

Report to the Policy and Resources Committee

Subject: Implementation of ID Badges for Councillors and Staff

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to outline the rationale for introducing ID badges for Faversham Town Council staff and councillors and to establish clear guidelines for their use. Implementing ID badges will enhance professionalism, security, and community trust in council operations.

2. Rationale for ID Badges

2.1 Enhanced Identification and Professionalism

- **Public Recognition:** ID badges allow members of the public to easily identify council representatives, promoting transparency and accountability.
- **Council Representation:** Wearing ID badges reinforces a professional image, especially during community events or when visiting partner organisations.

2.2 Improved Security

- **Controlled Access:** ID badges help manage access to restricted areas, ensuring only authorised personnel enter council offices or facilities.
- **Safeguarding:** In events involving children or vulnerable adults, visible identification ensures the community can quickly verify the legitimacy of council staff and councillors.

2.3 Community Trust and Engagement

- **Transparency:** Clearly identifiable staff and councillors build trust and confidence within the community, showing a commitment to open and accessible governance.
- **Approachability:** Visible identification fosters an approachable environment, encouraging residents to engage more openly with council representatives.

3. Guidelines for ID Badge Usage

3.1 When to Wear ID Badges:

- **During Official Duties:**
All staff and councillors should wear their ID badges when performing official council duties, such as:

- Attending council or committee meetings
- Representing the council at public or community events
- Conducting site visits or inspections
- Working within council offices or facilities
- **Public Interactions:**
ID badges should always be worn when engaging with members of the public in an official capacity.

3.2 When Not to Wear ID Badges:

- **Private Events:**
Councillors and staff would not be required to wear ID badges during non-council-related private or social events.
- **Safety Concerns:**
In situations where wearing an ID badge could compromise personal safety (e.g., contentious meetings or sensitive investigations), staff and councillors may seek approval from the Town Clerk to forgo wearing their badge.
- **Casual or Informal Settings:**
During casual interactions outside of official duties, wearing an ID badge is not mandatory unless representing the council formally.
- **Political Events**
Councillors should not wear ID badges at political events, unless they are specifically representing the town council.

4. Implementation and Management

- **Issuance:** ID badges will be issued to all current and new staff members, councillors, and long-term volunteers.
- **Replacement:** Procedures will be in place for reporting lost or damaged badges, with replacements issued promptly.
- **Training:** Staff and councillors will receive brief training on the appropriate use of ID badges to ensure consistent compliance.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Implementing ID badges for Faversham Town Council staff and councillors will enhance transparency, security, and community engagement. Establishing clear guidelines ensures that badges are used effectively and appropriately.

Recommendations:

1. Approve the mandatory use of ID badges during official duties and public interactions.
2. Develop a clear process for exemption requests in cases of safety concerns.
3. Allocate a budget for the issuance and replacement of ID badges.

Prepared for the Policy and Resources Committee

2nd December 2024