



## **Sarratt Parish Council**

### **Policies and Procedures: Parish Council Correspondence**

This Policy has been drawn up in accordance with the "Governance Toolkit for Parish and Town Councils", Sarratt Parish Council's Standing Orders, and its Policy for Dealing with the Press and Media.

The Clerk as the Appointed Proper Officer is the official administrator and shall deal with all correspondence received by the Council or generated following a meeting.

The Clerk, or the Chair, or Council may provide authorisation for Councillors to respond to, or initiate, correspondence relating to the ongoing day-to-day management of activities associated with Council business or the adopted policies of the Council.

The Clerk and Councillors must ensure that all communication with the public and other bodies on Council related matters reflects the decisions and policies of the Council regardless of the Clerk or Councillor's individual views on any subject. Furthermore, when communicating with the public or other bodies on behalf of the Parish Council, the Clerk and Councillors should not express their personal view if this is different to the decisions or policies agreed by the Council.

Any correspondence via email by Councillors must be sent from their Council email address. In addition, when acting for the Council, Councillors must copy all forms of correspondence, including email, to the Clerk to ensure the Parish Council records and audit trails are properly maintained.

When correspondence is copied to the Clerk or another Councillor, they must be made aware if a copy has been sent to other persons particularly where 'blind CC' is used on an email. Correspondence sent on behalf of the Parish Council to the District or County Council should also be copied to the relevant District or County Councillor.

All correspondence in the name of the Parish Council shall be sent using Council letter-headed paper, or if by email, will carry the official Council disclaimer.

No Parish Councillor should communicate with companies/individuals with which the Parish Council has or is negotiating a contractual relationship unless such contact has been agreed.

Individual Councillors, unless authorised to do so, should not correspond with or approach a voluntary or commercial organisation when seeking information which might be related to any Parish Council function as such approaches will normally be made formally by the Clerk on behalf of the Parish Council.

Councillors who wish to pursue an initiative on an unofficial/individual basis are welcome to do so but should first seek advice from the Clerk and / or Chair. A Councillor must be mindful not to give the impression that their initiative has the support of, or represents official Council Policy and must make it clear that they are acting in an unofficial/personal capacity.

**Reviewed and adopted: 13 April 2021**