

## Digital Media and Electronic Communication Policy

Adopted: 6<sup>th</sup> October 2025

Review Date: Annually. By 6<sup>th</sup> October 2026

### 1. Introduction

- This policy supports good communication between the Parish Council, residents, local groups, and organisations.
- It applies to all digital platforms: website, social media (e.g. Facebook), email, video calls, and SMS.
- The Council aims to use the most suitable and accessible channels to keep residents informed and involved across a wide range of demographics.

### 2. Aims of Communication

- Be respectful, clear, and accurate.
- Encourage community engagement.
- Promote council events and decisions.
- Avoid political bias or advertising.
- Collect community information and opinions.

### 3. Rules for Official Social Media Use

- Platforms include the Alwoodley Parish Council website, Facebook page, and any approved digital tools.
- Posts will:
  - Be civil, factual, and relevant.
  - Avoid offensive, abusive, discriminatory and misogynistic content.
  - Not include personal data without permission.
  - Be posted by the Clerk or authorised admin only.
  - Avoid political views or promotion of products.

### 4. Public Interaction Guidelines

- Be respectful to all users and staff.
- Avoid personal attacks or offensive language.
- Stay on topic and use social media constructively.
- Not post private information or commercial promotions.
- Use email or contact forms for official business or complaints.

## **5. Managing Content**

- Inappropriate content may be removed without notice. This includes:
  - Obscene, racist or threatening posts.
  - Personal or private information shared without consent.
  - Spam, unrelated links, or misleading statements.
  - Allegations of misconduct — these should be made through the proper complaints process.

## **6. Personal Use by Councillors and Staff**

- State that views are personal.
- Do not share confidential information.
- Do not use the Council's logo or images.
- Avoid any content that could damage the Council's reputation.

## **7. Email and Other Communication**

- Council emails should:
  - Be respectful and clear.
  - Use official council addresses where possible.
  - Be copied to the Clerk if sent externally.
  - Urgent matters should be marked as such.
  - SMS and video calls should follow the same standards of politeness and confidentiality.

## **8. Website Management**

- The Clerk or agreed person manages the website content.
- Local groups may be allowed a section, at the discretion of the council, clearly marked as their responsibility.
- All content must follow Council rules and may be removed if inappropriate.

## **9. Internal Communication**

- All correspondence for the Council should go through the Clerk.
- Councillors must:
  - Respect confidentiality.
  - Avoid "reply all" where unnecessary.
  - Only share information with those who have a "need to know".

## **10. Dealing with Staff**

- Councillors must not give instructions to staff unless formally authorised.
- Communications with staff should:
  - Be respectful and professional.
  - Focus on parish council business only.
  - Go through the Clerk where possible.