

# **Bakewell Town Council**

## **Local Procedures 2022**

This document brings adopted Local Procedures together under one cover.

### **History**

Procedures have been adopted at various times  
Local Procedures 1-6 were adopted at minute 231/07  
Local Procedure 7 was adopted at minute 2981/15  
Members Interests (Annex A to minute 1974/12(c))  
Media Policy (Annex A to minute 2089/12)  
Grants Procedure (Annex C to minute 2154/12)  
Mayors Allowance (adopted at minute 4168/20)  
Co-option Procedure (adopted at minute 4646/20)  
Social Media and Communications Policy (4769/20)

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These local procedures are supplementary to Standing Orders and intended to cover local issues

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## **Local Procedure 1**

### **Complaints Procedure - Code of Practice**

Code of Practice

#### **Before the Meeting**

1. The complainant should be asked to put the complaint about the council's procedure or administration in writing to the Parish Clerk.
2. If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the Parish Clerk, they may be advised to put it to the Chair of the Council.
3. The Parish Clerk shall acknowledge the receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant when the Council will consider the matter.
4. The complainant shall be invited to attend the relevant meeting and bring with them such representative as they wish.
5. Seven clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant shall provide the Council with copies of any documentation or other evidence, which they wish to refer to at the meeting. The Council shall similarly provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting.

#### **At the Meeting**

6. The Council shall consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the public and the press. Any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the council meeting in public.
7. Chair to introduce everyone.
8. Chair to explain procedure.
9. Complainant (or representative) to outline grounds for complainant.
10. Members to ask any questions of the complainant.
11. If relevant, the Parish Clerk to explain the Council's position.
12. Members to ask any questions of the Parish Clerk
13. Parish Clerk and complainant to be offered opportunity of last word (in this order)
14. The Parish Clerk and the complainant be asked to leave the room while Members decide whether or not the grounds of the complaint have been made. (If a point of clarification is necessary, both parties be invited back)
15. Parish Clerk and complainant return to hear decision, or to be advised when decision will be made.

## **After the Meeting**

16. Decision confirmed in writing within seven working days together with details of any action to be taken.

## **Local Procedure 2**

### **Delegation of Authority to Clerk – Highways Issues and Street Furniture**

1. At the request of Members or members of the public the clerk is authorised to report to the relevant statutory body any of the following matters:

- (a) potholes in the highway, damaged roads and pavements and street furniture
- (b) failed bulbs and out of phase lamps and lamp posts
- (c) damaged or obscure road signs
- (d) grit bins that require refilling or grit heaps requiring replenishment
- (e) failures of or issues arising from street sweeping/gully emptying
- (f) blocked or damaged gullies
- (g) failure of or issues arising from verge cutting
- (h) issues regarding playing fields
- (i) uncollected refuse/suspected fly-tipping
- (j) pigeon nuisance

2. The Clerk will report to Mayor or if unavailable Deputy Mayor details of action taken within two working days, and give a report to Council at the next available meeting.

## **Local Procedure 3**

### **Urgent Business**

1. Wherever possible urgent business will be discharged by holding a Special Meeting of the Town Council. The Council recognises that on rare occasions very urgent decisions will need to be taken in order to discharge business

2. Where an urgent decision needs to be taken between meetings the clerk is delegated to act upon behalf of the Council in order to discharge the business in a timely manner, following discussion with two Councillors including the Mayor or if not available Deputy Mayor.

3. The Clerk will report at the beginning of the next available meeting of the Town Council any matters that have been disposed of in this manner.

## **Local Procedure 4 Notices and Posters**

1. The Clerk is authorised to place upon Parish Notice Boards such posters and notices as are received from statutory bodies, and such others of a routine nature. The Clerk will report all such posters and notices put up at the next appropriate Ordinary Council meeting. Non routine posters will be referred to Council for prior approval or considered under Local Procedure 3 as appropriate.

## **Local Procedure 5 Publication of Minutes**

1. A copy of all minutes of Town Council Meetings will be placed in the Library following approval.

## **Local Procedure 6 Bakewell Town Council Annual Certificate of Merit Award**

### **1. Information**

A Certificate of Merit for recognition of valued contribution by individuals within the community, who go the extra mile, not just their day job alone or extremely noteworthy voluntary activity, is proposed.

A scheme run by Bakewell Town Council is in existence, this proposal is made to reignite the system in place.

### **2. Costs**

Negligible, i.e. production of a pro forma certificate to be completed on computer and printed by Town Clerk. (Town Clerks time and paper/ printer).

