

STOTTESDON AND SIDBURY PARISH COUNCIL

MEDIA RELATIONS POLICY

This policy on media relations forms part of a wider strategy of public relations. The policy has the following aims:

- To protect and promote the good reputation of the Parish Council.
- To encourage an understanding between the Parish Council and the public.
- To recognise the legitimate right of Councillors to comment on issues relating to Stottesdon and Sidbury Parish Council, whilst at the same time distinguishing personal comment from official Council communications.
- To recognise the legitimate role of the media in reporting the activities of the Parish Council, whilst seeking to ensure that the reporting is fair and accurate.
- To foster mutual respect between the Parish Council and the media.

The Council will adhere to the following procedure when handling media relations:

1. The Clerk will be the media contact for the Council and only the Clerk will issue press releases on behalf of the Council (in consultation with the Chairman of the relevant committee, sub-committee or working group).
2. Unless acting upon the specific instructions of the Council, Committee, Sub-committee or working group, the final contents of the press releases will be decided on by the Clerk.
3. The Clerk will issue press releases on Council initiatives, activities, policies, facilities and services.
4. The Clerk will respond to media inquiries about Council initiatives, activities, policies and services.
5. The Clerk will issue clarifications or corrections to the media, should she feel that they have misreported, or reported in an ambiguous way, any Council initiatives, activities, policies, facilities or services.
6. The Clerk will ensure, where relevant, that all press releases are sent in a timely manner following each meeting to the Bridgnorth Journal and Shropshire Star.
7. If members use the title 'Councillor' when writing letters for publication, they should include a sentence stating that they are not writing on behalf of the Council. The Clerk will issue a clarification or correction if a letter is published which does not state this.
8. When speaking to the media, Councillors should make it known that they are not speaking on behalf of the Council. The Clerk will issue a clarification or correction if a story states or implies that a Councillor is speaking on behalf of the Council.