

Press and Media Guidance Notes for Councillors

1. It is vital that the Town Council provides local people with the opportunity to engage and that the community can get directly involved with the democratic decision making process.
2. The Council's contact with the press and media is extremely important in this regard and should be undertaken in a positive and proactive way.
3. All members of the Council are entitled to respond directly when they are contacted by the press and media. However, in doing so, the following considerations should be taken into account:
 - Consider the wider implications of the information about to be imparted and in what capacity the information is being given, for what reason and purpose;
 - That the Town Council's Code of Conduct and Standing Orders be considered;
 - That if in doubt, members should seek the advice of The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or Mayor in advance.
4. In the event of individual members being contacted by the press or media careful consideration is to be given as to whether or not the enquiry should be referred to the Mayor/Deputy Mayor or CEO/Executive Officer (EO). A direct quote can be given so long as it is made clear that the view expressed is a personal one and has not been given on behalf of the Town Council. At no time must the council be brought into disrepute.
5. On receipt of a request from the press or other media for a formal/ Tetbury Town Council statement the person receiving the request should advise the sender that a statement will be considered and issued shortly.
6. All requests from the press or other media for an oral or written statement or comment from the Council should be co-ordinated by the CEO (or EO in the CEO's absence) in consultation with the Mayor (or Deputy Mayor in the Mayor's absence, unless agreed otherwise.
7. The CEO will draft a response and discuss any respective statement, quotes and/or information to be provided. Statements will then be issued either in the name of the Mayor or CEO, on behalf of the Council.

8. All publications and press releases will be circulated to all members of the Council.
9. Should members wish to provide written statements/articles to the press or other media in their role as a Town Councillor then these should be agreed in the first instance by the CEO, in consultation with the Mayor. A record of these will be kept at the Town Council Offices
10. The Town Council acknowledges the right of the media to obtain information under the Freedom of Information Act and will co-operate with requests for information.
11. In addition Tetbury Town Council and all of its representatives must consider both Data Protection and our internet and e-mail policy when dealing with both the press and media.

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Signed by Tetbury Town Council Mayor

Approved on.....

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Signed by the CEO to Council