

**WIMBORNE MINSTER TOWN COUNCIL**

**MINUTES** of a meeting of the **PERSONNEL, POLICY & STRATEGY COMMITTEE** via video link held on **FRIDAY, 9 OCTOBER 2020** at **10.00 am**.

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT**

**Cllr S K Bartlett (Chairman of the Council – in the chair)**  
**Cllr K F Webb (Vice-Chairman of the Council)**  
**Cllr C A Chedgy (Chairman Resources Committee)**  
**Cllr W J Richmond (Chairman Recreation & Leisure Committee)**  
**Cllr M R Tidd (Chairman Planning & Environment Committee)**

**OFFICERS PRESENT**

**Town Clerk**  
**Assistant Town Clerk**

**303** **PROJECT PROGRESS OVERVIEW REPORT**

The Assistant Town Clerk submitted a Project Progress Overview Report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as **Appendix A** to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

It was agreed that urgent consideration needed to be given to any new or existing projects or priorities that would require funding and therefore have implications on the Council's budget for 2021/22.

Cllr Webb requested that this included some small-scale projects from the Biodiversity and Climate Change project and also the potential growth of the grounds maintenance team.

**304** **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (Min 204 – 28.01.20)**

The Town Clerk submitted a Report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as **Appendix B** to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Comprehensive discussion followed on this item. Members agreed that given the current COVID-19 pandemic and implications on the budget for 2021/22, a formal decision on the development of a Neighbourhood Plan should be delayed.

Out of the discussion on this item, Members considered that the methods by which the Council currently engaged and consulted with the local community needed to be reviewed and improved.

**RECOMMENDED to Council**

- a) **that a decision as to whether to proceed with the development of a Neighbourhood Plan be deferred until October 2021;**
- b) **that the Town Clerk produce a report on the options for improving communications with and consulting the public.**

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**ICT ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

The Assistant Town Clerk submitted a draft policy on ICT Acceptable Use, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as **Appendix C** to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Members were of the view that the Policy needed to be further refined to include a definition of the word ‘data’, details on issues such as the method of storage and location of information saved on Council-owned equipment and the differences in use of IT between Officers and Members.

**RESOLVED that the Assistant Town Clerk update the policy to incorporate the issues raised and report back.**

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**SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

The Assistant Town Clerk submitted a draft Social Media Policy, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as **Appendix D** to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Members discussed this draft policy in detail and requested that it be expanded to include all communications and renamed a ‘Communications Policy’ to cover a broader range of issues including response times to enquiries.

Members also felt that, in future, the public relations role, including posting on social media, should be the responsibility of the Town Clerk (since 2015 the role had been undertaken by a Councillor).

**RESOLVED that the Assistant Town Clerk expand the policy as discussed and report back.**

The meeting closed at 11.17 am.

Signed ..... Dated .....  
Town Mayor and Chairman of the Council

### Appendix A - Project Action Plan – 9 October 2020

Project Name	Project Status	Start Date	End Date	Lead Person	RAG Status	Completed Progress	Planned Next Steps
Meeting Accessibility and the Equality Duty	Not yet started						
Review of Office Printers	Not yet started						
Neighbourhood Plan	Live	January 2020		Cllr Tidd/ TC/ ATC	Amber	The Town Clerk and ATC have drafted a project plan and costings report for consideration by this Committee. See report with Agenda.	Awaiting Committee decision on next steps.
Website Accessibility – Phase 1	Live	July 2019	October 2019	ATC	Red	The ATC continues to work on the new website, but it is not yet completed.	Further training being sought.
Community Asset and Amenity Areas Transfer	Live	Jun-18	Not known	TC	Amber	The District Council agreed list of assets to be transferred. The Town Council accepted the majority of these on 20 November 2018. Reports on title received on various land and property to be transferred.	Report to be drafted and considered aa part of the Budget for next year.
<b>Completed or On-Hold Projects</b>							
Climate Change and Biodiversity Task and Finish Group	On Hold	July 2019	Dec 2019	Cllrs Shirley and Webb	Green	Money included in the budget for match funding with Low Carbon Dorset for reducing the Town Council's carbon footprint. Low Carbon Dorset advised that	No further work planned.

