

# Eastwood Town Council



## Press and Media Policy

### Enquiries to Councillors for their Personal Opinion

Nothing in this Policy prevents Councillors from expressing their own personal opinion on non-Council matters in the press or by way of published letters. Councillors should stress that the opinion given is their own and not that of the Council. Councillors should be mindful of the pre-determination rules when commenting.

### Enquiries to the Council

1. All press enquiries in relation to the Council's view on matters shall be made to the Clerk and in his/her absence to the Deputy Clerk at the Council Office.
2. The Clerk/Deputy Clerk shall refer the enquiry to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor or Chairman of the relevant Committee for consideration and or comment.
3. The Councillor may consult with the other Members of the Council and the Clerk/Assistant Clerk before commenting to agree a form of words. The Council will only comment on matters of fact or matters agreed at Council meetings and representations will be in accordance with the Council's decision.
4. The Clerk/Deputy Clerk shall communicate the agreed response to the press.
5. All Members approached by the press/media for a Council comment/view shall process the enquiry in accordance with this Policy and should not answer the query direct.
6. No representations will be made in matters which are discussed in closed session i.e. where press and public have been excluded under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. Furthermore no representations will be made on any item or of a nature that may reasonably cause the Council to be subject to litigation.
7. The Council will respect the rights of individuals and others and will have particular regard to Data Protection issues when issuing press releases.

### Press Releases

1. The Clerk and in her/his absence the Deputy Clerk shall prepare appropriate press releases and/or news items for the Council's website and publish together with contact details of the local Members.
2. The content shall be guided by decisions made by the Council and events organised by the Council during the previous month, decisions or events in the forthcoming month, notifications/publications required by law, and other issues that the Clerk and /or the Council consider appropriate.

In the event that Councillors have direct dealings with the press on any matter which may reasonably be construed as being associated with the Town Council must make it clear that they are not commenting as a representative of the Council or reflecting its views.

The Clerk will issue copies of all Main Council agenda's free of charge to the local press officer or send electronically.