



# Broseley Town Council

## MEDIA POLICY

### Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to define the roles and responsibilities within the Council for working with the media. This policy covers all of the Council's public communications and includes formal and informal contact with the media, the Council website, the Town Talk newsletter and the annual report.

Communication by the Council must be carefully managed to ensure that it is accurate, effective, consistent and timely. Failure to observe these principles risks miscommunication with the public, potentially leading to adverse publicity and damage to the Council's reputation.

It is not the intention of this policy to curb freedom of speech or to enforce strict rules and regulations. Rather, the intention is to establish a framework for achieving an effective working relationship with the media. The Council welcomes the opportunity to talk to the media and, through them, to debate issues in the public arena.

The law governing communications in local authorities can be found in the Local Government Acts 1986 and 1988. The Council will also have regard to the government's Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity.

### Policy statements

1. The Council's public statements will reflect its policies and decisions as set out in Council minutes.
2. Any Councillor or officer may draft a public statement, but all such statements will be released by the Town Clerk.
3. All Council statements will be issued in the name of either the Mayor or the relevant committee Chair. Where possible, such statements will include a quote from the Mayor or from the relevant committee Chair.
4. In the event of an enquiry from the media the Town Clerk may provide purely factual information relating to minuted Council policies and decisions.
5. In the event of an enquiry which requires a more detailed response, or an enquiry about a sensitive matter, the Town Clerk will agree a statement with the Mayor, or with the relevant committee Chair. No public statement will be issued in the absence of such an agreement.
6. Any Council statement which names or refers to an individual Councillor will be agreed with that individual prior to release.
7. Public statements will be made in writing, preferably using a Press Release pro forma. If a verbal statement is made by a Councillor or officer, then a written record of the conversation will be made and copied to the media organisation and to the Mayor and the relevant committee Chair.

This policy should be used in conjunction with the Council's Communications Policy.

8. Individual Councillors may comment either in public or to the media provided:
- a. they follow the Council's Code of Conduct;
  - b. they make it clear that they are commenting as an individual Councillor;
  - c. they do not misrepresent the policies and decisions of the Council, or the views of their fellow councillors;
  - d. they have regard to the government's Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity.

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