Project Name	Project Status	Start Date	End Date	Lead Person	RAG Status	Completed Progress	Planned Next Steps
						the proposed projects would not attract a grant from that body.	
Ownership of Amenity Spaces (Cranfield Estate)	On Hold	Jan-18	Unknown	WJR	Green	Cllr Richmond reported findings to P and E Committee on 3 December 2019 and recommended to Council that Dorset Council claim adverse possession of the relevant areas. On 3 March 2020, Council approved approach to Dorset Council.	Awaiting decision of Dorset Council held up by lockdown and other priorities.
Development of a Corporate Strategy Phase 1 – Member Development and a Council Vision	ON HOLD	June 2019	Autumn 2019	ATC	Red	The PPS Committee agreed to progress this project at the meeting held on 6 August 2019. The Assistant Town Clerk has completed a first draft of the Strategic Plan.	PPS Committee to review the first draft 5 Year Plan at an informal meeting following the April Committee.
Upgrade of CCTV System	Completed	Jan-18	August-19	TC	Green	Project is completed except for Dream Boats camera.	No further action until a solution can be found on radio connection to Dream Boats.
Health and Safety Review	Completed	June 2019	January 2020	TC/ ATC	Green	The Council has outsourced this service. The ATC has had an initial telephone consultation with the new provider and a consultant site visit is booked for 20 March 2020 (this is the rescheduled date).	Project is complete. Compliance will become a business as usual activity. There may be a slight increase in workload and the need for some officer and member training over the next couple of months to ensure we are meeting the required standards.
Chamber Renovation	Completed	Sep-18	April 2020	Cllr Webb/ TC	Green	The project has been completed.	Project is complete.
Standing Orders/Financial Regulations Review	Completed	Apr-19	May 2020	TC/ ATC	Green	The revised Standings Orders and Financial Regulations have been approved by Council.	
Land and Leases Review: a. Bowls Club	Completed	a. Jun-17 b. Jun-17 c. Mar-18	a. Unknown	TC/ CAC	Green	a. Lease and Maintenance agreement agreed by Bowls Club Solicitors.	a. NFA. b. NFA. c. NFA.

Project Name	Project Status	Start Date	End Date	Lead Person	RAG Status	Completed Progress	Planned Next Steps
b. Tennis Club Rugby Club			b. Complete d c. Complete d			Documents now signed and sealed by the Town Council. b. New lease deferred indefinitely. c. Deed of Variance completed.	
ICT Upgrade	Completed	Mar-19	Summer 2019	ATC/ TC	Green	Office ICT upgraded.  All Members now issued with Council laptops, mouse and headsets.  Cyber Essentials certification achieved with Cyber Security Insurance cover for the Town Council.  A social Media and Acceptable Use Policy have been written and awaiting approval by Council.	The Project is complete.  The Assistant Town Clerk will review office printers next as the current contract is coming to an end.

**Subject: NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**  
**Date: 9 October 2020**  
**Author: Assistant Town Clerk**  
**Appendix B**

## 1. Background

Members will recall that earlier this year at an Extraordinary Meeting of the Town Council, approval was given to carry out a fact-finding exercise to determine whether to develop a Neighbourhood Plan (NP) for Wimborne Minster. Part of this approval included the setting up of a Task and Finish Group and production of a Project Plan and written Terms of Reference report for consideration by this Committee.

## 2. Current Position

Given the current COVID-19 pandemic, the Group has not been able to complete the Project Plan, a written Terms of Reference report with detailed costings or hold public consultation meetings. However, the Group has produced a questionnaire which it wishes to circulate to all households in the Town.

To give this project the maximum chance of progressing to the next stage, the Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk have now dedicated time to produce this written report with a Project Plan to give a better understanding of the costs, resources, sources of funding available and timescales needed to successfully develop a Neighbourhood Plan for Wimborne Minster.

## 3. Research

In order to inform the content of this report, a handful of local Councils that are in the process of completing or have already completed a NP were contacted to gain first-hand knowledge and experience of this type of project as well as carry out desk based reading and information gathering.

One of the key messages we have been given repeatedly, is that the completion of a NP is an “enormous undertaking” for any Council.

## 4. Drivers for Action

A common conception is that a NP will empower a local Council and community to restrict and limit the amount of housing development in its area. This is not the case for Wimborne Minster as following the extensive new housing developments in recent years, land availability is now limited. The following drivers have therefore been identified:

- a. A NP is a statutory planning document that would work to protect, positively support and shape the future of Wimborne Minster. Rather than being focused on large scale housing and land availability, it could instead address issues such as history, heritage and design, green infrastructure and accessibility, parking and transport, community and leisure opportunities, employment and housing in-fill policies. All of which, through anecdotal evidence, are known as issues locally which have been and continue to be impacted on by the large-scale developments around the Town.
- b. The ever-changing world of planning documentation and legislation is led by Central Government and provides a ‘one size fits all’ approach. It does not give due

consideration to the individual characteristics and key issues known to be of importance to the local community and residents in a set area. A NP is a statutory document developed for a local area and informed and tailored by the wants, needs and views of that local community.

These identified ‘project drivers’ give the community of Wimborne Minster a ‘sense of control’ and a positive voice in planning the future of the place they live and work.

## 5. Project Plan and Timeframes

A Project Plan is attached to this report as Appendix 1. This has been shared with the NP Project Officer for Shaftesbury Town Council in order to validate its accuracy. The Officer has confirmed that it is realistic.

The Project Plan provides an overview of the activities and legislative stages that need to be followed and completed in order to develop a NP. The timeframe for completion is set at approximately two and half years. However, this will be affected by a number of factors (which would not be fully known until the Plan commences) such as the scale and scope of the NP, successful and comprehensive engagement with the community, successful passing of inspection, referrals and requests for additional research and evidence to be gathered, availability of staff, volunteer and consultancy support.

Some of the actions listed on the plan are ‘high level activity’. In order to complete the action e.g. engagement – a series of actions and steps would need to be carried out.

The recommended stages identified in the Project Plan suggest that the development of the questionnaire by the Group may have been premature and that robust launch consultation and community engagement needs to take place beforehand. This will also satisfy the Inspector that the approved process has been duly followed.

## 6. Costs and Grant Funding

The costings detailed within this report are guided by the NP project carried out by Shaftesbury Town Council (which is in a similar position to Wimborne Minster). Having reached the town’s limit for large scale developments and no further available land for development, Shaftesbury’s NP has focused on key themes such as infrastructure, transport, heritage and design. There are also similarities between the two towns such as the geography and rural market town status. Hence the NP being produced by Shaftesbury Town Council was considered the most comparable to any plan that Wimborne Minster might choose to produce.

‘Locality’ is the national membership network supporting local councils and community organisations to develop NPs. They provide advice, technical support and financial grant assistance.

The Town Council would be eligible to apply for up to £10,000 in basic grant. The Town Council may also be eligible for an additional technical support grant which is delivered as a work package within the project. In this scenario and as an

example, Locality would work with the Town Council to appoint technical planning experts on identified matters such as ‘Design’ and help produce a Design Statement. Whilst the true costs of this are unknown as Locality pay for this work-package directly, estimated costs are in the region of £12,000.

Any grant funding received must be spent within 12 months or by the end of the financial year.

In addition to the grant funding available, we are advised that the Town Council may need to contribute approximately £10,000 to cover further project and consultancy costs. This is in addition to any staffing costs.

## 7. Staffing and Consultancy Support

We have been advised that a planning consultant would need to be appointed to support the project from the initial stages. The consultant would also provide the technical planning expertise which is absent from the current staff team.

Consultancy costs are in the region of £70 per hour or £500 day rate. According to the Shaftesbury NP Project Officer, the Locality grant can be used and will cover £10,000 of the consultant costs. The Town Council will then need to fund any shortfall in consultancy fees.

However, more concerning, is the direct staffing costs. Having discussed this with Shaftesbury’s NP Project Officer, these are estimated to be in the region of £40,000 per year over 3 years (to cover the salary of a NP Project Officer and admin support).

The Town Clerk and Finance Administrator have started work on a draft budget for 2021/22 and without any ‘growth’ items such as the NP, the increase in a Band D using the current tax base would be in the region of 10%. Realistic figures were used to give members an idea as to the likely increase in Council Tax so that an informed decision can be made by the Town Council on the NP.

