a firm of competent engineers in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and the BS 5305 Pt 3.

### ***Means of Escape***

The designated on-site staff will check daily that all corridors / exits are kept clear of obstructions and combustible material.

### ***Records of Testing & Maintenance***

Management to ensure accurate and true records associated with testing and maintenance of fire safety measures as well as staff training and evacuation drills.

Records must be kept on site with the following information:

- Date of test
- Item tested
- Result of test
- Action taken
- Person completing test

In the case of staff training records they should be retained on site for a period of 5 years. The records should be kept confidential but may be shown to enforcing authorities for the purpose of showing due diligence to legislation.

### ***Staff Training***

All staff will be given induction training when employed: this will take place on their first day of employment and will encompass:

- Action to take on discovering a fire or hearing the alarm
- Knowledge of firefighting equipment
- Location of exits
- Assembly points
- Where necessary, nominated key staff will receive additional training providing detailed knowledge on the installed fire safety measures and use of firefighting equipment.

Continuation training should be completed as appropriate.

### ***Evacuation Drills***

It is anticipated this will take place without visitors. The drill should take place at least annually and will be recorded and documented.

### ***Policy on Firefighting***

Staff members who have been trained in the use of portable firefighting equipment may attempt to fight an uncontrolled fire where they feel confident it can be dealt with safely however they must not do where they would put themselves or others at risk of harm from the fire or its effects.

Visitors are actively discouraged from fighting fire unless they have received specific training. Any such firefighting is carried out at their own risk. Sufficient firefighting equipment will be provided in the premises for the purpose of immediate first aid firefighting.

## **Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP's)**

All staff/Councillors known to have a disability will have a PEEP completed on them.

The purpose of the PEEP is to ensure the person is provided with a means of being alerted to a fire emergency and a safe means of escape taking into account their disability or illness.

The PEEP should not disadvantage the employee/councillor in their role but ultimately the purpose of the PEEP is to ensure the safety of the employee/councillor and if no reasonable solution can be found to ensuring the safety of the person a restriction in their location within or on the premises may have to be considered.

When completing a PEEP the Manager should speak to the person involved to discuss:

- What fire safety issues present problems
- How serious are the problems
- How can they be overcome

Where it is recognised an employee/councillor has a disability that may affect their escape from the building the Responsible Person should consider discussing with them how they can be assisted.

## **Contractors on Site**

Any contractors invited on site to carry out authorised repairs must provide onsite management with a method statement stating how the work is to be safely completed. This must include a section on fire safety.

Any contractor invited on site to complete "hot work" (work that could use open flame or heat producing equipment high enough to cause ignition to flammable material) must produce a risk assessment stating how the equipment is to be used and what precautions will be put into place to reduce the risk and deal with a fire.

All such contractors must bring their own firefighting equipment on site suitable for the hazard they are introducing as specified in their risk assessment.

All such firefighting equipment must be in service (within one year). When the contractors have set up to work, on site management must carry out an inspection and satisfy themselves they are working safely and to their risk assessment/method statement. On site management has the right to stop any contractor from working in or on the premises where they feel there is an unacceptable risk to the contractors, staff and/or visitors.

## **Relevant Legislation**

Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

Document No : HSPSPCo50423



# Health and Safety Policy

Signed: .....  
The Chair of Finance Committee  
Signed: .....  
The Chair-Stantonbury Parish Council

Date: .....  
Date: .....



### Document History

Original adopted	16/11/2017
Reviewed and adapted from SLCC Notes	13/03/2023
Reviewed and signed at Finance Committee	05/04/2023
Adopted and signed at Main Meeting	19/04/2023

This is the Health and Safety Policy Statement of Stantonbury Parish Council:

Stantonbury Parish Council recognises and accepts its responsibility for providing a safe and healthy environment for its members; staff; volunteers; visitors; and for anyone affected by its activities.

The Council maintains this policy for the management of health and safety as its top priority and will do all that is reasonably practicable to ensure effective organisation and planning are established and maintained. The Council will also ensure that appropriate and effective audit and review mechanisms are used to inform the work of the Council, which undertakes to commit appropriate resources to manage health and safety.

Our statement of general policy, below, is based upon that required by virtue of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The principles of the Act and its underpinning Regulations as later published are taken by the Council as a minimum requirement for the safe and effective management of the Council and its activities.

Our statement of general policy is:

- To provide adequate control of the health and safety risks arising from our activities;
- To consult with our staff on matters affecting their health and safety;
- To provide and maintain safe equipment;
- To provide sufficient information, instruction, and supervision of staff, volunteers and visitors as far as is reasonably practicable;
- To ensure all staff and volunteers are competent in their Council-related activities, and to provide adequate training as far as is reasonably practicable;
- To prevent accidents and activity-related ill health as far as is reasonably practicable;
- To maintain safe and healthy conditions for conducting the Council's business and the public facilities it provides; and
- To review and revise this Policy as necessary at regular intervals, but at least annually.

Document No: GDPSPCo50423



# Grant and Donations Policy

Signed: .....  
The Chair of Finance Committee

Date: .....

Signed: .....  
The Chair-Stantonbury Parish Council

Date: .....

## Document History

Draft Created by Cllr Morgan	01/12/20
Reviewed by council for changes	27/01/21
Reviewed and amended and submitted to Finance Agenda	29/10/21
Further amendments made including version change from 9 to 10. Passed to Main Meeting on 31.11.21 to recommend to adopt (with v10 changes).	17/11/21
Reviewed and amended as per SLCC Notes	13/03/2023
Reviewed and signed at Finance Committee	05/04/2023
Adopted and signed at Main Meeting	19/04/2023

## Introduction to Policy

A grant is any payment made by the Council to be used by an organisation for a specific purpose that will benefit the Parish, or residents of the Parish, and which is not directly controlled or administered by the Council. The Council awards grants, at its discretion, to organisations which can demonstrate a clear need for financial support to benefit the Parish by:

- Providing a service
- Enhancing the quality of life
- Improving the environment
- Promoting Stantonbury Parish in a positive way

