

SONNING COMMON PARISH COUNCIL

Policy for dealing with requests from Press and/or other Media 2013-14

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 public comment on any matter related to the Council's business or its responsibilities they must be sensitive to any agreed Council position and also make it clear if they are speaking/writing as a Councillor or expressing a personal opinion.

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 Training:

An informal Media Training session for Councillors will be offered from time to time.

6. Website:

Material is posted on the SCPC website (www.sonningcommonparishcouncil.org.uk) by the Clerk. Policies on the content of the SCPC website should be considered on a regular basis by the Council.

7. New media:

Policy on the use of Social Media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter) is to be determined.

This Policy for dealing with requests from press and/or other media was approved by Sonning Common Parish Council on2013

Signed:
Chairman