



Policy for dealing with correspondence

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Botus Fleming Parish Council (BFPC) receives correspondence fairly regularly via the post or by email. The correspondence is dealt with by the Parish Clerk and may include information not relevant to the Parish Council, or is outside the remit/powers of the Parish Council, or it may be general correspondence such as sales literature.

1.2 Currently, correspondence such as some information emails and newsletters, are forwarded to Councillors who have email facilities. In this way a Councillor can read any information that is of interest to them or delete the email if it is not of interest. The downside to this is that Councillors without email facilities are disadvantaged.

1.3 There is regular correspondence between Councillors and the Parish Clerk which may refer to specific topics such as the Recreation Field or the Grass cutting contract.

1.4 Items of correspondence received that requires a decision to be made by the Parish Clerk or Chairman are placed onto an appropriate agenda. Correspondence regarding a specific topic or activities carried out by the Parish Council, or as a result of an item being on the agenda, are usually referred to at the appropriate place during the agenda and a summary of the correspondence is shown.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 There is a need to approve a formal Policy for dealing with correspondence to meet the following requirements:-

- A)** Parish Councillors must be kept informed about all relevant matters arising at Parish level.
- B)** Councillors must be made aware of any correspondence received relating to an agenda item to be debated.
- C)** Where a decision and/or action is required urgently and affects the local community, it should be dealt with promptly to avoid a long list of correspondence to be dealt with at Parish Council Meetings.
- D)** It is unlawful for any one member of the Parish Council to deal with any matter alone.

3.0 Policy Terms

3.1 A correspondence list will be maintained by the Parish Clerk and circulated to Councillors with agenda documents for noting. Items that are on the agenda will be marked as such where appropriate and the correspondence summarised where or if necessary. A description of the contents of any correspondence may be listed. The Parish Clerk will have delegated authority in association with either the Chairman or Vice Chairman to redact any correspondence, or parts thereof, which should be publicly withheld due to the contents being libellous, commercially sensitive, in breach of the Data Protection Regulations, or as otherwise not deemed to be in the public interest.

3.2 The Parish Council delegates to the Parish Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman or Vice Chairman, to take such urgent action as they deem appropriate for time sensitive items of correspondence. Any such action will be as per the agreed Policy of the Parish Council and reported at the next Parish Council Meeting.

3.3 The responsibility of deciding which correspondence is suitable and relevant to the Local Community rests with the Parish Clerk in consultation with the Chairman or Vice Chairman.

3.4 Where correspondence is not time sensitive, there will be no action taken without the prior approval of Full Council.

3.5 Circulation emails containing information reports, newsletters, and details of events will continue to be circulated to Parish Councillors by email. Councillors can request to be removed from the general circulation list. Councillors who do not have access to a computer can request a copy of the above emails if a small document, or can view larger files in the presence of the Parish Clerk.

Policy written in 1st May 2020 by Parish Clerk Christopher Cook

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Review May 2024

Christopher Cook – Parish Clerk & RFO

24 Rashleigh Avenue Saltash PL12 4NS Tel 07523 005414
clerk@botusfleming.org.uk | www.botusfleming.org.uk