## Grant Application Process

1. Applicants will be required to complete an application form. All questions on the application form should be fully answered and additional appropriate information, which supports an application, should be provided:
  - a copy of their written constitution or details of their aims and purpose,
  - full details of the project or activity,
  - demonstration that the grant will be of benefit to the local community within the Parish,
  - the proportion or number of beneficiaries living in the electoral area,
  - demonstration of a clear need for the funding,
  - a copy of the previous years accounts or, for new initiatives, a detailed budget and business plan.
2. The only exceptions to the above process if the organisations are:
  - Religious organisations, for whom a constitution will not be required.
  - Newly constituted organisations and groups for which accounts will not yet exist.
  - Informal groups that gather for a common social purpose or other activity, having clear aims and objectives and whose members act collectively. Some form of documentation /identification of members must be produced.
  - Schools of Milton Keynes Council-supported organisations are not required to submit full accounts.
  - Very small clubs or societies (i.e. less than 15 members) that have a basic book keeping system or monies in and expenditure.
3. The Clerk to the council will receive all applications in the first instance. A designated Councillor will then collate all the necessary information from the applicant ready for presentation and discussion at the appropriate Council meeting.
4. Grant applications are divided into two categories:

### Category 1 - Parish-Based Grants

These are for groups and organisations based in the Parish supporting or benefiting parishioners of the Parish.

### Category 2 - Non-Parish Based Grants

These are for groups and organisations that are based outside of the Parish, but whose wider-ranging activities may benefit the Parish and/or particular Parish residents, groups and organisations. Category 2 applications will only be considered by the council from the end of September until the end of March.

5. Our common award is usually no more than £500 however an applicant may request an amount of up to £1000 which they will then be invited to attend a full Council meeting and provide a supporting verbal statement for the grant.

In exceptional circumstances, the Full Council has the discretion to modify the grant value requested.

6. The Council reserves the rights to refuse any grant that they feel that does not meet the criteria or is not beneficial to the wider community. Similarly, the Parish Council reserves the right to seek return of the full value of any grant where the monies have not been spent as per the details set out in the grant application.
7. Where funding is being sought to meet costs arising from a community event, the applicant is responsible for any licenses and permissions when needed. The Council requires all community events to have an appropriate insurance policy which includes but is not limited to cover if the event is cancelled for any reason. The Council can request for the grant amount to be returned when an event does not take place for which the grant was issued.
8. The Council will make the decision on which grants to award. All applicants will be contacted following the Council's decision, and this decision is final.

### **Conditions of Funding**

1. The organisation must be either non-profit or charitable. Applications will not be considered from private organisations operated as a business to make a profit or surplus.
2. Payment will be made by bank transfer and payable to the group or organisation concerned within 28 days. Under no circumstances will payments be made payable to individuals (or third-party representatives). Exceptionally, payment may be made payable to the vendor of the goods or service for which the grant was made.
3. Grants will not be made to individuals.
4. Grants will not be made retrospectively.
5. Applications will not normally be considered from national organisations or local groups with access to funds from national 'umbrella' or 'parent' organisations, unless funds are not available from their national bodies, or the funds available are inadequate for a specified project.
6. An organisation should have a bank account in its own name with two authorised representatives required to approve payments.
7. The administration of and accounting for any grant shall be the responsibility of the recipient. All awards must be properly accounted for and evidence of expenditure should be supplied to the Council within 28 days of completion using the standard report form provided by the Council.
8. The sum total of grants made to any one group or organisation within a single financial year (1 April – 31 March) shall not exceed £500 unless special motions are made as explained in our Grant Application Process paragraph 5.
9. Ongoing commitments to award grants or subsidies in future years will not be made. A fresh application will be required each year.
10. Each application will be assessed on its own merits.
11. The Council may make the award of any grant or subsidy subject to such additional conditions and requirements as it considers appropriate. For example you may be required to include our logo in any advertising for which the funding was received.

12. Any grant must only be used for the purpose for which it was awarded unless the written approval of the Council has been obtained for a change in use of the grant monies, and that any unspent portion of the grant must be returned to the Council by the end of the financial year in which it was awarded.
13. The Council may make the award of any grant or subsidy as it considers appropriate in the event of any unforeseen urgent event.
14. Nothing contained herein shall prevent the Council from exercising, at any time, its existing duty or power in respect of providing financial assistance or grants to local or national organisations under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972, Section 137.

#### **1.0 Consideration of a Donation.**

A donation request may be made by any Parish Councillor on behalf of an organisation and must be supported in writing with evidence of need and application of the donation.

A qualifying donation is one that will assist either a local charity (within the boundary of Milton Keynes) or in an emergency situation where the action of the Charity will have a direct impact on our members of our community. This would be classed by the Local Authority/National Government as an emergency situation e.g. Pandemic, flooding, fire, building collapse, transport disaster. Other local emergencies of similar type may be considered by the Full Council if proposed.

Alternatively, where circumstances are such that the full council are fully aware of the situation e.g. emergency circumstances, where a donation will be of benefit to our Parishioners this will be discussed as a formal agenda item for the full Council.

In cases of doubt with respect to the interpretation of the above conditions, the applicant must seek the advice and guidance of the Parish Clerk.

Document No : CTVSPCo50423



# CCTV Policy

Signed: .....  
The Chair of Finance Committee  
Signed: .....  
The Chair-Stantonbury Parish Council

Date: .....  
Date: .....



### Document History

Reviewed and adapted from other Parishes	23/03/2023
Agreed and signed at Finance Committee	05/04/2023
Adopted and signed at Main Meeting	19/04/2023

## **1. Introduction:**

Stantonbury Parish Council is registered with the ICO; Registration number ZA24982. Closed circuit television (CCTV) is installed at some of our SPC's owned premises for the security of visitors, staff, assets and the premises. The cameras can record images with sound recorded in some areas. There is no facility for Automatic Number Plate Recognition. While every effort is made to ensure maximum effectiveness of the cameras no guarantee is given that every incident taking place within the area covered will be detected.

