

Weeley Parish Council

Press & Media Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Council's Standing Orders

1. The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework within which Councillors and the Clerk shall operate in their relationships with the media.
2. News media are welcome to attend parish council meetings and will be supplied with agendas, minutes and other published documents on request to the clerk and subject to the Council's publications scheme.
3. There may occasionally be items on the parish council agenda from which the press (and public) may be legitimately excluded. These items may not be discussed with the media.
4. The Council will allow all reasonable access to news media organisations.
5. Councillors and Clerk shall act with integrity at all times when representing the Council and shall abide by the Code of Conduct.
6. A Councillor, including the Chairman, does not have any individual power, which rests with the Parish Council as a corporate body. (Local Government Act 1972.)
7. Councillors have a duty to respect council policy, whether or not they agree with it as an individual.
8. The voting record of an individual is a matter of public record therefore it may on occasion be legitimate for a councillor to confirm that he/she voted either for or against a motion. This should be done in such a way as to avoid undermining the decision.
9. Councillors should be cognisant of their role as a Councillor at all times and should be circumspect about expressing 'personal' views in order to avoid bringing the council into disrepute.
10. Councillors have a responsibility to ensure that they are clear about council policy on any given matter.
11. Councillors should avoid making any statement to the media which may be open to misinterpretation.
12. Any requests for press statements shall be forwarded to the Clerk, who will prepare a response in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman as appropriate.
13. Occasionally it may be appropriate for the Council to provide a spokesperson. This will usually be either the Chairman or Vice Chairman and he/she will undertake this role with the aid of a written aide-memoir to be written by the Clerk to ensure that Council policy is clearly adhered to.