## 8. Community Engagement

Community engagement must be a priority when producing a NP. The Inspector will want to see that the development of any questionnaires, key themes, ideas and policies have been led from the ‘grass roots up’, continually tested and informed by the people of Wimborne Minster. Community engagement is the golden thread that weaves the plan together and gives it a strong evidence-based foundation. Without this, the Plan is highly unlikely to be ‘passed’. Examples from local Councils have included all of the following: pop up shops in town centres, visits to schools, meetings with community groups, press releases and social media engagement methods, written questionnaires with mailshots, recurring face to face surveys conducted outside local supermarkets daily for 2/3 weeks at a time. All data collected must then be analysed and documented to be purposeful. Community engagement is therefore a significant undertaking within the development of a Plan.

Shaftesbury NP Project Officer has advised that the written questionnaires and mailshot they conducted via Royal Mail cost in the region of £2,000 - £3,000.



## 9. Volunteer Support Group

The Town Council would need to recruit a Task and Finish Group (also known as the Steering Group, Volunteer Support Group or Project Team) made up of both Councillors and volunteers from within the local community. It would be supported by the Town Council's Project Officer and chaired by a Councillor. Progress would be reported back to the Town Council at agreed intervals.

The Steering Group would meet monthly and each member would be actively involved in carrying out work within their assigned workstream/ package.

Therefore, we are advised by the Shaftesbury NP Project Officer that a robust recruitment exercise for volunteers would need to be carried out to ensure the right people with right skills and time availability are appointed to help drive the project forward. Having a committed Steering Group is a key success factor for the completion of a NP.

## 10. Lifecycle of the Plan

The Neighbourhood Plan would roughly align to the timeframes set out in the Local Plan produced by Dorset Council. However, should the Plan be successfully 'made', it would need to be reviewed every 2-3 years to ensure the policies are still in line with the needs of the area. The specifics in terms of effort and time to carry out these reviews are not fully known.

## 11. Planning for the Future White Paper

Members will be aware that Government is currently carrying out a consultation on 'Planning for the Future' with reforms of the planning system to streamline and modernise the planning process, bring a new focus to design and sustainability, improve the system of developer contributions to infrastructure, and ensure more land is available for development where it is needed.

A search of the White Paper shows that it contains 14 mentions of NPs with Proposal 9 stating that "Neighbourhood Plans should be retained as an important means of community input, and we will support communities to make better use of digital tools." This is followed by question 13(a) "Do you agree that Neighbourhood Plans should be retained in the reformed planning system?" and question 13(b) "How can the neighbourhood planning process be developed to meet our objectives such as in the use of digital tools and reflecting community preferences about design?" The Town Clerk is currently drafting a formal response to the consultation for consideration by the Town Council. However, at this early stage, the impact of any change brought about by this legislation on the development of NPs is not known.

## 12. Risks

A number of risks have been identified.

Community Engagement and the need to meet 'Basic	The basic conditions and the requirement of national policy that neighbourhood plan policies must be evidence based are not met.
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Conditions <sup>1</sup> set out in Planning Law	This is further complicated by the current COVID19 pandemic.
Acquisition of the right Skill Sets	<p>The production of a NP will require a range of skills both interpersonal and specialist (e.g. leadership, project management, organisation, communication, negotiation, analysis, collaborative working, compromise, active listening, community engagement).</p> <p>The recruitment and availability of volunteers and staff with the right skills to form a balanced and capable Steering Group are not available within the parish area.</p> <p>The COVID19 pandemic may also prevent high risk category individuals from volunteering to support the project.</p>
Leadership	The Chairman of the Steering Group does not have the time or availability to devote to the NP's successful completion.
Scope and Complexity of the Plan	The scope and complexity of the plan have significant budget implications for the Town Council.
Adequacy of Existing Policy	The development of a Neighbourhood Plan might duplicate existing Local Plan policies. A review of existing policies and discussions with the Local Planning Authority should help to make this clear and avoid duplication.

### 13. Potential Benefits

A number of potential benefits have been identified.

Secure revenue from proposed new developments	Communities that draw up Neighbourhood Plans will receive 25% of planning levy charged on new developments in their Neighbourhood Plan area instead of the 15% now. This is known as the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).
Community cohesion	Preparing a Neighbourhood Plan can help strengthen communities by coming together to deliver a collective vision for their area.
Future Vision	Neighbourhood planning enables communities to play a much stronger role in shaping the areas in which they live and work and in supporting new development proposals. Through a Neighbourhood Plan communities can choose where they want new homes, shops and offices to be built, have their say on what new buildings should look like and what infrastructure should be provided.