1.1. The CCTV system will be used for the following purposes:

- To help prevent, deter and detect vandalism and crime and disorder.
- To discourage anti-social behaviour.
- To identify individuals breaching terms and conditions of hire at parish premises.
- To assist the police, Parish Council and Milton Keynes City Council and other relevant law enforcement agencies with detection and identification of offenders

## **2. Data Protection Statement**

2.1. Stantonbury Parish Council is the Data Controller.

2.2. CCTV is installed for the security of visitors, staff, assets and the premises.

2.3. Access to stored images will be controlled on a restricted basis within the Parish Council and limited to authorised council personnel.

2.4. Use of images and sound including the provision of images to a third party, will be in accordance with any requirements that may be occasioned by the Council's Data Protection registration.

2.5. CCTV may be used to monitor the movements and activities of staff and visitors outside the premises.

2.6. External signage is provided advising that CCTV is in operation.

## **3. Retention of Images**

Images from cameras are recorded on a secure hard drive and recordings are accessible for up to **14 days**. Recordings which are not required for the stated purposes will not be retained for longer than is necessary.

The cameras do not have an automatic power backup facility in the event of a main supply power failure.

#### **4. Access to Images/Sound**

It is important that access to and disclosure of images/sound recorded by CCTV are restricted and carefully controlled, not only to ensure that the rights of individuals are preserved, but also to ensure that the chain of evidence remains intact should the images/sound be required for evidential purposes.

- 4.1. Images/sound will only be viewed if an incident is reported which falls into the categories listed in 1.1
- 4.2. Access to recorded images/sound is restricted to nominated Parish Council staff who are authorised to share the images/sound with police officers and relevant authorities
- 4.3. Images/sound will not be supplied to the media, except on the advice of the police if deemed to be in the public interest and only with approval of the Chair of the Parish Council
- 4.4. CCTV images/sound will not be supplied to any third party other than those specified in 4.2 and 4.3

#### **5. Access to Images/Sound by Data Subjects**

CCTV images/sound, if they show a recognisable person, are personal data and are covered by the Data Protection Act. Anyone who believes they have been filmed by CCTV is entitled to ask for a copy of the data, subject to exemptions contained in the Act. They do not have the right of instant access.

- 5.1. To request a copy of the image/sound the subject must apply in writing, specifying the date, location and time the image was taken
- 5.2. The subject must supply a full description, including clothing worn for the correct image to be traced.
- 5.3. The Clerk will reply within 1 calendar month of the request
- 5.4. The Data Protection Act gives the Data Protection Officer the right to refuse a request for a copy of the data particularly where provision could prejudice an ongoing criminal investigation. If it is decided that the request is to be refused, the reasons will be fully documented and the subject informed in writing.

Any enquiries should be addressed to:

Donna Moore - Clerk of Stantonbury Parish Council  
Address: 126 Kingsfold  
Bradville  
Milton Keynes  
MK13 7DX  
Telephone: 01908 227201  
Email: [donna.moore@stantonburyparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:donna.moore@stantonburyparishcouncil.org.uk)

Document No : SGSPCo50423



# SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Signed: .....  
The Chair of Finance Committee  
Signed: .....  
The Chair-Stantonbury Parish Council

Date: .....  
Date: .....

### Document History

Created by HR Chair	16/09/19
Reviewed by Management Committee	11/12/19
Policy examples extracted and adopted from other Parish's	08/06/22
Conversation with NALC regarding contents agreed	08/06/22
Reviewed and signed at Finance Committee	05/04/23
Adopted and signed at Main Meeting	19/04/23

## **Introduction**

The Parish Council believes that children, young people and vulnerable adults have the right to be safe in the services provided for them and the activities they choose to participate in.

The Parish Council believes all children, young people and vulnerable adults have the right to live their lives to the fullest potential, to be protected, to have the opportunity to participate in and enjoy any activity and to be treated with dignity and respect.

The Parish Council believes that all children, young people and vulnerable adults irrespective of their age, class, religion, culture, disability, gender, ethnicity or sexual preference have the right to protection.

### **Child/Young People and Vulnerable Adults Protection Statement**

This Parish Council endeavours that all children, young people and vulnerable adults are protected and kept safe from harm as much as possible whilst engaged in services organised and provided by the Parish Council. This Parish Council will also safeguard the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults who use the Parish Council's services or who attend activities within its venues, by endeavouring to protect them from abuse.

This Parish Council recognises its responsibilities under the terms of the Children Act 2004, and The Care Act 2014 and other relevant legislation to make arrangements for ensuring that its functions are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. The policy affects every elected member, staff member, volunteer and anyone working on behalf of and/or representing the Parish Council.

#### **Definitions:**

- The term children or young person is used to refer to anyone under the age of 18 years.
- The term parent is used as a generic term to represent anyone with legal parental responsibility.
- A vulnerable adult is a person “who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or maybe unable to take care of himself or herself or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

## **Aims of the Policy**

Stantonbury Parish Council accepts the moral and legal responsibility to implement procedures, provide a duty of care for children, young people and vulnerable adults, safeguard their wellbeing and protect them when they are engaged in services organised and provided by the Parish Council or when they come into contact with Parish Council staff, those on work experience, elected members and volunteers.

The Parish Council aims to do this by:

- Raising an awareness throughout the Parish Council and beyond of the statutory “duty of care” relating to children, young people and vulnerable adults and actively encourage good practice amongst all staff, elected members and volunteers.
- Creating a safe and healthy environment within all its services, avoiding situations where abuse or allegations of abuse may occur.
- Respecting and promoting the rights, wishes and feelings of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Listening to children, young people and vulnerable adults, minimising dangers and working closely with other agencies.
- Recruiting, training, supervising and supporting staff, elected members and volunteers who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from abuse, and themselves against false allegations. Staff and volunteers who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults will be subject to the appropriate level Disclosure and Barring Service check.
- Responding to any allegations appropriately and implementing the appropriate disciplinary and appeals procedures.
- Requiring staff, elected members and volunteers to adopt and abide by this policy and guidelines.

