FRAMSDEN PARISH COUNCIL MEDIA (INC. REPORTING AT MEETINGS) POLICY

Responsibility:	Parish Clerk
Version:	3
Prepared by:	Parish Clerk
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Introduction

1. Framsden Parish Council ("the Council") is committed to the provision of accurate information about its governance, decisions and activities. Where this information is not available via the Council's publication scheme, please contact the Council's clerk.

2. The Council shall, where possible, co-operate with those whose work involves gathering material for publication in any form including use of the internet ("the media").

3. This policy explains how the Council may work with the media to meet the above objectives in accordance with the legal requirements and restrictions that apply.

Legal requirements and restrictions

4. This policy is subject to the Council's obligations which are set out in the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the Local Government Act 1972, the Local Government Act 1986, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 1998, other legislation which may apply and the Council's standing orders and financial regulations. The Council's financial regulations and relevant standing orders referenced in this policy are available via the Council's publication scheme.

5. The Council cannot disclose confidential information or information the disclosure of which is prohibited by law. The Council cannot disclose information if this is prohibited under the terms of a court order, by legislation, the Council's standing orders, under contract or by common law. Councillors are subject to additional restrictions about the disclosure of confidential information which arise from the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council, a copy of which is available via the Council's publication scheme.

Meetings

6. A meeting of the Council and its committees is open to the public unless the meeting resolves to exclude them because their presence at the meeting is prejudicial to the public interest due to the confidential nature of the business or other special reason(s) stated in the resolution. In accordance with the Council's standing orders, persons may be required to leave a meeting of the Council and its committees, if their disorderly behaviour obstructs the business of the meeting.

Persons reporting on a meeting who act improperly or in a disruptive manner would include any action or activity which disrupts the conduct of the meeting, or impedes other members of the public from being able to see, hear or film etc the proceedings. This might include:

- Moving outside designated public areas
- Excessive noise during debate
- Intrusive lighting and use of flash photography
- Asking people to repeat for the purpose of recording
- Failure to observe this protocol

This list is not exhaustive.

7. Where a meeting of the Council and its committees include an opportunity for public participation, the media may speak and ask questions. Public participation is regulated by the Council's standing orders.

8. The photographing, recording, filming or other reporting of a meeting of the Council and its committees (which includes e.g. using a mobile phone or tablet, recording for a TV/radio broadcast, providing commentary on blogs, web forums, or social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebookand YouTube) which enable a person not at the meeting to see, hear or be given commentary about the meeting is permitted unless (i) the meeting has resolved to hold all or part of the meeting without the public present or (ii) such activities disrupt the proceedings or (iii) paragraphs 9 and 10 below apply.

Reporting is restricted by legislation to the proceedings of the meeting, in other words, from calling to order to the official closure of the meeting.

9. The photographing, recording, filming or other reporting of a child or vulnerable adult at a Council or committee meeting is not permitted unless an adult responsible for them has given permission. Any persons who object to being filmed or photographed and have moved to an area designated for this purpose should also not be filmed or photographed. However, the Council cannot guarantee that anyone will not be filmed or photographed.

10. Oral reporting or commentary about a Council or committee meeting by a person who is present at the meeting is not permitted.

11. The Council shall, as far as it is practicable, provide reasonable facilities for anyone taking a report of a Council or committee meeting and for telephoning their report at their own expense. Any filming or recording of meetings should be conducted overtly from a fixed point in an area of the meeting room specified by the Clerk or Chairman.

12. Those reporting on meetings should not edit the recordings, films or photographs in a way that could lead to misinterpretation of the proceedings. This includes refraining from editing an image or views expressed in a way that may ridicule, or show a lack of respect towards those being photographed, filmed or recorded.

13. Recording and reporting the Council's meetings is subject to the law and it is the responsibility of those recording and reporting to ensure compliance, including data protection and defamation. They will be responsible for any allegations of breaches of law which may result from their use of recorded material and are admitted to the Council meeting on the basis that they accept this responsibility. The Council reserves the right to initiate legal proceedings in appropriate circumstances.

14. The Council takes no responsibility for any recording made by others. It also takes no responsibility where a recording which it makes is subsequently used by a third party. Any third party making or editing a recording of a meeting shall in doing so be taken to have indemnified the Council against all actions, proceedings, costs, claims, demands, liabilities, losses and expenses whatsoever relating to the making or use of that recording.

15. The Council asserts no copyright or control over recordings made by itself or others whilst on Council premises, subject to paragraph 13 above.

16. The Council does not as a general rule make recordings of meetings itself, but if this is done (possibly for the purposes of assisting in minute taking) the recordings are destroyed immediately

that draft minutes are prepared. Therefore, there are no archived recordings of Council meetings. The only official record of meetings are the written minutes.

17. The Council's standing orders will confirm if attendance by the public, their participation, photographing, recording, filming or other reporting is permitted at a meeting of a sub-committee.

Other communications with the media

18. This policy does not seek to regulate councillors in their private capacity.

19. The Council's communications with the media seek to represent the corporate position and views of the Council. If the views of councillors are different to the Council's corporate position and views, they will make this clear.

20. The Council's Clerk may contact the media if the Council wants to provide information, a statement or other material about the Council.

21. Subject to the obligations on councillors not to disclose information referred to in paragraph 5 above and not to misrepresent the Council's position, councillors are free to communicate their position and views