

Stanhoe Parish Council
Digital Media and Electronic Communication Policy

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

The Council has a dedicated website, links into Stanhoe.Org 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 the channels of communication that it uses 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.

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 any personal information.
- If it is official Council business it will be moderated by either the Chair/Vice Chair of the Council or the Clerk to the Council;
- Our communications will not be used for the dissemination of any political advertising.

Parish Council Website.

Where necessary, we may direct those contacting us to our website to obtain the required information, or we may forward their question to Council for consideration and response.

Stanhoe.Org

The Council will publish updates and information from both itself and relevant organisations.

Parish Council Email

The Clerk to the council has their own council email address
clerk@stanhoe.norfolkparishes.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. An 'out of office' message will be used when appropriate. The Clerk is responsible for dealing with email received and passing on any relevant mail to Council 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. Any Emails requiring data to be passed on, will be followed up with a Data consent form for completion before action is taken with that correspondence.

NB any emails 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.

We do not forward personal information on to other people or groups outside of the Council, this includes names, addresses, email, IP addresses and cookie identifiers.

SMS (texting) Councillors and the Clerk may use SMS as a convenient way to communicate at times. This policy also applies to such messages.

Video Conferencing e.g. Zoom This policy also applies to the use of video conferencing.

Internal communication and access to information within the Council

The Council is continually looking at ways to improve its working and the use of social media and electronic communications is a major factor in delivering improvement. 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 and Clerk 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. Councillors should also be careful only to cc essential recipients on emails but of course copying in all who need to know and all email trails have been removed.

January 2024

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