## **Use of Contractors**

This Council and its staff, elected members and volunteers should take care that contractors doing work on behalf of the Council are monitored appropriately. Any contractor or sub-contractor, engaged by the Council in areas where workers are likely to come into contact with children and young people, should have a similarly robust Child Protection Policy/Care Policy, or failing this, must comply with the terms of this policy. Contractors will be monitored by the Officer of the Parish Council responsible for the contract.

## **Procedures**

These procedures inform staff, elected members and volunteers of what actions they should take if they have concerns or encounter a case of alleged or suspected child, young adult or vulnerable adults’ abuse.

## **Responding To Concerns and Allegations**

- It is important that all staff, elected members and volunteers are aware that the first person that has concerns or encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred. It is not the place of any Officer of the Parish Council to investigate allegations. However, staff, elected members and volunteers do have a duty of care to the child, young person or vulnerable adult which means they must report any suspicions they may have.
- It is the duty of any member, or council employee or volunteer to report any concerns about a child, young person or vulnerable adult being subject to abuse, receive a disclosure or are aware of Members, or colleagues behaving in an inappropriate manner. All reports should be treated as confidential and with respect to the person raising the concern regardless of the outcome.

In general there are 3 situations that staff, elected members and volunteers may need to respond to a concern or case of alleged or suspected abuse:

1. Responding to a child, young person or vulnerable adult disclosing abuse, i.e. they make an allegation of abuse.
2. Responding to allegations or concerns about a member of staff, elected member or volunteer from your own observation or due to a complaint.
3. Responding to allegations or concerns about any other person, i.e. parent, carer, other service user.

In the event of an incident record in writing all the details that you are aware of and what was said using the child, young person's, vulnerable adults' own words, immediately. In your record you should include the following:

- The date and time
- The child, young person's or vulnerable adults name, address and date of birth
- The nature of the allegation
- Your observations – a description of the child, young persons' or vulnerable adults' behaviour, physical and emotional state and any visible injuries.
- Exactly what the child, young person or vulnerable adult said and what you said. Record the child, young person's account of what has happened as closely as possible.
- Sign and date what you have recorded.

Do not ask questions, other than the child, young person's or vulnerable adults name, address and date of birth.

Reassure the child, young person or vulnerable adult that they have done the right thing in telling you.

Contact local Social Services or the Police without delay and follow their guidance.

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need-to-know basis only, this is usually Social Services or the Police. It is extremely important that allegations or concerns are not discussed, as any breach of confidentiality could be damaging to the child, young person or vulnerable adult, their family, those who are the subject of allegations and any child, young person or vulnerable adult protection investigations that may follow.

Informing the parents/carers of a child, young person or vulnerable adult of concerns you may have should be dealt with by Social Services. You must not inform parents/carers if they are the subject of the allegation.

Any individual against whom an allegation has been made has the right to be notified about the cause for concern. This should be done by Social Services and the Police. It is important that the timing of this does not prejudice the investigation; therefore, confidentiality is of the utmost importance.

Recorded information should be handed over to Social Services or the Police and any copies stored in a secure place with limited access in line with data protection laws (e.g. that



information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure). If enquiries arise from the public or any branch of the media, it is vital that all staff, elected members and volunteers are briefed not to make any comments regarding the situation.

## **Photography**

Staff and elected members should be vigilant at all times regarding people using cameras or videos within Parish Council services and at events or activities which involve children, young people and vulnerable adults.

- Do not allow unsupervised access to children, young people or vulnerable adults or one to one photographic sessions.
- Do not allow photographic sessions outside the activities or services, or at a child's, young person's or vulnerable adults home.
- The child, young person or vulnerable adult should be happy with having their picture taken.

To ensure the privacy of individuals and children, images taken by Stantonbury Parish Council will not be identified using full names or personal identifying information without written approval from the photographed subject, parent or legal guardian.

A person attending events or activities organised by Stantonbury Parish Council who does not wish to have their image recorded for distribution should make their wishes known to SPC in writing to [info@stantonburyparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:info@stantonburyparishcouncil.org.uk)

## **Sources of Information / Support**

Concerns about children must be referred to the Children's Social Care Referral and Assessment Team on 01908 253169 or 01908 253170 during office hours (out of hours 01908 265545) - email: [children@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:children@milton-keynes.gov.uk)

[Worried about a child? | Milton Keynes Council \(milton-keynes.gov.uk\)](#)

Concerns about vulnerable adults must be referred to the Adult Safeguarding Team on 01908 252835 during office hours (out of hours 01908 725005) - email: [safeguardingadults@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:safeguardingadults@milton-keynes.gov.uk)

[Worried about an Adult? | Milton Keynes Council \(milton-keynes.gov.uk\)](#)

Concerns about people who work with children must be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on 01908 254306 email: [lado@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:lado@milton-keynes.gov.uk)

Anyone working for Stantonbury Parish Council who has concerns about the behaviour of a member of staff or Councillor must always raise this with the Chair of the Council or the Chairman of the HR committee as quickly as possible.

Any violation or non-compliance with this policy may be investigated and may be treated as gross misconduct which includes termination of employment or contractual arrangements.

Document No : CMPSPCo50423



# Complaints Policy

Signed: .....  
The Chair of Finance Committee  
Signed: .....  
The Chair-Stantonbury Parish Council

Date: .....  
Date: .....

### Document History

Original complaints handling adopted	14/05/2014
Reviewed other parishes complaints policies/procedures	13/03/2023
Reviewed and signed by Finance Committee	05/04/2023
Signed and adopted at main meeting	19/04/2023

## **Introduction**

Stantonbury Parish Council is committed to providing a quality service for the benefit of the people who live or work in its area or are visitors to the locality. Complaints are valuable because they provide a chance to put things right if there has been an error, and to make sure that the same mistake is not repeated.

It is essential that complaints be dealt with positively. The Council is anxious to hear people's comments and committed to making full use of complaints information to contribute to continuous service improvement. Important information about areas for improvement can be obtained both from a single complaint and from patterns of complaints, highlighted by detailed monitoring. If you are dissatisfied with the standard of service you have received from Stantonbury Parish Council or are unhappy about an action or lack of action by us, this Complaints Policy sets out how you may complain to the Council and how we shall try to resolve your complaint.