Annual vote on awards. (Agenda item / business time at Council meeting.)

### **3. Procedure**

A citation, outlining the merit worthy activity, of approximately one paragraph in length should be submitted to the Town Clerk as a nomination for any potential recipient. This can take place throughout each Town Council year. Nominations should come via Town Councillors or external sources to the Town Clerk.

Amendment approved at minute 4293/19(b) Award recipients cannot be nominated for continued service but can be nominated for other, unrelated, good works"

A review of any nominations should appear on the March Full Town Council meeting of each Council year as an agenda item. The Council would then consider the nominations that are worthy of award.

The Mayor would present the award at the Annual Town meeting, certificate to be endorsed by the Mayor and a short citation outlining the reasons for the award to be included on each certificate.

#### **4. Publicity**

Maximising publicity should be a positive outcome when recognising community involvement and enhance the Town Councils public image and perception.

Local media including Matlock Mercury, Peak Advertiser, local radio and the Town Councils own web site should be included in publicising the awards.

### **Local Procedure 7 Use of the Council Seal**

1. The Town Council will no longer support the use of the Council Seal to authenticate "Certificate of Life" requests.

Requests received will be directed to take legal advice.

Reference: DALC Circular 07/2019;

NALC have been asked to advise on whether there is a power for a local council to use its official seal to authenticate a document on behalf of a private individual. It is understood that a practice has developed of the clerk or a councillor using their council's seal to authenticate a document confirming, for example, that a resident is still alive, for people receiving a pension from abroad.

NALC's view is that a council should not use its seal to authorise documents not directly related to that council.

In many European countries the local authority has a specific role in authenticating documents - that is not the case here.

A council seal is to be used for confirming the council's consent to a particular document and the related transaction (e.g. the sale or purchase of land). The seal should never be used without a formal resolution authorising the specific use and a council's standing orders should set out the procedure for the use of the seal. When a council uses the seal on a document relating to a council transaction, the power to use the seal is incidental to that transaction (s.111 of the Local Government Act 1972).

When the seal is used on a document to which the council is not a party, there is no power to do so and that use is not incidental to any other of the council's powers. In addition, because of the role of a foreign local authority, the council could be taking on an open ended liability if there was something wrong with a document that it applied the seal to as the foreign authority would take the seal as a guarantee by the town council of the validity of the underlying transaction.

## **Local Procedure 8 Members Interests**

### **Annex A to minute 1947/12(c)**

As a member or co-opted member of **Bakewell Town Council** I have a responsibility to represent the community and work constructively with our staff and partner organisations to secure better social, economic and environmental outcomes for all.

In accordance with the Localism Act provisions, when acting in this capacity I am committed to behaving in a manner that is consistent with the following principles to achieve best value for our residents and maintain public confidence in this authority.

**SELFLESSNESS:** Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

**INTEGRITY:** Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

**OBJECTIVITY:** In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

**ACCOUNTABILITY:** Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

**OPENNESS:** Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

**HONESTY:** Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

**BULLYING AND HARASSMENT:** Holders of public office must treat others with respect and must not pursue a course of conduct which amounts to bullying or harassment of another.

**LEADERSHIP:** Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

The Act further provides for registration and disclosure of interests and in **Bakewell Town Council** this will be done as follows:

#### **1. REGISTRATION OF MEMBER'S INTEREST**

- (1) Subject to section 2(1), you must within 28 days of:-
  - a) This Code being adopted by or applied to your authority; or
  - b) Your election or appointment to office (where that is later),

- register in your authority's Register of Members' Interests (maintained under section 81 (1) of the Local Government Act 2000) details of your personal interests by providing written notification to your authority's Monitoring Officer.

(2) Subject to section 2(1), you must, within 28 days of becoming aware of any new personal interest or change to any personal interest registered under paragraph 1 register details of that new personal interest or change by providing written notification to your authority's Monitoring Officer.

## 2. SENSITIVE INFORMATION

(1) Where you consider that the information relating to any of your personal interests is sensitive information, and your authority's Monitoring Officer agrees, you need not include that information when registering that interest, or, as the case may be, a change to that interest under section 1.

(2) You must, within 28 days of becoming aware of any change of circumstances which means that information excluded under section 2(1) is no longer sensitive information, notify your authority's Monitoring Officer asking that the information be included in your authority's Register of Member's Interests.

(3) In this Code "sensitive information" means information whose availability for inspection by the public creates or is likely to create, a serious risk that you or a person who lives with you may be subjected to violence or intimidation.

