

# Thorrington Parish Council

## PRESS & MEDIA POLICY

### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this policy is to define the roles and responsibilities within Thorrington Parish Council (known as “the Council”) for working with the press and media (known as “the media”) and deals with the day-to-day relationship between the Council and the media. It is not the intention of this policy to curb freedom of speech or to enforce strict rules and regulations. Rather, it provides guidance on how to deal with issues that may arise when dealing with the media.

### KEY AIMS

The Council is accountable to the local community for its actions and this can only be achieved through effective two-way communications. The media – press, radio, TV, internet – are crucially important in conveying information to the community so the Council must maintain positive, constructive media relations and work with them to increase public awareness of the services and facilities provided by the Council and to explain the reasons for particular policies and priorities. It is important that the media have access to Officers and Members and to background information to assist them in giving accurate information to the public. To balance this, the Council will defend itself from any unfounded criticism and will ensure that the public are properly informed of all the relevant facts using other channels of communication if necessary.

### THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The law governing communications in local authorities can be found in the Local Government Acts 1986 and 1988. The Council must also have regard to the Government’s Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity. The Parish Council’s Standing Orders should be adhered to.

### CONTACT WITH THE MEDIA

Officers and Members should always have due regard for the long-term reputation of the Council in all their dealings with the media. Confidential documents, exempt Minutes, reports, papers and private correspondence should not be leaked to the

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