## **Definition of a Complaint**

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions, or lack of action by the Council or its staff which affects the individual customer or group of customers.

## **What the complaints procedure will deal with:**

The complaints procedure will deal with matters of maladministration, which is if the Parish Council does something the wrong way, fails to do something it should do or does something it should not do. Some examples include:

- neglect or unjustified delay
- malice, bias, or unfair discrimination
- failure to tell people their rights
- failure to provide advice or information when reasonably requested
- providing misleading or inaccurate advice
- inefficiency, ineffectiveness, bad and unprofessional practice or conduct

## **What the complaints procedure will not deal with:**

- complaints for which there is a legal remedy or where legal proceedings already exist
- complaints about employment matters, complaints by one Council employee against another Council employee, or between a Council employee and the Council as employer as the Council operates alternative procedures to deal with grievances or disciplinary matters against staff.
- complaints against Councillors. Complaints against individual Councillors will be referred to the Monitoring Officer of Buckinghamshire Council. Further information about this process may be obtained from the Monitoring Officer of Buckinghamshire Council.

## **Equal Opportunities**

The Council is committed to equal opportunities. Complaint's feedback will be used to highlight discriminatory practices, and to promote equality of opportunity. Complaints by members of the

public of discrimination and/or harassment against the Parish Council will be dealt with through the complaints procedure unless it is a complaint that should be dealt with through a statutory procedure.

### **Data Protection Act 2018**

The Data Protection Act 2018 must be complied with when dealing with a complaint and the complainant's personal details. By making a formal complaint with the Parish Council, individuals are deemed to be giving consent for their personal data to be used in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Parish Council's Information and Data Protection Policy. Personal information provided will only be used for the purpose for which it has been given and may be shared with a third party if the Parish Council deems that it will assist in resolving the issue raised.

### **Stages of the Procedure**

Complaints sometimes arise due to a misunderstanding or a misconception. If you prefer to discuss your concerns informally with either the Clerk or the Chair of the Council or the source of the complaint, please contact the Clerk. Such action does not prevent you following the formal complaints procedure as set out below.

The appropriate time for influencing Council decision-making is by raising your concerns before the Council debates and votes on a matter. You may do this by writing to the Council in advance of the meeting at which the item is to be discussed. There may also be the opportunity to raise your concerns in the public participation section of Council meetings. If you are unhappy with a Council decision, you may raise your concerns with the Council, but Standing Orders prevent the Council from re-opening issues for six months from the date of the decision, unless there are exceptional grounds to consider this necessary and the special process set out in the Standing Orders is followed.

The stages of the procedure are designed to provide the complainant with a thorough and fair means of redress and to provide a framework for officers to work within. It is vital however, that the Clerk remains clear of the process, until required at the second stage to ensure that their contribution is completely independent.

### **Everyday problems, queries and comments**

The Council receives queries, problems and comments as part of its day-to-day running, and they should not all be regarded as complaints. These are routine and expected and are generally resolved quickly to the customer's satisfaction.

If someone is dissatisfied with the original service or response they received and wishes to take the matter further then the issue should be recognised as a complaint.

### **Informal Complaint**

During the course of daily business, minor complaints are made about the services we provide. SPC staff will usually deal with these. It is not appropriate for every comment to be treated as a formal complaint. Every effort should be made to deal with these problems immediately, either by providing information, instigating the appropriate action or explaining a decision.

## **Formal Complaint (Stage 1)**

A customer may wish to make a formal complaint directly or may be unsatisfied with the outcome of an informal complaint and may wish to take the matter further. This will be recorded as a complaint and passed to the appropriate officer to investigate, normally the Clerk.

### **Timescales:**

Complaint Acknowledged	72 hours
Investigation completed	21 working days
or progress reports issued	21 working day intervals

## **Review of Investigation and Complaint (Stage 2)**

If the complainant is not satisfied with the Investigating Officer's response, they should be advised of their right to have the complaint referred to the Council's HR Committee. The complaint should confirm in writing why they remain unhappy within 10 working days of receiving the original investigation/outcome as per stage 1.

## **Complaints Committee (Stage 3)**

As soon as reasonably practicable the HR Committee should convene. The committee will review the complaint and respond accordingly.

The outcome of all formal complaints dealt with by the HR Committee will be reported to the full Council.

### **Timescales:**

Panel convened within	21 working days
Investigation completed	21 working days thereafter
or Progress Reports issued	21 working day intervals

## **Before the HR Committee Meeting**

The complainant shall be invited to attend a meeting and to bring with them a representative if they wish.

Seven clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant shall provide the council with copies of any documentation or other evidence relied on. The Council shall provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting and shall do so promptly, allowing the claimant the opportunity to read the material in good time for the meeting.

## **At the Complaints Committee Meeting**

The Chair should introduce everyone and explain the procedure.

The complainant (or representative) should outline the grounds for complaint and, thereafter, questions may be asked by (i) the Clerk or other nominated officer and then (ii) members.

The Clerk or other nominated officer will have an opportunity to explain the council's position and questions may be asked by (i) the complainant and (ii) members.

The Clerk or other nominated officer and then the complainant should be offered the opportunity to summarise their position.

The Clerk or other nominated officer and the complainant should be asked to leave the room while members decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been made. If a point of clarification is necessary, both parties shall be invited back in.

The Clerk or other nominated officer and the complainant should be given the opportunity to wait for the decision but if the decision is unlikely to be finalised on that day, they should be advised when the decision is likely to be made and when it is likely to be communicated to them. See timescales above.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

In handling and resolving the complaint, the Clerk or other nominated officer and Council members shall pay due regard to any conflicts of interest which may exist or arise while doing so. Such conflicts of interest would normally preclude their involvement in the decision-making process.

### **Unreasonable and Vexations Complaints**

Habitual or vexatious complainants can be a problem for Parish Council staff and councillors. The difficulty in handling such complainants is that they are time consuming and wasteful of resources in terms of Officer and Councillor time. While the Parish Council endeavours to respond with patience and sympathy to the needs of all complainants there are times when there is nothing further which can be done to assist or to rectify a real or perceived problem.

The Parish Council will take steps to protect its staff from members of the public who are behaving in a way which is considered abusive and/or vexatious.

The Parish Council will decide if it considers a Complainant's behaviour or actions to be vexatious. In such circumstances, the Parish Council reserves the right to determine the appropriate restrictions it may apply to any individual or group of individuals, which may ultimately include exclusion from Parish Council meetings.

### **Anonymous Complaints**

Anonymous complaints should be referred to the Clerk, and may be dismissed at their discretion, according to the type and seriousness of the allegation.

### **Resolution and Remedies**

The aim in dealing with all complaints is to reach a resolution for the complainant, whether it is the remedy they were originally seeking or not. Where a complaint is found to be at all justified, consideration may need to be given to the question of an appropriate remedy (the Complaints Committee to make any final decision regarding remedy). An explanation or an apology will always be needed.

**CONTACT:**

Donna Moore (Clerk of Stantonbury Parish Council)

Address: 126 Kingsfold

Bradville

Milton Keynes

MK13 7DX

Telephone: 01908 227201

Email: [donna.moore@stantonburyparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:donna.moore@stantonburyparishcouncil.org.uk)



Document No : SMSPCo50423



# Social Media Policy

Signed: .....  
The Chair of Finance Committee  
Signed: .....  
The Chair-Stantonbury Parish Council

Date: .....  
Date: .....

### Document History

Original adopted	07/06/2017
Reviewed and adapted from other parish councils	13/03/2023
Reviewed and signed at Finance Committee	05/04/2023
Adopted and signed at Main Meeting	19/04/2023

The aim of this policy is to set out a Code of Practice to provide guidance to parish councillors, council staff and others who engage with the council using online communications, collectively referred to as social media. Social media is a collective term used to describe methods of publishing on the internet.

## **Introduction**

Social media is a term for websites based on user participation and user-generated content, including social media sites and other sites that are centered on user interaction.

This policy is intended to help Councillors and Council staff make appropriate decisions about the use of social media, and to outline Stantonbury Parish Council's position on various aspects of its use, including the management of comments made by members of the public when using SPC's social media sites.

It includes standards and guidelines for Councillors and Council staff to observe when using social media as a channel for communication, the management of public comments, and the action to be taken in respect to breaches of this policy.

This policy covers all forms of social media and social networking sites which include (but are not limited to):

- Stantonbury Parish Council website
- Facebook and other social networking sites
- Twitter and other micro-blogging sites
- YouTube and other video clips and podcast sites
- LinkedIn
- Blogs and discussion forums
- Email

This policy supplements and should be read in conjunction with all other policies and procedures adopted by Stantonbury Parish Council. The current Code of Conduct applies to online activity in the same way it does to other written or verbal communication.

Over time Stantonbury Parish Council may add to the channels of communication that it uses as it seeks to improve and expand the services the Council delivers. When these changes occur this policy will be updated to reflect the new arrangements. This policy may be amended at any time.

## **How social media will be used by the Council**

Social media may be used for:

- Engagement with individuals and communities for the promotion of Council based services, decisions and actions.
- Distribute in whole or part information from council notices, agendas, approved minutes and dates of meetings
- Information specifically agreed to be communicated via social media at Council meetings.

- Advertising events and activities that Stantonbury Parish Council has organised or co-organised or supports as being beneficial for the community.
- Sharing good news stories relevant to the local area.
- Announcing new information relevant to people living in or around the Parish area.
- Providing and exchanging information about local services and events.
- Support community cohesion, neighbourliness and resilience.
- Gathering residents' insights.
- Promoting cultural events or tourism in the area.
- Advertising vacancies.
- Re-tweet or share relevant information from partner agencies such as Principal Authorities, Police, Library, Health etc.
- Post, retweet or share relevant information from local community groups for community benefit such as information from community associations, community groups, schools, sports clubs, Scouts/Guides and charities.
- Link to appropriate websites and other social media accounts of sites or organisations that meet the council's expectations of conduct.
- Post other items as the council see fit.
- Refer resident queries via social media to the Clerk for wider dissemination to Councillors if required.

Councillors and staff should be aware that not all communication through social media requires a response, although an acknowledgement should be made if appropriate.

Stantonbury Parish Council runs its social media pages so that it can pass information on to residents quickly. Social media accounts will not necessarily be checked daily and posts will not necessarily be responded to. SPC's social media accounts are primarily a tool to pass information on.

Though SPC is keen to hear residents' views, it will not be able to take comments made on its social media accounts as official comments, particularly on planning applications. In order to manage the messages received, residents will be asked – if necessary – to forward their comments to SPC. This can be done by emailing the Parish Clerk, by contacting a Parish Councillor or by attending a monthly meeting.

### **Who is covered by this policy**

The principles of this policy apply to elected and co-opted Parish Councillors, council staff and volunteers (collectively referred to as staff in this policy).

All Councillors and staff are expected to comply with this policy at all times to protect the reputation, privacy, confidentiality, and interests of the council, its services, employees, partners and community.

Individual Parish Councillors and council staff are responsible for what they post, both in a council and personal capacity.

In the main, Councillors and council staff have the same legal duties online as anyone else, but failure to comply with the law may have more serious consequences.

The Council may take disciplinary action in respect of serious breaches of this policy by employees. This may include unlawful, libelous, harassing, defamatory, abusive, threatening, harmful, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, or racially offensive comments by an employee.

Volunteers in breach of the policy will result in the council no longer using their services and, if necessary, appropriate action will be taken.

The behaviour required in the Councillors Code of Conduct shall apply to online activity in the same way it does to other written or verbal communication. Councillors will bear in mind that inappropriate conduct can still attract adverse publicity, even where the code does not apply.

Councillors must be aware that their profile as a Councillor means the more likely it is they will be seen as acting in an official capacity when blogging or networking.

Councillors and staff must remember that communications on the internet are permanent and public.

When communicating in a 'private' group it should be ensured that the council would be content with the statement should it be made public.

A Councillor or council staff member's behaviour on any social media site must be consistent with the behaviour required generally.