As a Member of **Bakewell Town Council**, my conduct will in particular address the statutory principles of the code of conduct by:

- Championing the needs of residents – the whole community and in a special way my constituents, including those who did not vote for me - and putting their interests first.
- Dealing with representations or enquiries from residents, members of our communities and visitors fairly, appropriately and impartially.
- Not allowing other pressures, including the financial interests of myself or others connected to me, to deter me from pursuing constituents' casework, the interests of the **Authority's area** or the good governance of the authority in a proper manner.
- Exercising independent judgement and not compromising my position by placing myself under obligations to outside individuals or organisations who might seek to influence the way I perform my duties as a member/co-opted member of this authority.
- Listening to the interests of all parties, including relevant advice from statutory and other professional officers, taking all relevant information into consideration, remaining objective and making decisions on merit.
- Being accountable for my decisions and co-operating when scrutinised internally and externally, including by local residents.
- Contributing to making this authority's decision-making processes as open and transparent as possible to enable residents to understand the reasoning behind those decisions and to be informed when holding me and other members to account but restricting access to information when the wider public interest or the law requires it.
- Behaving in accordance with all our legal obligations, alongside any requirements contained within this authority's policies, protocols and procedures, including on the use of the Authority's resources.

- Valuing my colleagues and staff and engaging with them in an appropriate manner and one that underpins the mutual respect between us that is essential to good local government.
- Always treating people with respect, including the organisations and public I engage with and those I work alongside.
- Providing leadership through behaving in accordance with these principles when championing the interests of the community with other organisations as well as within this authority.

#### **Annex B to minute 1947/12(c)**

##### **Procedure: Members Interests**

In accordance with Bakewell Town Council's Code of Conduct for Elected Members, a Councillor must withdraw from the meeting room or chamber during the whole consideration of any item of business in which s/he has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest.

The requirement to withdraw does not apply where the individual member has sought and has been granted a dispensation."



## **Local Procedure 9**

### **Press and Media Policy**

#### **Introduction**

This policy defines the roles and responsibilities within the Council in its relationship with the media.

It is not the intention of this policy to curb freedom of speech but to provide guidance and provide an “aide memoire” as to how to deal with issues that may arise when dealing with the media.

#### **Policy**

Responses to the press relating to matters discussed by the Town Council shall be dealt with in the first instance by the Town Clerk.

The Town Council Chairman (Mayor) and in their absence the Vice-Chairman (Deputy Mayor) and Chairs of Committees are also authorised to give the views of the Council to the press on any non-confidential subject discussed by Council.

Whenever possible any information given to the press shall be given in writing so as not to leave interpretation open to misunderstanding and misreporting.

At no time shall the personal view of either Members or Officers of the Council be given to the press in a way which could be interpreted as a view of the Council as a whole.

#### **Legal framework**

The law governing communications in local authorities can be found in the Local Government Acts 1986 and 1988. The Council must also have regard to the government’s Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity.

The Town Council’s adopted Standing Orders should be adhered to.

#### **Key aims**

The Council is accountable to the local community for its actions. Accountability and trust are best served through effective two-way communication

The media – press, radio, TV, internet – are crucially important in conveying information to the community. The Council must maintain positive, constructive media relations and work with them, for example, to:

- increase public awareness of the services and facilities provided by the Council
- to explain the reasons for particular policies and priorities
- to invite opinion or public debate on matters of current concern

It is important that the press have access to the Clerk and Members as well as to background information to assist them in giving accurate information to the public.

To balance this, the Council will defend itself from any unfounded criticism to ensure that the public are properly informed of all the relevant facts using other channels of communication if necessary.

### **Contact with the media**

The Clerk and Members must always have due regard for the long-term reputation of the Council in all their dealings with the media.

Confidential documents, exempt minutes, reports, papers and private correspondence should not be leaked to the media. If such leaks do occur, an investigation will take place to establish those responsible and appropriate action taken.

When the media wish to discuss an issue that is, or is likely to be subject to legal proceedings then advice should be taken from the appointed Council solicitor before any response is made.

Due regard must be taken in respect of personal privacy issues for both Clerk and Members, and these must be handled carefully and with appropriate sensitivity to the circumstances. These include the release of personal information, such as home address and telephone number (although Member contact details are in the public domain); disciplinary procedures and long-term sickness absences affecting service provision. In this type of situation advice must be taken from the Clerk before any response is made to the media.

