

Sheviock Parish Council

Policy for Dealing with the press and media.

1. This policy is to guide both Councillors and Officers of the Council in their relations with the news media in such a way as to ensure the smooth running of the Council.
2. The Council is accountable to the electorate for its actions and shall therefore be proactive in making all reasonable efforts to make its decisions and policies known to the electorate.
3. The Council shall allow all reasonable access to news media organisations. The Council shall make every effort to respond without delay to requests for information from news media organisations. However, all news releases and enquiries made on behalf of the Parish Council will be authorised by the Parish Clerk after consultation with the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Council and are therefore never answered immediately.
4. Councillors should be aware that case law states that the role of councillor overrides the rights to act as an individual. This means that Councillors should be careful about expressing individual views to the news media, whether or not they relate to matters of Council business. Councillors also have an obligation to respect Council policy once made, while it may be legitimate for a Councillor to make clear that he or she disagreed with a policy and voted against it (if this took place in an open session), they should not seek to undermine a decision through the news media.
5. Councillors and officers should act with integrity at all times when representing or acting on behalf of Sheviock Parish Council.
6. Councillors and officers must not disclose information that is of a confidential nature. This includes any discussion with news media organisations of any item which has been discussed under confidential items on the Council's agenda.
7. A Councillor must not raise matters relating to the conduct or capability of an Officer at meetings held in public or before the press.

Adopted by Councillors on date:

Signed by Councillors: