

# **Wexham Court Parish Council (WCPC)**

**Minutes of Ordinary Meeting of the Wexham Court Parish Council  
held at Parish Hall, Norway Drive, Slough SL2 5QP on  
Friday 5<sup>th</sup> January, 2024 at 6:30 pm.**

**05012024-01 Councilors Present:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Not Present</b>
<b>Cllr I. Ahmed</b>	<b>Y</b>	
<b>Cllr M. Ahmed</b>	<b>Y</b>	
<b>Cllr S. Akbar</b>		<b>N</b>
<b>Cllr H. Bajwa</b>	<b>Y</b>	
<b>Cllr H. Gahir</b>		<b>N</b>
<b>Cllr H. Javed</b>		<b>N</b>
<b>Cllr M. Javed</b>		<b>N</b>
<b>Cllr G. Jeynes</b>	<b>Y</b>	
<b>Cllr K. Kaur</b>		<b>N</b>
<b>Cllr M. Satti</b>	<b>Y</b>	
<b>Cllr G. Singh</b>		<b>N</b>

In attendance: Adil Iftakhar - CLERK to WCPC

Members of Public Present: 5

## **05012024-02 Apologies for Absence**

Received from Cllr S. Akbar.

## **05012024-03 Declarations of Interest**

None Received.

## **05012024-04 Approval of minutes of meetings held on the 26th October 2023, 9th October 2023 and 30th June 2023**

It was unanimously resolved, by those present, that the minutes of the meeting held on the 26<sup>th</sup> October 2023, 9<sup>th</sup> October 2023 and 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023 be approved as a true and accurate record.

### **05012024-05 Public Question Time**

Q1: Who has the Parish Jewel?

Response: The previous chairman, Cllr H. Gahir has not handed back the Jewel despite the clerk requesting him to do so via email. The Jewel is the property of the parish council and should always be kept in the parish hall and be given out to the chairperson on formal occasions only. The clerk is requested to request the jewel to be returned again and failure to do so will result in a complaint being made against the Cllr H. Gahir to the relevant authorities.

### **05012024-06 Precept for the financial year 2024/2025**

WCPC unanimously resolved and approved, to request Slough Borough Council to levy a precept charge of £30 per annum, per property at band D for the financial year 2024/25. The Council Tax base for Wexham is 1,425.10, so at £30 per Band D the precept is £42,753.00.

### **05012024-07 Appointment of Mulberry & Co as Internal Auditor for the year 2023/24**

It was unanimously resolved, that Mulberry & Co is appointed as Internal Auditor for the year 2023/2024 and the Clerk was authorised to sign the letter of engagement with immediate effect.

### **05012024-08 Consider quotations and approve a quotation for the installation of cricket nets within the tennis courts.**

It was unanimously resolved that the current quotes are reviewed and requoted in order to ensure best value. Further quotes in order to explore having the cricket nets built outside the tennis courts be sought in order for this agenda item to be reconsidered again at the next council meeting.

### **05012024-09 Clerk Update**

The clerk informed the council of the following:

- Natwest Current Account Bank Balance: £200,760.
- Saving Accounts: Redwood Bank (£85,000), Cambridge & Counties Bank (£85,000), Nationwide (£85,000) and Buckinghamshire Building Society (£85,000).
- The legal case around election expenses is ongoing against SBC and a defense will be filed at Reading County Court.
- Successfully advertised the RFO position with significant interest being achieved
- Re-established links with SBC to consider our offer to acquire further allotment land, as well as, purchase the freehold of the parish hall.
- Hand railings have been removed from the front of the hall by vandals, therefore, contractors have been contacted in order to fix new handrails.

### **05012024-10 Appointment of Responsible Finance Officer (RFO)**

WCPC unanimously resolved and approved, the following:

- a. To elect interview & appointment panel, which shall consist maximum of six Parish Councillors who shall be responsible for shortlisting the candidates, interviewing and making the appointment of RFO. The following councillors were

elected to sit on the panel: Cllr M. Satti, Cllr H. Bajwa, Cllr M. Ahmed, Cllr I. Ahmed, Cllr G. Jaynes and Cllr S. Akbar.

- b. The interviewing panel will agree its own term of reference at its first meeting.
- c. The meeting of the panel will be convened by the Clerk.