### **Code of Practice**

When using social media, Councillors and staff must be mindful of the information they post in both a personal and council capacity and keep the tone of any comments respectful and informative.

Councillors and staff should not post comments that they would not be prepared to make in writing or face-to-face.

When participating in online communication, Councillors and staff must:

- Be responsible and respectful, ensuring posts are positive, informative and balanced.
- Respect the privacy of other councillors, staff and residents.
- Keep the tone of comments respectful and informative, never condescending or 'loud' i.e. use sentence case format and not write in capital letters or red to emphasise points
- Seek permission to publish original photos or videos (posting copyright images or text on social media sites is an offence so Councillors and staff must ensure any information does not infringe copyright).
- Always disclose their identity and affiliation to the Council, and never hide their identity using false names or pseudonyms
- Be objective, balanced, informative and accurate.
- Spell and grammar check everything

Parish councillors and council staff must not:

- Give out the personal data of others on social media, including home address and telephone numbers.

- Use an individual's name in social media communications or post information about an individual unless given written permission to do so (publishing personal data of individuals without permission is a breach of Data Protection legislation)
- Present personal opinions as that of Stantonbury Parish Council. If a Councillor or member of staff blogs, tweets or communicates online personally, and not in the role as a Councillor or member of council staff, they must not claim to act or give the impression that they are acting as a representative of the Council i.e. they should not include web links to official Council websites, Council logos, Council email addresses or any other Council identification as this may give or reinforce the impression that they are representing the Council.
- Present themselves in a way that might cause embarrassment to the Council; they must protect the good reputation of the Council
- Make false or misleading statements.
- Post personal or political content, content that is contrary to the democratic decisions of the council or post controversial or potentially inflammatory remarks
- Make derogatory, defamatory, discriminatory or offensive comments about any person including council staff, councillors, the council or about the people, businesses and agencies the council works with and serves, or post online activity that constitutes bullying or harassment. Language that may be deemed offensive relating in particular to race, sexuality, disability, gender, age or religion or belief should not be published on any social media site
- Engage in personal attacks, online fights, hostile communications or in any way allow their interaction on websites or blogs to damage their working relationships with others
- Publish photographs or videos of minors without parental permission. (Please refer to our Safeguarding policy).
- Post any information that may be deemed libel (publishing untrue statements about a person which is damaging to their reputation is libel and can result in a court action)
- Post obscene material (publication of some obscene material is a criminal offence and is subject to a custodial sentence)
- Conduct any online activity that violates laws, regulations or that constitutes a criminal offence
- Bring the council into disrepute, including through content posted in a personal capacity

Councillors views posted in any capacity in advance of matters to be debated by the council at a council or committee meeting may constitute Pre-disposition, Predetermination or Bias and may require the individual to declare an interest at council meetings.

Anyone with concerns regarding content placed on social media sites that denigrate Parish Councillors, Council staff or residents should report them to the Parish Clerk for referral to the moderator(s) and/or the Council as required.

### **Managing Social Media Accounts**

An appointed staff member will be responsible for posting content on the council website and social media pages.

The Parish Clerk will moderate the Parish Councils social media output and be responsible for monitoring content to ensure it complies with the Social Media Policy.

The Parish Clerk as moderator will have authority, without notice or comment, to remove any posts from council social media pages which are deemed to be of an inflammatory, defamatory or libellous nature. Such posts may also be reported to the hosts (i.e. Facebook) and also to the Parish Clerk for council records.

The Parish Clerk as moderator will also have the authority to block or ban access from an individuals or company's account to SPC's social media pages.

When participating in online communication, SPC will generally allow posts on its social media pages from members of the public that:

- Are responsible and respectful
- Respect the privacy of other councillors, staff and residents
- Are objective, balanced, informative and accurate.

Posts may be deleted and the holder of an account banned if a comment or post:

- Gives out the personal data of others on social media, including home address and telephone numbers.
- Mentions an individual's name in social media communications or post information about an individual unless deemed reasonable (publishing personal data of individuals without permission is a breach of Data Protection legislation)
- Makes intentionally false or misleading statements.
- Includes potentially inflammatory, defamatory, libelous or offensive remarks.
- Makes derogatory, defamatory, discriminatory or offensive comments about any person including council staff, councillors, the council or about the people, businesses and agencies the council works with and serves, or post online activity that constitutes bullying or harassment.
- Uses language that may be deemed offensive, in particular relating to race, sexuality, disability, gender, age or religion or belief
- Engages in personal attacks, online fights, and/or hostile communications
- Includes the publication of photographs or videos of minors without parental permission.
- Includes any information that may be deemed libel (publishing untrue statements about a person which is damaging to their reputation is libel and can result in a court action)
- Includes obscene material (publication of some obscene material is a criminal offence and is subject to a custodial sentence)
- Conducts any online activity that violates laws, regulations or that constitutes a criminal offence

It is ultimately up to the moderators as to whether a post will be deleted and/or an account blocked.

The Parish Clerk will also be responsible for checking the correct security settings are in place on the social media sites used.

Councillors may assist the Parish Clerk to disseminate information however all must ensure they follow this policy.

No social media account details may be changed without the permission of the Parish Clerk or full council.

This policy will be a living document and will be able to be altered by the Parish Clerk to allow immediate action should the unexpected arise. This will be key to overcoming teething problems that have not already been identified. Changes to the policy will be highlighted at the next Council meeting to keep members abreast of the changes.



Document No : PMPSPCo50423



# Press and Media Policy

Signed: .....  
The Chair of Finance Committee  
Signed: .....  
The Chair-Stantonbury Parish Council

Date: .....  
Date: .....

### Document History

Original adopted	2017
Reviewed and amended as per SLCC Notes	13/03/2023
Reviewed and signed at Finance Committee	05/04/2023
Adopted and signed at Main Meeting	19/04/2023

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. The purpose of this policy is to define the roles and responsibilities within the Council for working with the media and deals with the day-to-day relationship between the Council and the media.
- 1.2 It is not the intention of this policy to curb freedom of speech or to enforce strict rules and regulations. Rather, it provides guidance on how to deal with issues that may arise when dealing with the media.

