



Claydon with Clattercote

Claydon with Clattercote Parish Council

Website & social media Policy

Definitions

- Parish - Claydon with Clattercote
- Council - Claydon with Clattercote Parish Council
- Councillor - Councillor on Claydon with Clattercote Parish Council
- Website: www.claydon.org.uk
- Webmaster - Person who works directly on the website
- Archive, or "Archival Material" - Material that is a record of Council business, e.g. meetings, reports, surveys, plans, or correspondence referred to in the Minutes, Official correspondence received or sent out by Parish Council.

Introduction

The aim of this Policy is to set out a Code of Practice providing guidance to Councillors in the use of online communications, collectively referred to as social media. Social media is a collective term used to describe methods of publishing on the Internet. The policy covers all forms of social media and social networking sites which include (but are not limited to):

- Parish Council Website
- Parish Council Emails
- Facebook, X (formerly Twitter) and other social networking sites

The principles of the Policy apply to Parish Councillors and the Clerk to the Council. It is also intended for guidance for members of the public communicating with the Parish Council. This Policy sits alongside other relevant existing policies which need to be taken into consideration.

No direct costs will be incurred by implementing it.

The website is not intended to replace existing forms of communication and existing means of communication should continue.

Aspects of the Members' Code of Conduct apply to online activity in the same way it does to other written or oral communication. Online content should be objective, balanced, informative and accurate. What you write on the web is permanent.

In the main, councillors have the same legal duties online as anyone else, but failures to comply with the law may have more serious consequences. There are some additional duties around using their websites for electoral campaigning and extra care needs to be taken when writing on planning matters, see further notes below.

The Parish Council will also protect personal data in compliance with the General Data Protection Legislation 2018 and any subsequent legislation.

The Policy includes any material which is presented to the Council for consideration of publication on the website by parishioners. The same Standards and Code of Practice apply.

Community - Support our local communities, encourage inclusion and diversity.

Environment - Protect and enhance our local environment.

Governance - Promote participation, good management, and efficiency.

To maintain and enhance the quality of life and sense of community within the Parish of Claydon & Clattercote.
To safeguard the individual character of our village and protect its rural environment whilst supporting sustainable development that meets the needs of residents now and in the future.

Parish Council Website Policy

This policy covers the management of the Claydon with Clattercote Parish Council Website, in particular:

- The scope of the website
- Management of the website, roles of the Webmaster and the Parish Clerk.
- Criteria and procedures for making changes or additions to the Website.

1. Website Hosting Arrangements

The Council is committed to operating a website hosted by a 3rd party provider, having no other connection with the Council. The current system is a “Content Management System” where the Council itself has direct control of day-to-day editing, updating and maintenance.

2. Who determines what should be on the Website?

Subject only to the requirements of the law, Council has the right to determine what should or should not be included on the Website.

3. What the Website should contain

3.1 The website will be used to

- Post minutes, agendas, and dates of PC meetings
- Advertise events and activities, good news stories
- Advertise Parish Council vacancies
- Share information from community partners i.e. police, schools, and health authorities etc.
- Announce new information relevant to the Parish
- Post or share information from other Parish related community groups/clubs/associations/bodies e.g. schools, sports clubs and community groups
- Refer resident queries to the clerk.

3.2 The Website may also contain other material, such as history and geography of the Parish, news of local events, or any other material of a non-controversial nature which is appropriate for the Website.

3.3 The Website shall in principle not contain material of a deliberately contentious, offensive or disputatious nature, or material that criticises or implies criticism of one or more members of the public, individual Councillors, groups of Councillors or the Council as a whole.

3.4 Regardless of what has been voted on by Council, the Website shall not contain any material that is libelous or defamatory or in any way against the law or which could expose the Council to legal challenge.

3.5 Links to websites that serve the community with impartial information or news will be considered by request and at the discretion of the Parish Council.

4. The Webmaster

4.1 The clerk and/or a councillor nominated by the Council to have administrative access will act as Webmaster(s) and will be responsible for maintaining and updating the site.

4.2 Where the nominated Councillor Webmaster has managed the Website in a manner contrary to the will of the Council, the Council may require the Councillor Webmaster to make good any deficiencies, or in extreme cases, pass a motion of “No Confidence” in the Councillor Webmaster and relieve them of their role on the Website. In that case, the Parish Clerk should take back control of the Website password and block any further activities by the Councillor Webmaster.