### 05012024-11 Payment List – January 2024

The payment list for January, 2024 was presented at the meeting and unanimously approved. Former Cllr Ghalib Hussain, one of the signatories, was requested to sign the cheques until the signatories have been changed. The Clerk was requested to issue the cheques as soon as possible.

Position: *Chair*  
Signature: *M B*  
Date: *12/03/2024*





## WEXHAM COURT PARISH COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS POLICY 2024

### 1. INTRODUCTION

This policy will focus the communication efforts of the Parish Council and support it to be effective and efficient in its activity to serve the parishioners and our wider audiences (referred collectively as 'our community').

#### 1.1 Policy Context

This policy is advised by the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity ('the Code'), available at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/5670/1878324.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/5670/1878324.pdf)

The Code is statutory guidance, and the Parish Council must have regard to it and follow its provisions. It requires that publicity must:

- Be lawful.
- Be cost effective.
- Be objective.
- Be even-handed.
- Be appropriate.
- Have regard to equality and diversity.
- Be issued with care during periods of heightened sensitivity.

It also takes account of national guidance, for example 'The Good Councillor's Guide 2018 (National Association of Local Councils – 'The Guide').

#### 1.2 The Need For A Communications Strategy

Wexham Court Parish Council has a duty to engage effectively with its residents, partners, employees, and stakeholders. Better communications lead to recognition and respect – reputation matters. Many councils fail to effectively communicate who they are and what they do – and the less people know about an organisation, the less likely they are to rate it highly. Achieving the council's aims and objectives requires good communication with every individual, group, and organisation we work with, or provide services for. Without proper co-ordination it would be difficult to make sure messages communicated by the Parish Council are consistent and accurate. But if communication is managed effectively, the Parish Council can create and seize opportunities to communicate with partners and the public and build an accurate and positive reputation.

#### 1.3 What Should We Be Communicating?

Research by MORI, an independent research organisation, and the Local Government Association, states the most important drivers of council reputation among local residents are:

- Perceived quality of services overall
- Perceived value for money
- Media coverage

- Direct communications
- Council performance
- Clean, green, and safe environment
- Positive experiences of contact with council employees and contractors.

If the council is to build a strong reputation, effectively inform residents, engage and improve customer satisfaction then these drivers must form the basis of our communications strategy. There is also a need for proactive and reactive information:

Proactively – telling people information to influence and change attitudes.  
 Reactively – giving residents information they want to know.

## **2. COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVES**

- To ensure the Parish Council is aware of and responds in a timely manner to what the parishioners want and need to know.
- To use a variety of digital and traditional communication channels to make sure the information we provide is accessible for the whole community.
- To ensure our messages are relevant, clear and factual to ensure maximum impact and interaction between the Parish Council and our community.
- To provide a user friendly and accessible website to drive interaction with our audiences.
- To celebrate success of interest to the village.

## **3. COMMUNICATIONS PRINCIPLES**

Five principles underpin the strategy. Our communication channels need to:

- Be accessible for all.
- Be convenient to access.
- Help manage expectations.
- Be relevant, clear, and factual.
- Encourage two-way positive engagement and to 'act together'.

### **3.1 Identifying Newsworthy Items**

It is the responsibility of everyone working within the Parish Council to identify newsworthy items; these will include a range of Parish Council activities and decisions and it is the responsibility of the Parish Clerk to make the decision as to whether or not a press release should be issued. The content of a Press Release should be approved by the Chair of the Parish Council.

### **3.2 Handling Media Enquiries**

The Parish Clerk co-ordinates all formal media enquiries to the Parish Council. Members and Parish Council staff who are directly approached by the media should not attempt to answer questions themselves without establishing the full facts. If Members are in any doubt, they should consult the Parish Clerk. Parish Council staff should refer all media enquiries to the Parish Clerk in the first instance. The Parish Council should not pass comments on leaks, anonymous allegations or allegations about individual staff and Members. The phrase "no comment" should not be used as a response to a media enquiry. The Parish Council is open and accountable and should always try to explain if there is a reason why it cannot answer a specific enquiry.

#### **3.2.1 Managing Negative Issues**

From time to time the Parish Council has to respond to negative issues. It is important that these situations are managed carefully so as to limit the potential for negative publicity. Members and Officers must alert the Parish Clerk as soon as a potentially negative issue which may attract media interest is known. They should not wait until contact