



Maxey Parish Council

Social Media and Communications Policy

Adopted: 11th July 2025

Review Date: July 2026

1. Introduction

This policy sets out the principles for the use of communication channels by Maxey Parish Council, including social media, press, website, noticeboards, newsletters, email, and meetings. Its purpose is to ensure that all communications:

- Reflect the decisions and ethos of the Council
- Are professional, accurate, respectful, and transparent
- Help engage and inform residents while maintaining accountability

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All parish councillors
- The Parish Clerk
- Any individuals or contractors managing communication on behalf of the Council

It covers all forms of communication including:

- Social media
- The official Council website
- Email correspondence
- Printed publications (newsletters, flyers, posters)
- Verbal communication in public meetings or to the media

3. Key Principles of Council Communication

Maxey Parish Council communication will be:

- **Truthful and Accurate** – Facts will be checked before being shared

- **Timely** – Information will be provided promptly
 - **Respectful** – Tone and content will be courteous and inclusive
 - **Non-Political** – Council platforms must not be used for political purposes
 - **Legally Compliant** – Communications will comply with GDPR, the Code of Conduct, and other legal duties
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4. Responsibilities

- **The Clerk** is the designated Communications Officer and manages all official communication channels.
 - **The Chair** may act as spokesperson for official statements if required, in consultation with the Clerk.
 - **Councillors** must not make public statements on behalf of the Council unless authorised by resolution. They may comment as individuals but must make clear their views are personal.
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5. Website and Noticeboards

- The Clerk is responsible for maintaining the Council's website and ensuring it meets accessibility and transparency standards.
 - The website will include:
 - Councillor contact details
 - Meeting agendas and minutes
 - Policy documents
 - News and updates relevant to the parish
 - Parish noticeboards will display statutory notices and public information as appropriate.
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6. Email and Correspondence

- Council email accounts or agreed personal email addresses will be used for official business.
 - All correspondence must be professional, factual, and documented when necessary.
 - Residents will receive a response within a reasonable time (usually within 7 working days).
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7. Social Media Use

7.1 Official Accounts

- Any social media accounts set up in the Council's name (e.g. "Maxey Parish Council") must:
 - Be approved by the Council
 - Be clearly marked as official
 - Be managed by the Clerk or a nominated councillor

Content must:

- Reflect official Council decisions
- Provide news, meeting updates, and community alerts
- Avoid party-political bias
- Moderate public comments where necessary to prevent abuse or misinformation

Comments will be removed or hidden if they:

- Are defamatory, abusive or discriminatory
- Contain personal or confidential information
- Breach copyright or legal rights
- Incite illegal activity

7.2 Personal Use by Councillors

- Councillors are reminded that they are subject to the Code of Conduct in both public and private communication when identifiable as councillors.
 - Personal accounts must not:
 - Claim to represent the Council without permission
 - Publish confidential or sensitive Council matters
 - Use the Council logo or identity unless authorised
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8. Media Relations

- Any contact with the media must be coordinated via the Clerk and/or Chair.
 - Press releases will be factual, non-political, and reflect official Council decisions.
 - Councillors should not speak to the press on behalf of the Council unless authorised to do so.
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9. Public Engagement and Feedback

- The Council welcomes resident input at public meetings, via email or through online channels.
- Comments or messages via social media will be monitored and responded to where appropriate but are not a formal method of contacting the Council.

- The Council reserves the right to restrict or block users who repeatedly breach expected standards of behaviour.
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10. Breaches and Misuse

Any misuse of communications platforms or breaches of this policy may result in:

- Referral to the Monitoring Officer under the Code of Conduct
 - Disciplinary action for staff or volunteers
 - Restrictions on access to Council communication platforms
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11. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or as needed to respond to changes in legislation, technology, or Council practice.

Signed:

Chair of Maxey Parish Council
Clerk to Maxey Parish Council