

Fradley and Streethay Parish Council **Social Media Policy**

Introduction

The use of digital and social media now has a clear and compelling impact on all areas of local government, enabling better and more direct contact between the Parish Council, the people and businesses it serves and the agencies that it works with.

This Social Media Policy aims to describe how the Parish Council and its staff will use social media to improve and expand the ways in which it communicates internally, with its residents, local businesses and the various other agencies that it deals with.

Social media provides an alternative channel (to written correspondence, telephone and face to face conversation) for the Parish Council, to inform and respond to questions and queries raised by people who live in, work and visit Fradley and Streethay parish. It also enables the Parish Council to deal more efficiently with the various agencies (e.g. the surrounding parishes, District Council and the County Council) that delivers services to local people.

The Social Media Policy

Use of digital and social media will form an integral part of how Fradley and Streethay Parish Council delivers its services, this will be in a way that improves the communications, both within the Parish Council and between the Parish Council, the residents, businesses and agencies it works with.

The Parish Council has a corporate presence on the web, a Facebook page and an e-mail channel which it uses to communicate with people who live in, work and visit Fradley and Streethay Parish.

The Parish Council will always try to use the most effective method of communication. We may from time to time ask those who contact us for their preferred channel of communication when we deal with them.

Over time, the Parish 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 Social Media Policy will be updated to reflect the new arrangements.

Any Councillor that received a direct email communication from a resident, organisation or business can reply directly. However, the Clerk of the council should be copied into this correspondence.

If a formal response from the Parish Council is required, the Clerk of the Council will be responsible for doing this.

If a Councillor is granted a mandate from the Council to deal with a specific task/project, it will not be necessary to copy the Clerk of the Council into all correspondence with regards to this. (unless it is felt necessary or requires a formal response from the Council).

Non-Parish Council Facebook Pages:

Any comments on non-Parish Council Facebook Pages should be made in a personal capacity and not as a Councillor. If a response is required on behalf of the Parish Council, this should be discussed with the Clerk and posted on the Parish Council Facebook Page, not as a direct reply to a particular post, but as a general statement. The Parish Council can not be held responsible for a Councillor's personal comments made on a non-Parish Council social media page.

Our rules and expectation

Most online communities have their own rules and guidelines, which we will always abide by.

We promise that any communications (this includes all content on the Parish Council's web site and any posts to the Facebook page) from the Parish Council will meet the following criteria:

- be civil, tasteful and relevant;
- not contain content that is unlawful, libellous, harassing, defamatory, abusive, threatening, harmful, obscene, profane, sexually oriented or racially offensive;
- not contain content copied from elsewhere, for which we do not own the copyright;
- not contain any personal information, other than necessary basic contact details;
- will be moderated by either the Chair, Vice Chair or the Clerk to the Parish Council.
- social media will not be used for the dissemination of any political advertising

Equally, we expect any communications to the Parish Council to meet the following criteria:

- be civil, tasteful and relevant;
- not contain content that is unlawful, libellous, harassing, defamatory, abusive, threatening, harmful, obscene, profane, sexually oriented or racially offensive;
- not contain content copied from elsewhere, for which the enquirer does not own the copyright;
- not sending large volumes of the same message (also called "spamming");
- not to contain anyone's personal information, other than necessary basic contact details;

Channels and responsibilities

Parish Council website

Our web site is hosted by Vision ICT and is normally continuously available.

The Parish Council will maintain only one web site

<http://www.fradleyandstreethayparishcouncil.gov.uk>

The Clerk to the Parish Council is responsible for publishing content to the web site.

The Clerk of the Parish Council is responsible for approving content on the web site prior to its publication in conjunction with the Chair.

Where the Chair of the Parish Council is unavailable the Vice Chair of the Parish Council will deputise.

Where necessary, we may direct those contacting us to our website to see the required information, or if agreed by the Clerk we may add an item to the next available agenda for further discussion, or we may forward their question to one of our Parish Councillors for consideration and response.

We may not respond to every comment we receive particularly if we are experiencing a heavy workload.

The Parish Council may, at its discretion, allow approved local groups to have a presence on its website for the purpose of presenting information about the group's activities. The Parish Clerk on behalf of the Parish Council will be responsible for the content ensuring that it meets the Parish Council's "rules and expectation" (see previous page) for the web site before it is posted. The Parish Council reserves the right to remove or not to post any or all, of a local group's information, if it feels that content does not meet the Parish Council's "rules and expectation".

Parish Council e-mail channel

Our e-mail account is monitored mainly during office hours, Monday to Friday 8am to 3.45pm. We aim to reply to all questions sent via e-mail as soon as we can but within 10 working days.

The Parish Council will maintain two e-mail addresses, currently they are, clerk@fandspc.org and admin@fandspc.org

The Clerk to the Parish Council is responsible for dealing with e-mails received and passing them onto the relevant Councillor or external agency to deal with.

The recognised procedure for sending out e-mails from the Parish Council to residents, businesses and organisations is via the Clerk to the Parish Council. Where Parish Councillors need to communicate with residents, businesses and organisations they should, preferably, keep to the recognised procedure by sending their e-mail to the Clerk of the Parish Council. Where for reasons of expediency this is not practical the e-mail concerned must be copied to the Clerk to the Parish Council so that the Clerk is kept up to date.

Parish Council Facebook channel

Currently the Parish Council maintains one Facebook page currently it is Fradley and Streethay Parish Council.

The Clerk to the Parish Council is responsible for all posts to the Facebook page in conjunction with the Chair to the Parish Council.

Where the Chair of the Parish Council is unavailable the Vice Chair of the Parish Council will deputise.

The Facebook page status is set at closed and no comments can be posted to the Parish Council Facebook page.

The posts on the Fradley and Streethay Parish Council page are automatically posted to the other pages which are Fradley and Streethay Village Community and The Fradley Village Telegraph. Comments can be made to posts on those pages, but the Parish Council will not respond to those comments.

The organisations that the Parish Council supports through our Facebook Page are:

- Fradley Youth and Community Hall
- Fradley Village Hall
- St. Stephens Primary School
- St. Stephens Church

The rules for these organisations are:

- Regular Events will be posted only once per calendar month.
- One-off events will be posted up to a maximum of 3 times.

Parish Council Twitter channel

Currently the Parish Council does not operate a Twitter channel.

Parish Council YouTube channel

Currently the Parish Council does not operate a YouTube channel.

Internal communication and access to information within the Parish Council

The Parish Council is continually looking at ways to improve how it operates and the use of social media is a major factor in delivering improvements. Parish Councillors and its staff are expected to abide by the "our rules and expectation" section (shown earlier in this document) in all work on behalf of the Parish 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. Parish Councillors and its staff are expected to maintain an awareness of the confidentiality of all information that they have access to and not to share that information with anyone unless they are sure that it is reasonable to do so. Failure to properly observe confidentiality may be a breach of the Parish Council's Data Protection Policy and will be dealt with through its prescribed procedures.

Reviewed: 23.07.2019
Next Review: April/May 2020