<sup>1</sup> Basic Conditions include: have regard to national policy; • contribute to the achievement of sustainable development; • be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan for the local area; and • be compatible with EU obligations and comply with human rights legislation.

#### 14. Conclusion

Across the Town and Parish Councils in Dorset, 21 Neighbourhood Plans have already been 'made' and there are 27 in progress. The costs and time invested into the development of a Neighbourhood Plan are significant and would impact on the Town Council's budget. However, the overarching benefit of having a locally driven and informed statutory planning document for the ancient town of Wimborne Minster which will give local people a say over the future growth of their area is invaluable.

#### 15. Next Steps

Although funding of £1,500 has been provided in this year's budget for the fact finding exercise and in particular printing costs, the Town Clerk is unwilling to authorise the printing of the questionnaire until the Committee and the Council has considered the impact on staff time, priorities and the budget of progressing to the next stages.

The Committee is asked to make a recommendation to Council in this regard.





**ICT Policy for Staff, Councillors  
and Contractors  
(ICT Acceptable Use, Laptop and  
Mobile Devices)**

**Draft v0.1**

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## **Introduction**

This Acceptable Usage Policy covers the security and use of all Wimborne Minster Town Council's (hereafter referred to as the 'Town Council') information and IT equipment. It also includes the use of email, internet, voice and mobile IT equipment. This policy applies to all of the Town Council employees, Members, contractors and agents (hereafter referred to as 'individuals').

This policy applies to all information, in whatever form, relating to the Town Council's business activities worldwide, and to all information handled by the Town Council relating to other organisations with whom it deals. It also covers all IT and information communications facilities operated by the Town Council or on its behalf.

## **Computer Access Control – Individual's Responsibility**

Access to the Town Council's IT systems is controlled by user IDs and passwords. All user IDs and passwords are to be uniquely assigned to named individuals and consequently, individuals are accountable for all actions on the Town Council's IT systems. These will be supplied in the first instance by the Town Council's IT contractor.

Individuals must not:

- Allow anyone else to use their user ID and password on any Town Council IT system.
- Leave their user accounts logged in at an unattended and unlocked computer.
- Use someone else's user ID and password to access the Town Council's IT systems.
- Leave their password unprotected (for example writing it down).
- Perform any unauthorised changes to the Town Council's IT systems or information.
- Attempt to access data that they are not authorised to use or access.
- Exceed the limits of their authorisation or specific business need to interrogate the system or data.
- Connect any unauthorised device to the Town Council's network or IT systems.
- Store Town Council data on any non-authorised equipment.
- Give or transfer Town Council data or software to any person or organisation outside the Town Council without the authority of the Town Council.
- Line managers must ensure that individuals are given clear direction on the extent and limits of their authority with regard to IT systems and data.

## **Internet and Email Conditions of Use**

Use of the Town Council's internet and email is intended for business use. Personal use is permitted where such use does not affect the individual's business performance, is not detrimental to the Town Council in any way, not in breach of any term and condition of employment and does not place the individual or the Town Council in breach of statutory or other legal obligations.

All individuals are accountable for their actions on the internet and email systems.

Individuals must not:

- Use the internet or email for the purposes of harassment or abuse.
- Use profanity, obscenities, or derogatory remarks in communications.
- Access, download, send or receive any data (including images), which the Town Council considers offensive in any way, including sexually explicit, discriminatory, defamatory or libellous material.
- Use the internet or email to make personal gains or conduct a personal business.
- Use the internet or email to gamble.
- Use the email systems in a way that could affect its reliability or effectiveness, for example distributing chain letters or spam.

- Place any information on the Internet that relates to the Town Council, alter any information about it, or express any opinion about the Town Council, unless they are specifically authorised to do this.
- Send unprotected sensitive or confidential information externally.
- Forward Town Council mail to personal (non-Town Council) email accounts (for example a personal Hotmail account).
- Make official commitments through the internet or email on behalf of the Town Council unless authorised to do so.
- Download copyrighted material such as music media (MP3) files, film and video files (not an exhaustive list) without appropriate approval.
- In any way infringe any copyright, database rights, trademarks or other intellectual property.
- Download any software from the internet without prior approval of the Town Clerk.
- Connect Town Council devices to the internet using non-standard connections.

