

## **FAVERSHAM TOWN COUNCIL: MEDIA POLICY**

### **Introduction**

1. Faversham Town Council (“the Council”) is committed to the provision of accurate information regarding its functions, decisions and actions.
2. The Council may communicate with those whose work involves gathering material for editorial publication in print, broadcast and electronic form (e.g. researchers, journalists, reporters, photographers, editors of newspapers and magazines, camera or sound operators and crew of TV and radio programmes) (“the media”) to publicise its business, decisions and actions. The Council may require the media to produce a UK press card.
3. Where information is not available via the Council’s publication scheme, the Council shall endeavour to assist the media with enquiries about the Council’s functions, decisions and actions.
4. This policy explains how the Council, its councillors and staff, will work with the media to meet the above.

### **Legal Restrictions**

5. This policy is subject to the Council’s statutory obligations 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, the Audit and Accountability Act (Regulations) 2014, and the Council’s Standing Orders. Relevant Standing Orders referenced to or explained in this policy are available via the Council’s publication scheme.
6. The Council, its councillors and staff, cannot disclose information which is confidential, or where disclosure of information is prohibited by law. Some, but not all, of the relevant obligations that councillors are subject to are contained in the Council’s code of conduct, a copy of which is available on Swale Borough Council’s website.

### **Meetings**

7. The meetings of the Council, its committees and sub-committees, are open to the public unless they resolve that 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, or if Standing Orders for certain sub-committees do not permit attendance of the public. In accordance with its Standing Orders, persons may be required to leave a meeting of the Council, its committees, sub-committees and joint committees if their disorderly behaviour disrupts the business of the meeting.
8. Where meetings include time for public participation, the media may ask questions, subject to the Council’s Standing Orders (on who can ask questions).

9. The Council's Standing Orders incorporate guidelines on the photographing, recording or filming of meetings of the Council, its committees and sub-committees.
10. In advance of meetings of the Council, its committees, sub-committees and joint committees, newspapers, news agencies or organisations that collect news for sound and TV broadcast will be sent electronically copies of the agenda and necessary supporting papers. The accredited representatives of newspapers, news agencies or organisations that collect news for sound and TV broadcast shall be given reasonable facilities for taking their report of a meeting.

### **Interviews, statements and articles**

11. The media shall contact the Town Clerk if they want to receive any oral or written statement that represents the corporate position and views of the Council. Any such statement by the Town Clerk or officers of the Town Council will not represent the individual views of its councillors or staff held in their official capacity.
12. The media may contact individual councillors for their personal views without going via the Town Clerk. The Town Clerk, or officers of the Town Council in the Town Clerk's absence, may contact the media if the Council wants to give an interview, provide an oral or written statement to the media or contribute an article about its business, decisions and actions.
13. Councillors and staff must not misrepresent the corporate position and views of the Council, or damage the reputation of others in the Council, or the Council itself. Councillors must act in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct.