

Lapley, Stretton & Wheaton Aston Parish Council

Media Policy

**Adopted by the Parish Council at the meeting on 6th September 2012,
reviewed 14th February 2013 & 14th May 2015, October 2017, May 2018, May 2019**

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to define the roles and responsibilities within the Council for contact with the media.
- 1.2 Lapley, Stretton and Wheaton Aston Parish Council (“the Council”) is committed to the provision of accurate information about its governance, decisions and activities. Where this information is not available via the Council’s publication scheme, please contact the Council’s Clerk or, in his/her absence, the deputy Clerk
- 1.3 The Council shall, where possible, co-operate with those whose work involves gathering material for publication in any form including use of the internet (“the media”).
- 1.4 .This policy explains how the Council may work with the media to meet the above objectives in accordance with the legal requirements and restrictions that apply .Legal requirements and restrictions
- 1.5 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. The Council’s financial regulations and relevant standing orders referenced in this policy are available via the Council’s publication scheme.
- 1.6 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 additional restrictions about the disclosure of confidential information which arise from the code of conduct adopted by the Council, a copy of which is available via the Council’s publication scheme.

2.0 Contact with the Media

- 2.1 Approaches from the media should be referred to the Chairman who is the authorised contact with the media in consultation with the Parish Council Clerk. The Parish Council Clerk , is, however, given permission to speak to the media in the Chairman’s absence.
- 2.2 Statements made by the Chairman to the media should reflect the Council’s opinion.
- 2.3 Other Councillors can talk to the media but must ensure that it is clear that the opinions given are their own and not necessarily those of the Council.
- 2.4 Caution should be exercised when submitting letters to the editor for publication in newspapers. 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. However, such letters should be kept brief and balanced in tone and correspondence should not be drawn out over several weeks.

- 2.5 Letters representing the views of the Council should only be submitted by the Chairman or the Parish Council Clerk. If other Members choose to use the letters column to express their own opinions on Council policies, they should make clear that the views put forward are those of the individual Member. Care should be taken not to disclose any information of a confidential nature, if a Member is unclear whether information is confidential they should consult the Parish Council Clerk .
- 2.6 At all times consideration should be given as to how the correspondence may affect the reputation of the Council. The Parish Council's Code of Conduct is relevant here – section 5. states that “You must not conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or authority into disrepute.”

Chairman: _____