## **2. KEY AIMS**

- 2.1. The Council is accountable to the local community for its actions and this can only be achieved through effective two-way communications. The media - press, radio, TV, internet are crucially important in conveying information to the community so the Council must maintain positive, constructive media relations and work with them to increase public awareness of the services and facilities provided by the Council and to explain the reasons for particular policies and priorities.
- 2.2. It is important that the press have access to the Clerk/Members and to background information to assist them in giving accurate information to the public. To balance this, the Council will defend itself from any unfounded criticism and will ensure that the public are properly informed of all the relevant facts using other channels of communication if necessary.

## **3. THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

- 3.1. The law governing communications in local authorities can be found in the Local Government Acts 1986 and 1988. The Council must also have regard to the Governments Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity.
- 3.2. The Parish Council's adopted Standing Orders should be adhered to.

## **4. CONTACT WITH THE MEDIA**

- 4.1. The Clerk and Members should always have due regard for the long-term reputation of the Council and all their dealings with the media.
- 4.2. Confidential documents, exempt Minutes, reports, papers and private correspondence should not be leaked to the media. If such leaks do occur, an investigation will take place to establish who was responsible and appropriate action taken.
- 4.3. When the media wish to discuss an issue that is, or is likely to be, subject to legal proceedings then advice should be taken from the Council's solicitor before any response is made. Whenever possible any information given to the press shall be given in writing so as not to leave interpretation open to misunderstanding and misreporting.
- 4.4. There are a number of personal privacy issues for the Clerk and Members that must be handled carefully and sensitively. These include the release of personal information, such as home address and telephone number (although Member contact details are in the public domain); disciplinary procedures and long-term sickness absences that are affecting

service provision. In all these and similar situations, advice must be taken from the Clerk before any response is made to the media.

- 4.5. When responding to approaches from the media, the Clerk, Chair or the Chair of Committees are authorised to make contact with the media.
- 4.6. Statements made by the Chair or the Chair of Committees and the Clerk should reflect the Council's opinion.
- 4.7. Other Councillors can talk to the media but must ensure that it is clear that the opinions given were their own and not necessarily those of the Council.
- 4.8. There are occasions when it is appropriate for the Council to submit a letter, for example to explain important policies or to correct factual errors in letters submitted by other correspondents. Such letters should be kept brief and balanced in tone and correspondence should not be drawn out over several weeks. All correspondence must come from the Clerk.

## **5. ATTENDANCE OF MEDIA AT COUNCIL MEETINGS**

- 5.1. The Local Government Act 1972 requires that agendas, reports and minutes are sent to the media on request.
- 5.2. The media are encouraged to attend Council meetings and seating and workspace will be made available.
- 5.3. Any filming or taping of Council proceedings by the media must be with prior notice to the Clerk and Chair of the meeting (see Standing Orders).

## **6. PRESS RELEASES**

- 6.1. The purpose of a press release is to make the media aware of a potential story, to provide important public information or to explain the Council's position on a particular issue. It is the responsibility of the Clerk and Members to look for opportunities where the issuing of a press release may be beneficial.
- 6.2. The Clerk or any Member may draft a press release, however they must all be issued by the Clerk or Chair in order to ensure that the principles outlined in section three (Legal Framework) are adhered to, that there is a consistency of style across the Council and that the use of the press release can be monitored.

## **7. Changes**

This policy will be a living document and will be able to be altered by the Parish Clerk to allow immediate action should the unexpected arise. This will be key to overcoming teething problems that have not already been identified. Changes to the policy will be highlighted at the next Council meeting to keep Members abreast of the changes.



# Broadcasting or using Social Media at Council Meetings Policy

Signed: .....  
The Chair of Finance Committee  
Signed: .....  
The Chair-Stantonbury Parish Council

Date: .....  
Date: .....

### Document History

Original adopted (Policy on the reporting of meetings of the council)	16/11/2016
Reviewed and adapted from other parish councils	13/03/2023
Title updated to 'Broadcasting or using Social Media at Council Meetings'	23/03/2023
Reviewed and signed at Finance Committee	05/04/2023
Adopted and signed at Main Meeting	19/04/2023

The right to record, film and to broadcast meetings of the Council, Committees and Sub Committees is established following the Local Government Audit and Accountability Act 2014. This is in addition to the rights of the press and public to attend such meetings.

1. The Council will make the Council chamber available to the public 15 minutes before and after meetings for the setting up and removal of any filming equipment.
2. Members of the public are permitted to film or record meetings to which they are permitted access, in a non-disruptive manner and only from public areas.
3. Meetings or parts of meetings from which the press and public are excluded may not be filmed or recorded.
4. The use of digital and social media recording tools, for example Twitter, blogging or audio recording will be allowed as long as it is carried out in a non-disruptive manner.
5. Councillors who choose to use social media during Council meetings must refrain from disrupting other Councillors and Council debate.
6. Councillors who choose to record, film or broadcast meetings including the use of social media are reminded of their responsibilities under the Council's Code of Conduct including the confidentiality requirements.
7. While those attending meetings are deemed to have consented to the filming, recording or broadcasting of meetings, those exercising the rights to film, record and broadcast must respect the rights of other people attending under the Data Protection Act 2018.
8. The Chair of the meeting, or any such Council representative as designated by the Chair, has the authority to stop a meeting and take appropriate action if any person contravenes these principles or is deemed to be recording in a disruptive manner.
9. Any person or organisation choosing to film, record or broadcast any meeting of the Council is responsible for any claims or other liability resulting from them so doing and by choosing to film, record or broadcast proceedings they accept that they are required to indemnify the Council, its members and officers in relation to any such claims or liabilities.
10. The Council asks those recording proceedings not to edit the film or recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation of the proceedings or infringe the core values of the Council. This includes refraining from editing an image or views expressed in a way that may ridicule or show lack of respect towards those being filmed or recorded.
11. The Council will display the requirements as to filming, recording and broadcasting at its meeting venues and those undertaking these activities will be deemed to have accepted them whether they have read them or not.