### **Use of Personal Devices (e.g. Smartphones, Tablets)**

Individuals are permitted to use personally owned devices for acceptable business use e.g. accessing Council emails. Acceptable business use is defined as activities that directly or indirectly involve the business of the Town Council.

The following conditions must be adhered to:

- In order to prevent unauthorised access, devices must be password protected using the features of the device and a strong password is required to access the company network.
- The device must lock itself with a password or PIN if it is idle for five minutes or more.
- The Town Council reserves the right to disconnect devices or disable services without notification.
- Lost or stolen devices must be reported to the Town Clerk or Assistant Town Clerk as soon as possible after the loss has been discovered. Individuals are responsible for notifying their mobile carrier immediately upon loss of a device.
- Individuals are expected to use their devices in an ethical manner at all times and adhere to the Town Council's acceptable use policy as detailed in this document.
- Individuals are personally liable for all costs associated with their device.
- Individuals must assume full liability for risks including, but not limited to, the partial or complete loss of Town Council and personal data as a result of an operating system crash, errors, bugs, viruses, malware, and/or other software or hardware failures, or programming errors that render the device unusable.
- Individuals must only access Council business data (e.g. emails) via the Microsoft Office applications (e.g. outlook app or website <https://outlook.live.com>) and sign out at the end of each session to prevent unauthorised access.
- Individuals are reminded not to share or disclose password or PIN information to third parties when using personal devices to access Council business data.

### **Clear Desk and Clear Screen Policy**

In order to reduce the risk of unauthorised access or loss of information, the Town Council enforces a clear desk and screen policy as follows:

- Personal or confidential business information must be protected using security features provided for example secure print on printers.
- Computers must be logged off/locked or protected with a screen locking mechanism controlled by a password when unattended.
- Care must be taken to not leave confidential material on printers or photocopiers.
- All business-related printed matter must be disposed of using confidential waste bins or shredders.



### **Insurance**

IT equipment and accessories, where appropriate, will be insured by the Town Council and added to the Asset Inventory.

All reasonable precautions must be taken to ensure any IT equipment and accessories in an individual's care is not damaged, lost or stolen. Please inform the Town Clerk immediately if IT equipment or accessories in your care are lost or stolen.

### **Health and Safety**

All issued IT equipment and accessories must be made available for a Portable Appliance Test (PAT) annually.

### **Working Off-Site**

It is accepted that laptops and mobile devices will be taken off-site. The following controls must be applied:

- Working away from the office must be in line with the Town Council's remote working policy.
- Equipment and media taken off-site must not be left unattended in public places and not left in sight in a car.
- Laptops must be carried as hand luggage when travelling.
- Information should be protected against loss or compromise when working remotely (for example at home or in public places). Laptop encryption must be used.
- Particular care should be taken with the use of mobile devices such as laptops, mobile phones, smartphones and tablets. They must be protected at least by a password or a PIN and, where available, encryption.

### **Mobile Storage Devices**

Mobile devices such as memory sticks, CDs, DVDs and removable hard drives must be used only in situations when network connectivity is unavailable or there is no other secure method of transferring data. Only Town Council authorised mobile storage devices with encryption enabled must be used, when transferring sensitive or confidential data.

### **Software**

The Individuals must use only software that is authorised by the Town Council on Town Council computers. Authorised software must be used in accordance with the software supplier's licensing agreements. All software on the Town Council's computers must be approved and installed by the Town Council's approved IT contractor.

Individuals must not:

- Store personal files such as music, video, photographs or games on the Town Council's IT equipment.

### **Viruses**

The Town Council's IT contractor has implemented centralised, automated virus detection and virus software updates on all the Town Council's IT equipment. All laptops/ PCs have antivirus software installed to detect and remove any virus automatically. Individuals who work remotely must ensure that their portable computer devices are connected to the corporate network at least once every two weeks to enable the Anti-Virus software to be updated.

Individuals must not:

- Remove or disable anti-virus software.
- Attempt to remove virus-infected files or clean up an infection, other than by the use of approved Town Council anti-virus software and procedures.

### **Telephony (Voice) Equipment Conditions of Use**

Use of Town Council voice equipment is intended for business use. Individuals must not use Town Council's voice facilities for sending or receiving private communications on personal matters, except in exceptional circumstances. All non-urgent personal communications should be made at an individual's own expense using alternative means of communication.

