

EAST BERGHOLT PARISH COUNCIL

Press, Media and Social Media Policy

East Bergholt Parish Council wishes to be open and transparent in the way it considers information and takes decisions. The Council will pursue all appropriate opportunities to publish information about its activities with the intention of raising awareness about what the Parish Council is doing.

Requests from the Media

- The Clerk and the Chairman of the Council should be aware of all approaches from the media for interviews, statements or interviews.
- Any request from the media will be discussed by the Clerk, Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council. The most appropriate person will make a response on behalf of the Council.

Responses to Media Articles, Published Letters, Online Comments, Tweets, Facebook Items

- Every situation must be carefully assessed and in many cases a response may not be appropriate.
- Councillors who see an article/item and consider a response by the Council may be needed, should inform the Clerk and the Chairman of the Council.
- In assessing whether or not a response is appropriate the following will be considered:
 - Is the article/item in question factually accurate?
 - Is the article/item expressing a personal view – and if so is that clearly stated?
 - Would further discussion on the subject be constructive?
- Any potential response will be discussed by the Clerk and the Chairman of the Council and then forwarded to the most appropriate person(s) to prepare a response on behalf of the Council, e.g. Chairman of a relevant Parish Council Committee.
- Prior to its release the Clerk and the Chairman of the Council should be made aware of any response where they were not involved in its preparation.

Media Releases

- The Clerk, the Chairman of the Council and Committee Chairmen will identify issues and stories that have the potential to be of interest to the public.
- The Clerk will draft media releases consulting the Chairman of the Council and Committee Chairs or any individual Councillor as appropriate.

- A copy of the final media release will be sent to the Chairman of the Council and any Councillor who is quoted in the text.
- Media releases will be sent to relevant media outlets as determined by the Clerk following consultation with the Chairman of the Council. Copies of media releases will be posted on the Council's website.

Social Media

- Any social media accounts operated by the Council will be used to help keep local residents, businesses and interested parties and visitors to the village informed of important Parish Council related news, events and updates.

- The accounts will be managed by the Clerk on behalf of the Council who will seek to ensure that legal obligations and best practice guidelines are adhered to.

- Social media updates may cover some or all of the following:

Alerts such as news, publications, events, publicity campaigns, Council/Committee Meetings and new content.

Invitations to provide feedback on specific issues on which the Parish Council is consulting.

Information about or from partners or other local groups, and about what they are doing.

Occasional live coverage of events if considered appropriate.

- The Council may follow or subscribe to social media accounts from other users. This does not imply endorsement of any kind. For example, links to the District Council.

- Any media accounts will be updated and monitored during working hours only and will be non-political. Political posts will be removed and the Parish Council will not engage on issues of party politics at any time.

- Inappropriate language or anything that might contravene defamation, copyright or data protection laws will be removed.

- Any online social media sites may occasionally be unavailable and the Parish Council accepts no responsibility for any lack of service.

- Feedback and ideas are welcomed from the community. Any response from the Parish Council will be via the Clerk.

- Any emerging themes or helpful suggestions will be passed to the relevant person(s) for consideration.

Approved and adopted by East Bergholt Parish Council: 12 November 2020

Next review: November 2021

