

THURMASTON PARISH COUNCIL

Policy for dealing with requests from Press and/or other Media

1. Council Meetings

All Council Meetings are open to the public and press. Councillors and the Clerk should be aware that any statements made in the meeting may be reported.

2. Minutes of Meetings:

All minutes of meetings are public legal documents and may also be quoted in the press and other media.

3. Public comment:

Members of the Parish Council accept their legal collective responsibility for all decisions taken by Council whether or not they personally supported those decisions. Members will not criticise or complain about such decisions if approached by the media to do so.

Where a Councillor or the Clerk wishes to make or publish a personal public comment on any matter related to the Council's business or its responsibilities they must be sensitive to any agreed Council position.

4. Requests for comments or quotes:

Any media requests for comments or quotes outside a Council meeting may be:

a. Answered by the Councillor contacted provided he or she is comfortable in doing this and the response should reflect the Council's agreed position/policy. If a Councillor wants to make a personal comment, he or she should make it completely clear that they are not commenting for or on behalf of the Council.

No Councillor is obliged to make any comment or to give any quote. (see b) **or**

b. Referred to the Chairman or the Clerk for comment. The Chairman or the Clerk may even then decline to comment or to give a quote.

5. Media Releases:

The Council shall allow all reasonable access to news media organisations. The Council shall make every effort to respond without delay to requests for information from news media organisations. However, all news releases and enquiries made on behalf of the Parish Council will be authorised by the Parish Clerk after consultation with the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Council and are therefore never answered immediately.

6. Website:

Material is posted on the Thurmaston Parish Council website by the Clerk or authorised Staff .

7. Social Media:

Facebook, twitter etc can jeopardise our compliance with legal obligations. To minimise the risk these communications systems are to be used for appropriate business purposes only.