Individuals must not:

- Use the Town Council's voice equipment for conducting private business.
- Make hoax or threatening calls to internal or external destinations.
- Accept reverse charge calls from domestic or International operators, unless it is for business use.

### **Actions upon Termination of Contract or Termination of Office**

Any Town Council IT equipment and accessories issued to an individual in whatever capacity, must be returned to the Town Council on termination of employment or if ceasing to be a Town Councillor.

All Town Council data or intellectual property developed or gained during the period of employment or term of office remains the property of the Town Council and must not be retained beyond termination or reused for any other purpose.

### **Monitoring and Filtering**

All data created and stored on the Town Council's computers is the property of the Town Council and there is no official provision for individual data privacy, however wherever possible the Town Council will avoid opening personal emails.

IT system logging will take place where appropriate, and investigations will be commenced where reasonable suspicion exists of a breach of this or any other policy. The Town Council has the right (under certain conditions) to monitor activity on its systems, including internet and email use, in order to ensure systems security and effective operation, and to protect against misuse.

Any monitoring will be carried out in accordance with audited, controlled internal processes, the UK Data Protection Act 2018 and applied General Data Protection Regulation, the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 and the Telecommunications (Lawful Business Practice Interception of Communications) Regulations 2000.

This policy must be read in conjunction with:

- Computer Misuse Act 1990
- Data Protection Act 2018

**It is your responsibility to report suspected breaches of security policy without delay to your line management or the IT service provider.**

**All breaches of information security policies will be investigated. Where investigations reveal misconduct, disciplinary action may follow in line with the Town Council's disciplinary procedures.**

### **Declaration**

I confirm I have received IT equipment and accessories with appropriate software installed and agree to abide by the terms and conditions of use as set out in the attached policy.

I confirm that I have read the IT Policy for Staff, Councillors and Contractors (ICT Acceptable Use, Laptop and Mobile Devices) and will abide by the terms and conditions of use.

Name (please print):.....

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Details of equipment issued (e.g. laptop, charging cable, mobile phone, headset, laptop case):

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**Document Version Control**

Version number	Purpose/change	Author	Date
0.1	Draft	Assistant Town Clerk	18/08/202
0.1	Draft	Town Clerk	

**Next Review Date**

August 2021



# **Social Media and Electronic Communications Policy**

**Draft v0.1**

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## **The Social Media and Electronic Communications Policy**

The use of digital and social media and electronic communication enables Wimborne Minster Town Council to interact in a way that improves the communications both within the Council and between the Council and the people, businesses and agencies it works with and serves. The Council has a website, Facebook page, Twitter account and uses email to communicate. The Council will always try to use the most effective channel for its communications. Over time the Council may add to the channels of communication that it uses as it seeks to improve and expand the services it delivers. When these changes occur, this Policy will be updated to reflect the new arrangements. The Council Facebook pages, and Twitter account intends to provide information and updates regarding activities and opportunities within our Town and promote our community positively.

### **Communications Criteria**

Communications from the Council will meet the following criteria:

- They will be civil, tasteful, respectful and relevant.
- They will not contain content that is knowingly unlawful, libellous, harassing, defamatory, abusive, threatening, obscene, profane, sexist, or racially offensive.
- They will not contain content that is likely to offend religious groups or ethnic minorities.
- Not contain content knowingly copied from elsewhere, for which we do not own the copyright.
- Not contain any personal or confidential information and will not breach the current policies or laws in respect of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
- If it is official Council business, it will be controlled or approved by the Town Clerk or, in his absence, the Assistant Town Clerk.
- Social media will not be used for the dissemination of any political advertising.

If you are using any of these platforms to contact the Council or comment on any issue within its remit, we ask you to follow these guidelines:

- Be considerate and respectful of others. Vulgarity, threatening or abusive language will not be tolerated, and you will not receive a response.
- Differing opinions and discussion of diverse ideas are encouraged, but personal attacks on anyone, including the Council members or staff, will not be permitted.
- Share freely and be generous with official Council posts but be aware of copyright laws; be accurate and give credit where credit is due.
- Stay on topic.
- Refrain from using the Council's Facebook page or Twitter site for commercial purposes or to advertise, market or sell products.