When responding to approaches from the media, the Clerk, Chairman or the Chairman of Committees are authorised to make contact with the media.

Statements made by the above should reflect the Council's minuted position.

Other Council Members may talk to the media but must ensure that it is clear that the opinions given were their own and not necessarily those of the Council.

There are occasions when it is appropriate for the Council to submit a letter, for example to explain important policies or to correct factual errors in letters submitted by other correspondents. Such letters should be kept brief and balanced in tone and correspondence should not be drawn out over several weeks. All correspondence must be issued by the Clerk.

### **Attendance of media at council meetings**

The Local Government Act 1972 requires that agendas, reports and minutes are sent to the media on request. The media are encouraged to attend Council meetings and seating and workspace will be made available.

Any filming or taping of Council proceedings by the media must be with prior notice to the Clerk and Chairman of the meeting (see Standing Orders).

### **News Releases**

The purpose of a news release is:

- to make the media aware of a potential story,

- to provide important public information
- to explain the Council's position on a particular issue
- to raise the awareness of the role, responsibilities and work of the Town Council
- to invite opinion or public debate on matters of current concern
- to publicise meetings, events and exhibitions

It is the responsibility of the Clerk and Members to look for opportunities where the issuing of a press release may be beneficial.

The Clerk or any Member may draft a press release; however they must all be issued by the Clerk in order to ensure that the principles outlined in the Legal Framework section are adhered to, that there is consistency of style across the Council and that the use of the press release can be monitored. News releases will be copied to all members.

### **Interviews**

It is recognised that on rare occasions an interview with the media is desirable. Prior to the interview the Town Clerk/interviewee should establish the context of the interview and the scope of questions being asked. The Clerk, as necessary, will prepare a briefing paper for the interviewee.

### **Training**

Bakewell Town Council recognises the role training has in promoting effective media relations and will support requests for Councillor and Clerk training in communications and media relations where appropriate

### **Related documents**

National Association of Local Council's – Communication Toolkit

**Local Procedure 10  
Grant Assistance**

**Application for Grant Assistance**

The funds that are sought must be applied for the general benefit of the residents of Bakewell and are conditional upon a report to the Town Council on the grant expenditure.

Please see advice on Grant Assistance Policy on reverse

Organisation <i>Registered Charity No.(if applicable)</i>	
Contact details  <i>Name, address (including Post Code), telephone number and email address of applicant</i>	
Position in organisation	
Payment arrangements If your application is successful payment will be made via digital banking Account Name Sort Code Account Number Name of Bank	
Grant sum requested: £.....	
Purpose for which the funding is to be used:	
Anticipated impact of the funding on the Bakewell Community	
I enclose our business plan YES/NO* <i>To demonstrate whether this application is seen as "seed funding" or a regular income stream</i>	
I enclose audited accounts for the last complete financial year YES/NO*	
I enclose accounts for current year including income and expenditure projections YES/NO*	
Evidence of bids to other funding providers:  <i>Funding sought should not exceed 50% of the total cost of the activity being funded and that BTC would prefer to see itself as a possible source of 'matched funding' up to a maximum of 50% of the total cost.</i>	
If you previously made a grant application to Bakewell Town Council please give a report on the use and effectiveness of the grant	
Signature of Applicant	Date.....

\*If "NO" please provide an explanation of why the information requested has not been provided

## **Bakewell Town Council Grant Assistance Policy**

Bakewell Town Council (BTC) welcomes applications for financial assistance from local organisations that will provide an activity or service to the Bakewell Community. Funds are limited and applications will be considered within the strict financial constraints set by the BTC budget. BTC is unable to provide assistance that would solely benefit one individual or private “for profit” enterprises.

The applicant should demonstrate:

- Full accounts for the last financial year; where possible these should be audited.
- Up to date accounts for the current financial year including income and spending projections for the rest of the current financial year.
- A clear business plan that would demonstrate whether this application is seen as seed funding or a regular income stream.
- A clear statement of what the funding would be used for.
- Feedback on the use and effectiveness of previous BTC grants through a report.
- Evidence of bids to other funding sources.
- An indication of the extent of the impact of the funding and activity on the local Bakewell Community.
- The applicant organisation may be expected to attend a meeting of BTC to present the case and to clarify any issues raised by BTC.

