

WALBERSWICK PARISH COUNCIL

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Policy for dealing with the Press and other Media

1. This policy is to guide Councillors and employees in their relations with the news media.
2. The policy is not comprehensive, but sets out guidance on issues that may arise when dealing with news media organisations.
3. The Council is accountable to the electorate for its actions and shall therefore be proactive in making reasonable efforts to make its decisions and policies known to the electorate.
4. The Council shall allow reasonable access to news media organisations and shall respond expeditiously to their requests for information.
5. When dealing with news media organisations Councillors and employees should be informed and certain of their facts; they should ensure that when making comments on behalf of the Council they are aware of relevant Council policies and the Council's position on the matter and ensure that their comments reflect those policies and position.
6. Councillors and employees must not disclose information that is of a confidential nature. This includes any item which has been discussed as a confidential item on the Council's agenda. An exception to this is that an employee may disclose information if required to do so pursuant to the Data Protection Act 1998, the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.
7. Councillors have an obligation to respect Council policy, once made. Thus Councillors should be careful about expressing individual views to the news media. Whilst a Councillor may make it clear that he or she disagrees with a policy, he or she should not seek to undermine a decision through the news media.