4.3 The website password will be changed when the nominated Councillor is no longer a member of the council and when a new clerk is appointed.

5. Procedure for adding new material to the Website

Any Councillor may submit material for inclusion on the website PROVIDED THAT it is consistent with the general policies in section 3, and also falls within any limits of technical feasibility to upload.

6. What are the specific powers of the Webmaster in determining what can go on the Website or in editing what is already there?

6.1 Routine updates. The Webmaster may make routine updates to the Website without prior reference to Council. Examples of routine updates could be: - Correcting errors of spelling, syntax or grammar and factual errors. - Repairing and restoring links that have ceased to work properly. Replacing out of date documents with current versions.

6.2 Preservation of Archival Material. It is understood that Archival Material (as in "Definitions" section above) should be preserved without change to the content but can be reorganised or re-structured as required. If the Webmaster considers other "non-archival" material to be out of date and no longer relevant, such as advertising an event that no longer takes place, he may consider it for deletion. If the deletions are substantial, it would be advisable to check with Councillors prior to making significant deletions or significant changes to existing material, for example, by creating an "update plan" that Council can approve.

6.3 Resolution of Disputes. If there is a dispute about the Webmaster's decisions or activities, the Chair shall adjudicate in the first instance, and if this fails to provide a resolution, the matter shall be referred to full Council whose majority vote shall be considered final.

7. The Webmaster will ensure that the following documents are upload to the website

- Agendas and Minutes
- Annual Parish Meeting
- Annual Accounts documents
- Standing Orders
- Councillors' specific responsibilities
- Upload of policies/compliance documents
- Audit Notes

The Webmaster will also

- Publish News updates as and when required.
- Ensure that the Website complies with the requirements of WCAG 2.1 (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines).

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Code of Practice regarding social media and e-mails

Although Claydon with Clattercote Parish Council does not have its own Social Media sites, Councillors may have occasion to respond to quotes on other sites.

Individual Parish Councillors are responsible for what they post. Councillors are personally responsible for any online activity conducted via their published e-mail addresses which is used for council business. Councillors are expected to have separate council and personal email addresses and to comply with the Code of Practice.

Guidance when using social media including emails.

1. All social media use will comply with the General Data Protection Regulations 2018.

2. When participating in any online communication.

- a.** Be responsible and respectful; be direct, informative, brief and transparent.
- b.** Always disclose your identity and affiliation to the Parish Council.
- c.** Never knowingly make false or misleading statements.
- d.** Parish Councillors should not present themselves in a way that might cause embarrassment. All Parish Councillors need to be mindful of the information they post on sites and make sure personal opinions are not published as being that of the Council or bring the Council into disrepute or is contrary to the Council's Code of Conduct or any other Policies.
- e.** Keep the tone of any comments respectful and informative.
- f.** Correct any errors promptly.
- g.** Refrain from posting controversial or potentially inflammatory remarks. Language that may be deemed as offensive relating in particular to race, sexuality, disability, gender, age or religion or belief should not be published on any social media site by Parish Councillors or residents.
- h.** Avoid personal attacks, online fights, and hostile communications.
- i.** Do not make comments about individuals by name unless you have their permission.
- j.** Permission to publish photographs or videos on social media sites should be sought both from the Parish Council and persons or organisations in the video or photograph before being uploaded.
- k.** Permission to retain personal data, publish and share email addresses needs to comply with the General Data Protection Legislation 2018.
- l.** Respect the privacy of other councillors and residents.

3. Do not post any information or conduct any online activity that may violate laws or regulations, see below libel and copyright.

4. Residents and Councillors should note that not all communication requires a response. There may not be immediate response to communications as it may be necessary to discuss the issue with the Parish Council and a response may have to be agreed by the Parish Council. When appropriate, a reply will be sent and copied to all Parish Councillors.

- a.** If a matter needs further consideration, it may be raised at either the public session or as a full agenda item for consideration by a quorum of Councillors. Again the 'poster' shall be informed via the page or direct message that this is the case.
- b.** Some communication from residents and other third parties may be required to be discussed at a Parish Council meeting. When this is necessary the item will be placed on the next available agenda, the persons will then be advised of this fact and told of the date and time of meeting so he/she can attend if they wish. Any response will then be included in the minutes of the meeting.

Adopted: 09 January 2024

Review Date: January 2027