BTC will consider the following in making a decision on providing Grant Aid:

- That the activity has a significant and beneficial impact on the Bakewell community.
- That applications are considered within the financial constraints of the BTC Grants Budget set at the beginning of the Financial Year.
- In the event of a large number of applications, the BTC Finance Committee would 'short list' before asking for 'presentations'
- That the funding sought should not exceed 50% of the total cost of the activity being funded and that BTC would prefer to see itself as a possible source of 'matched funding' up to a maximum of 50% of the total cost.
- BTC members who have a formal or informal association with the applicant organisation should declare an interest.
- BTC considers grant applications at its meetings which are generally held on the first and third Mondays of each month (see <https://www.bakewelltowncouncil.gov.uk/council-meetings.html> for details). Applications must be received by the agenda closing date which is five working days prior to the meeting. In practice applicants are advised to contact the Town Clerk well before the deadline so that any issues may be clarified before the request is formally submitted.
- Applicants may be asked to return all, or a proportion of the funds should the purpose for which the grant is applied fails.
- The awarding of a grant is entirely at the discretion of the BTC whose decision is final.

## **Local Procedure 11 Mayors Allowance**

The Town Council recognises that the office of Mayor carries with it necessary additional costs.

To help defray these costs a Mayor's Allowance has been established.

The value of the Mayor's Allowance for the year will be set as part of the precept process.

Consideration of approval of taking the Allowance into use will be at the Annual or other such appropriate meeting following the election of the Mayor and requires the passing of a resolution of Council.

Unless otherwise agreed by a meeting of the Town Council payment of the Allowance will be made in arrears on the presentation of receipts or, where this is not possible, a written description of the costs necessarily incurred in the office of Mayor.

Other than costs particular to the Mayor, the allowance is not expected to cover the costs of the Bakewell Civic Service.

In the interests of openness and transparency in the spending of public money any payments made to the Mayor against the allowance will be listed in the Supporting Document to Town Council Meetings."

## **Local Procedure 12 Co-option Procedure**

Reference: NALC Legal Briefing L15-08 Co-option

1. Where a vacancy exists the Clerk will notify DDDC immediately and request a copy of the current procedure for advertising co-option.
2. Co-option will be advertised in accordance with the procedure received from DDDC.
3. Candidates are to certify in writing that they:
  - (a) Meet the criteria for eligibility set out in s.79 of the Local Government Act 1972
  - (b) are not disqualified, pursuant to s.80 of the Local Government Act 1972
4. Co-option will take the form of a short interview. Candidates will be provided a copy of this procedure when invited to the meeting.
5. An extraordinary meeting will be convened for the purpose of co-option (this may be immediately prior to an Ordinary meeting). In accordance with guidance in NALC Legal Briefing L15-08, other than in exceptional circumstances, the public will not be excluded.

### At the meeting

The Mayor (or chairman of the meeting) will explain to candidates that they will be seen individually, in alphabetic order by surname, and that the interview will take the form of a short question and answer session which will last approximately 5 minutes. Candidates will have the opportunity to ask the council any questions they wish.

Chair to invite first candidate to remain others are asked to leave, or in the case of remote meetings placed in the “waiting room”.

### Questions to all candidates

- (a) Are you willing to sign a declaration to abide by the code of conduct expected of members and to register relevant interests?
- (b) What experience do you have of meetings and committees?
- (c) What experience do you have of the working of local government?
- (d) Are you involved in any groups or organisations in Bakewell? If so describe your role and experience.
- (e) How do you see your role as a Town Councillor?
- (f) Are you willing to attend occasional training courses or meetings outside those of the Town Council? These are generally, but not always, in the evening. Training may be delivered remotely.
- (g) How would you like to see the town develop?
- (h) High profile issues can bring certain pressures. How well do you feel you react under pressure?

The candidate should then be asked if he or she has any questions for the Town Council. Candidate leaves. Next candidate invited to come in.

After final candidate has been interviewed the public will be asked to leave the meeting room (or in the case of remote meetings be transferred to the “waiting room”) to allow discussion of candidates to take place.

The public and candidates will then be invited back into the meeting room and a vote, by show of hands, will take place.

The appointment of a co-optee must be by an absolute majority. (i.e. he or she receive a greater number of votes than the aggregate of the votes for other candidates).

Members will be invited to vote for one candidate for each vacancy, one seat at a time.

Votes will be counted and if the candidate with the most votes does not have an absolute majority a second vote will be taken after eliminating the candidate with the fewest votes, this will continue until an absolute majority is reached. The Mayor or chairman has casting vote if two candidates are tied on votes.

Successful candidate(s) will be invited to join the Council. Successful candidates will be asked to complete a Declaration of Acceptance of Office and be given a Registration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests form.