The social media sites are not monitored 24/7 and we will not always be able to reply individually to all messages or comments received. However, we will endeavour to ensure that any emerging themes or helpful suggestions are passed to the relevant people or authorities. Please do not include personal/private information in your social media posts to us. Sending a message/post via Facebook or Twitter will not be considered as contacting the Council for official purposes and we will not be obliged to monitor or respond to requests for information through these channels. Instead, please make direct contact with the Council's Town Clerk and/or Members of the Council (Councillors) by email.

We retain the right to remove comments or content that includes:

- Obscene or racist content.
- Personal attacks, insults, or threatening language.
- Potentially libellous statements.
- Plagiarised material or any material in violation of any laws, including copyright.
- Private, personal information published without consent.
- Information or links unrelated to the content of the forum.
- Commercial promotions or spam.

- Alleges a breach of a Council policy or the law.

The Council's response to any communication received which does not meet the above criteria will be to either ignore it, inform the sender of our policy, or send a brief response as appropriate. This will be at the Council's discretion based on the message received and given our limited resources. Any information posted on the Facebook page not in line with the above criteria will be removed as quickly as practically possible. Repeat offenders will be blocked from the Facebook page. The Council may post a statement that 'A post breaching the Council's Social Media Policy has been removed'. If the post alleges a breach of Council policy or the law, the person who posted it will be asked to submit a formal complaint to the Council or report the matter to the Police as soon as possible to allow due process.

### **Wimborne Minster Town Council Website**

Where necessary, we may direct those contacting us to our website to see the required information, or we may forward their questions to one of our Councillors for consideration and response. We may not respond to every comment we receive particularly if we are experiencing a heavy workload.

The Council may, at its discretion, allow and enable approved local groups to have and maintain a presence on its website for the purpose of presenting information about the group's activities. The local group would be responsible for maintaining the content and ensuring that it meets the Council's 'rules and expectation' for the website. The Council reserves the right to remove any or all of a local group's information from the website if it feels that the content does not meet the Council's 'rules and expectation' for its website. Where content on the website is maintained by a local group it should be clearly marked that such content is not the direct responsibility of the Council.

### **Email Communications**

All general email communications should be addressed to the Council's email address (office@wimborne.gov.uk). This email account is monitored mainly during office hours, Monday to Friday, and we aim to reply to all questions sent as soon as we can. The Town Clerk is responsible for dealing with emails received and passing on any relevant mail to Councillors or external agencies for information and/or action. All communications on behalf of the Council will usually come from the Town Clerk or one of the other members of staff. Where appropriate, new emails requiring data to be passed on will be followed up with a Data Consent Form for completion before action is taken with that correspondence. Individual Councillors are at liberty to communicate directly with parishioners in relation to their own personal views, if appropriate and copy in the Town Clerk. NB any emails copied to the Town Clerk become official and will be subject to The Freedom of Information Act. These procedures will ensure that a complete and proper record of all correspondence is kept. Do not forward personal information on to other people or groups outside of the Council, this includes names, addresses, email, IP addresses and cookie identifiers.

### **SMS (Texting)**

Members, Council staff and the Town Clerk may use SMS as a convenient way to communicate at times. All are reminded that this policy also applies to such messages.

### **Video Conferencing (e.g. Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Skype)**

If this medium is used to communicate please note that this policy also applies to the use of video conferencing.

### **Internal Communications and Access to Information**

The Council is continually looking at ways to improve its working and the use of social media and electronic communications is a major factor in delivering improvement.

### **Councillor Conduct**

As more and more information becomes available at the press of a button, it is vital that all information is treated sensitively and securely. Councillors are expected to maintain an awareness of the confidentiality of information that they have access to and not to share confidential information with the public. Failure to properly observe confidentiality may be a breach of the Council's Code of Conduct and will be dealt with through its prescribed procedures (at the extreme it may also involve a criminal



investigation). Members should also be careful only to 'cc' essential recipients on emails i.e. to avoid use of the 'Reply All' option if at all possible, but of course copying in all who need to know and ensuring that email trails have been removed.

**Document Version Control**

Version number	Purpose/change	Author	Date
0.1	Draft	Assistant Town Clerk	18/08/202
0.1	Draft	Town Clerk	

**Next Review Date**

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