

THAKEHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Protocol for handling of formal Parish correspondence and consultation requests

Aims

This protocol sets out how correspondence should generally be generated in such a way as to ensure the smooth running of the Council, to ensure consistency in the Council's approach and to comply with the Council's Standing Orders. The general principle is that officers and members of the Council must act with integrity when responding to correspondence on behalf of the Council.

Receiving Correspondence

Under normal circumstances, the Clerk, as the Proper Officer of the Council is authorised to receive all correspondence. Correspondence received will be assessed in terms of whether it is of immediate interest to some or all Council members, and will be circulated electronically to those in question. If in doubt, the Clerk will consult with the Chair of Council and/or Chairs of sub-committees. The Clerk will report all appropriate correspondence received since the last meeting to the Parish Council under a standing item on the full Council meeting agenda. Any member may request sight of any correspondence (subject to provisions relating to personal data).

Responding to Correspondence

Either the Clerk or the Chairman may write correspondence relating to the stated business and day to day management of the activities or the existing adopted policy of the Council. Where the Council is required to formally state a position on a new matter, if timing allows the matter will normally be taken at a meeting of the full Council, but in matters of genuine urgency Council and its sub-committees are empowered to expedite agreement of responses (including comments to the press or other external agencies) under arrangements for delegated action set out in Standing Orders section 4(e) (i). Likewise in relation to planning matters, if timing allows the matter will be taken at a meeting of the Neighbourhood Planning Committee, but Standing Orders section 4(e) (ii) sets out arrangements for delegated action.

Ratification and record-keeping

Any action taken under clauses 4e(i) and (ii) will be reported to the public as soon as possible (normally within one calendar week) via the parish website. Council and committee agendas include a standing item for the reporting and ratification of any delegated action taken since the last meeting. Copies of all relevant correspondence sent and received will be held in the Parish Council files.

Consultation requests

Will normally be considered by full Council at the next available council meeting and a response, if required, will be agreed and sent. If a response is needed before it is possible to hold a council meeting, then Standing Orders arrangements relating to delegated action may be used.

Adopted: 19 September 2016

Next review date: May 2019