## **Local Procedure 13**

### **Social Media and Communications Policy**

The use of digital and social media and electronic communication enables Bakewell Town Council to interact in a way that improves the communications within the Council and between the Council and the people, businesses and agencies it works with and serves.

The Council has a website, [www.bakewelltowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.bakewelltowncouncil.gov.uk), a 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 its channels of communication 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 Facebook page intends to provide information and updates regarding activities and opportunities within our town 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 personal information.
- If it is official Council business, it will be managed by the nominated administrators.

The Council will not use social media for the dissemination of any political advertising.

To ensure that all discussions on the Council Facebook page are productive, respectful and consistent with the Council's aims and objectives we ask you to follow these guidelines:

- Be considerate and respectful of others. Vulgarity, threats or abusive language will not be tolerated.
- Differing opinions and discussion of diverse ideas are encouraged, but personal attacks on anyone, including the Councillors or staff, will not be permitted.
- Share freely and be generous with official Council posts, but be aware of copyright laws; be accurate and give credit where credit is due.
- Stay on topic.
- The Council's Facebook must not be used for commercial purposes or to advertise, market or sell products.

The site is not monitored constantly and we will not always be able to reply individually to all messages or comments received. We will though, 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. This will clearly be displayed on the Town Council Facebook profile so readers clearly understand this point.

Instead, please make direct contact with the Council's Clerk and/or members of the council by emailing [townclerk@bakewelltowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:townclerk@bakewelltowncouncil.gov.uk)

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 falling short of the above criteria will be to either ignore it, 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. 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. 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.

#### Bakewell Town Council Website

Where necessary, we may direct those contacting us to our website [www.bakewelltowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.bakewelltowncouncil.gov.uk) to see the required information, or 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 Town Council may at its discretion, allow approved local groups to have information about their activities on the Town Council website . Any information of this kind will only be posted to the site after vetting by the Clerk and removed by a time bound date or review of material on the site.

#### Bakewell Town Council email

The Clerk to the Council has the following official email address:  
[townclerk@bakewelltowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:townclerk@bakewelltowncouncil.gov.uk)

The email account is monitored mainly during office hours, Monday to Friday, and we aim to reply to all questions sent as soon as we can.

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.

Individual councillors are at liberty to communicate directly with parishioners in relation to their own views and, if appropriate, copy in/send a copy to the Clerk.

Please note that any emails/letters 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 to other people or groups outside of the Council. This includes names, addresses, email, IP addresses and cookie identifiers.

#### SMS (texting)

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

#### Video Conferencing

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 becomes 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 to only copy in (cc) essential recipients on emails i.e. to avoid use of the 'Reply to All' option, but of course copying in all who need to know and ensuring that email trails have been removed.

This policy will be reviewed at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council or sooner if thought necessary.

## **Local Procedure 14 Recording of Meetings**

This procedure relates to the filming, videoing, photography and audio recording at council and committee meetings

The right to record, film and to broadcast meetings of the council, committees and sub committees is established following the Local Government Audit and Accountability Act 2014. This is in addition to the rights of the press and public to attend such meetings.

Meetings or parts of meetings from which the press and public are excluded may not be filmed or recorded.

Members of the public are permitted to film or record meetings to which they are permitted access in a non-disruptive manner.

The use of digital and social media recording tools, for example Twitter, blogging or audio recording be allowed as long as it is carried out in a non-disruptive way and only to the extent that it does not interfere with any person's ability, even where he or she has a disability, to follow the debate.

Whilst those attending meetings are deemed to have consented to the filming, recording or broadcasting of meetings, those exercising the rights to film, record and broadcast must respect the rights of other people attending under the Data Protection Act 1998.

The Chairman of the meeting has the authority to stop a meeting and take appropriate action if any person contravenes these principles or is deemed to be recording in a disruptive manner.

Any person or organisation choosing to film, record or broadcast any meeting of the Council or a committee is responsible for any claims or other liability from them so doing.

The Council asks those recording proceedings not to edit the film or recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation of the proceedings, or infringe the core values of the Council. This includes refraining from editing an image or views expressed in a way that may ridicule, or show lack of respect towards those being filmed or recorded.

The Council will display requirements as to filming, recording and broadcasting at its meeting venues and those undertaking these activities will be deemed to have accepted them whether they have read them or not.

The Council may itself photograph, film, record or broadcast meetings and can retain, use or dispose of such material in accordance with its retention and disposal policies.