

Clare Town Council



Media Policy

September 2015

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MEDIA POLICY

Introduction

1. Clare Town Council ("the Council") is committed to the provision of accurate information about its governance, decisions and activities.
2. This policy covers key aspects of the Council's work with respect to media, in the following areas:
 - a. Legal requirements and restrictions
 - b. Website: clare-suffolk.co.uk
 - c. Newsletter: Chevron
 - d. Press Relations
 - e. Email
 - f. Meetings
 - g. Social Media

Legal requirements and restrictions

3. 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 1998, other legislation which may apply and the Council's standing orders and financial regulations.
4. 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. Councillors are subject to restrictions about the disclosure of confidential information which arise from the code of conduct adopted by the Council.

Website

5. The Council operates a website: www.clare-suffolk.co.uk.
6. The Clerk will be responsible for updating the Council's areas. A separate editor, under the Clerk's guidance, will update other areas.

Newsletter

7. The Council provides information to its parishioners by a newsletter. This is delivered to all residents and additional copies are made available in public locations. There is no set pattern of publication, but is issued as the need arises.
8. Material for inclusion in the newsletter may be forwarded to the clerk. Advertisements are not permitted. A councillor is appointed editor and reserves the right to edit any material provided.

Press Relations

9. The Council's nominated Press Officer may contact the media if the Council wants to provide information, a statement or other material about the Council.

10. The Council's communications with the media seek to represent the corporate position and views of the Council.
11. This policy does not seek to regulate councillors in their private capacity.

Email

12. It must be understood that e-mail is not secure. No personal, confidential or sensitive material should be sent by e-mail without careful consideration.
13. Third parties may not use the Council's email system.
14. E-mails are not to be sent if the contents are likely to be illegal, could bring the Council into disrepute or could make the Council liable to action against it.

Meetings

15. A meeting of the Council and its committees is open to the public unless the meeting resolves to exclude them because their 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.
16. Persons may be required to leave a meeting of the Council and its committees, if their disorderly behaviour obstructs the business of the meeting.
17. Where a meeting of the Council and its committees include an opportunity for public participation, the media may speak and ask questions. Public participation is regulated by the Council's standing orders.
18. The photographing, recording, filming or other reporting of a meeting of the Council and its committees (which includes 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
 - ii) such activities disrupt the proceedings (e.g. noise, lighting or use of flash photography, oral reporting or commentary)
 - iii) an adult responsible for a child or vulnerable adult withdraws permission for the photographing or filming or where such persons may be present.
19. If a member of the public does not wish to be recorded, they may wish to request that recording cease whilst that member of the public is speaking. The Chairman/Council cannot be asked to prohibit such recording.
20. Oral reporting or commentary about a Council or committee meeting by a person who is present at the meeting is not permitted.
21. The Council shall, as far as it is practicable, provide reasonable facilities for anyone taking a report of a Council or committee meeting.

Social Media

22. Clare Town Council does not have a Facebook, Twitter or other social media account.