

Council Name: Rolleston on Dove Parish Council
Council Address: c/o 32 Hillcrest Rise, Burntwood WS7 4SH
Email Address: rollestonpc@outlook.com
Telephone number: 07908 545412

Social Media and Electronic Communication Policy

The use of digital and social media and electronic communication enables Rolleston on Dove Parish Council (the Council) to interact in a way that improves the communications both within the Council and between the Council and the people, businesses and agencies it works with and serves.

The Council has a website, Facebook page and uses email to communicate. The Council will always try to use the most effective channel for its communications. Over time the Council may add to the channels of communication that it uses as it seeks to improve and expand the services it delivers. When these changes occur, this Policy will be updated to reflect the new arrangements.

The Council's Facebook page intends to provide information and updates regarding activities and opportunities within our Parish and promote our community positively.

Communications from the Council will meet the following criteria:

- Be civil, tasteful and relevant.
- Not contain content that is knowingly unlawful, libellous, harassing, defamatory, abusive, threatening, harmful, obscene, profane, sexually oriented or racially offensive.
- Not contain content knowingly copied from elsewhere, for which we do not own the copyright;
- Not contain any personal information.
- Social media will not be used for the dissemination of any political advertising.
- If it is official Council business that has not been approved at a full meeting of the Council it will be moderated by either the Chair/Vice Chair of the Council or the Clerk to the Council otherwise it will be moderated by the system administrators as appointed by the Council.

If it is not official Council business it will be moderated by the system administrators as appointed by the Council in accordance with the Social Media and Electronic Communication guidelines.

Social Media and Electronic Communication Guidelines

1. Calendar notices

- a) The Council website contains a diary of events. Regular meetings such as Council monthly meetings, Civic Trust monthly meetings or one off special events such as the Transport Festival, Rollestonbury etc can also be included. Any non-commercial or not for profit organisations that operate within or provide services within the village can request that their meetings or events be included in the diary. Inclusion in the diary does not automatically mean that the event will be further promoted or publicised unless requested.
- b) There is no facility within Facebook for a diary of events.

2. Promoting events

- a) We are happy to promote events for any village group or for activities happening within the village that are non-commercial/profit making. These events must be open to all, whether by ticket or free entry. Rollestonbury, Civic Trust wine tasting, Carols around the Christmas tree would all fit into this. Allotment society social, WI lunch would not but they could be on the

calendar. We may occasionally promote events outside of the village – Tutbury, Stretton or TTTV – applying the same non-commercial caveat.

3. Post event news/photos

- a) Any group falling into the category at 2 above may have their own page on the website to show photos or provide updates after their event has taken place. It is their responsibility to provide the photos and reports to the Council administrators for inclusion.
- b) Requests for a page to be added should be made to the Parish Clerk for approval as appropriate.
- c) The Council does not currently report on events that were not organised or run by the Council.

4. Public information

- a) The Council will report notices that are legally required to be brought to the attention of the village, for example notices of forthcoming Council meetings.
- b) The Council will report notices that could impact those living in the village or otherwise be of use, for example road closures, tree works.
- c) The Council will report commercial issues that are considered to be in the interests of the village, for example a temporary business closure such as the Post Office or suspension of a bus service.
- d) The Council will provide updates on Council activities, for example the completion of the Meadow view play area or the erection of the new bus shelter.

The site is not monitored 24/7 and we will not always be able to reply individually to all messages or comments received. However, we will endeavour to ensure that any emerging themes or helpful suggestions are passed to the relevant people or authorities. Please do not include personal/private information in your social media posts to us.

Sending a message/post via Facebook will not be considered as contacting the Council for official purposes and we will not be obliged to monitor or respond to requests for information through these channels. Instead, please make direct contact with the Council's Clerk and/or members of the Council by email.

We retain the right to remove comments or content that includes:

- Obscene or racist content
- Personal attacks, insults, or threatening language
- Potentially libellous statements.
- Plagiarised material; any material in violation of any laws, including copyright
- Private, personal information published without consent
- Information or links unrelated to the content of the forum
- Commercial promotions or spam
- Alleges a breach of a Council's policy or the law

The Council's response to any communication received not meeting the above criteria will be to either ignore, inform the sender of our policy or send a brief response as appropriate. This will be at the Council's discretion based on the message received, given our limited resources available. Any information posted on the Facebook page not in line with the above criteria will be removed as quickly as practically possible. Repeat offenders will be blocked from the Facebook page. The Council

may post a statement that 'A post breaching the Council's Social Media Policy has been removed'. If the post alleges a breach of a Council's policy or the law the person who posted it will be asked to submit a formal complaint to the Council or report the matter to the Police as soon as possible to allow due process.

Parish Council website and Facebook page

Where necessary, we may direct those contacting us to our website to see the required information or we may forward their question to one of our Councillors for consideration and response. We may not respond to every comment we receive particularly if we are experiencing a heavy workload.

The Council will not promote commercial organisations on its website or Facebook page, but it will promote village organisations and not for profit organisations where these are of interest to residents.

Parish Council email

The Clerk to the Council has their own council email address (rollestonpc@outlook.com). The email account is monitored during office hours, Monday to Friday, and we aim to reply to all questions sent as soon as we can. An 'out of office' message should be used when appropriate.

The Clerk is responsible for dealing with email received and passing on any relevant mail to members or external agencies for information and/or action. All communications on behalf of the Council will usually come from the Clerk, and/or otherwise will always be copied to the Clerk. All new emails requiring data to be passed on, will be followed up with a Data Consent form for completion before action is taken with that correspondence.

Individual Councillors are at liberty to communicate directly with parishioners in relation to their own personal views, if appropriate, copied to the Clerk. **NB:** Any emails copied to the Clerk become official and will be subject to The Freedom of Information Act.

These procedures will ensure that a complete and proper record of all correspondence is kept.

Do not forward personal information on to other people or groups outside of the Council, this includes names, addresses, email, IP addresses and cookie identifiers.

SMS (texting)

Members and the Clerk may use SMS as a convenient way to communicate at times. All are reminded that this policy also applies to such messages.

Video Conferencing e.g. Skype, Zoom

If this medium is used to communicate please note that this policy also applies to the use of video conferencing.

Internal communication and access to information within the Council

The Council is continually looking at ways to improve its working and the use of social media and electronic communications is a major factor in delivering improvement.

Councillors are expected to abide by the Code of Conduct and the Data Protection Act in all their work on behalf of the Council

As more and more information become available at the press of a button, it is vital that all information is treated sensitively and securely. Councillors are expected to maintain an awareness of the confidentiality of information that they have access to and not to share confidential information with anyone. Failure to properly observe confidentiality may be seen as a breach of the Council's Code of Conduct and will be dealt with through its prescribed procedures (at the extreme it may also involve a criminal investigation).

Members should also be careful only to cc essential recipients on emails i.e. to avoid use of the 'Reply to All' option if at all possible but of course copying in all who need to know and ensuring that email trails have been removed.

Policy adopted: 11 March 2019

Revised: 11 September 2023