

HEALEYFIELD PARISH COUNCIL



Correspondence Protocol

Adopted: 27th October 2022

Review Date: October 2022

Healeyfield Parish Council

Correspondence Protocol

Protocol for Dealing with E-mail, Correspondence and Verbal Comments from Residents

1 Letters to the Clerk

All resident letters to the Clerk will be added to the next agenda – in line with giving the appropriate notice and LGA 1972. This means that no correspondence received at a meeting, or after the agenda for that meeting has been published, will be discussed at that meeting but will be added to the next agenda.

2 Letters to Councillors

All resident letters to Councillors will be forwarded to the Clerk. Again, such cannot be discussed at a meeting unless already included on the agenda. Otherwise, they will be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

3 E-mails to the Clerk

With the increase in popularity of e-mail considerable amounts of the clerk's time is now being taken up dealing with resident e-mail correspondence.

3.1 Procedure

When a resident e-mail is received, the clerk will action it in one of the following ways:

- a. If it is a routine enquiry about a task the clerk is delegated to deal without consulting the Council (see 3.2 below) the clerk will acknowledge receipt of the e-mail, deal with the query and notify the sender within 14 days as to what action has been taken.
- b. If the e-mail is about an issue which is not one of the tasks delegated to the clerk, the clerk will acknowledge receipt of the e-mail and will notify the sender of the date of the meeting when it will be discussed.
 - i. The e-mail will also be forwarded on to all the parish councillors.
 - ii. The sender will be invited to attend the Public Participation time during the meeting to discuss his/her queries with the Council and to stay for the meeting to hear the Council's discussions.
 - iii. Any decisions made at the meeting will be included in the minutes which will be published on the Council's website within 28 days of the meeting.
- c. The Council will not respond to vexatious, abusive, or threatening e-mails.

3.2 Designated for action by the Clerk

Responsibility for the following matters has been delegated to the clerk:

- Reporting highway matters:
- Reporting potholes,
- Reporting blocked drains,
- Reporting broken road signs
- Requesting road sweeping,
- Reporting faulty streetlights.
- Rights of way: reporting problems with footpaths, faulty stiles etc.
- Obtaining information required by the Council.

4 E-mails to Councillors

All relevant resident emails to individual Councillors will be forwarded to the Clerk who will take the appropriate action as per the above.

5 Telephone calls and verbal comments to the Clerk or Individual Councillors

5.1 Calls / comments to the Clerk: Information only

The Clerk will report all relevant information at the next appropriate meeting.

5.2 Calls to the Clerk: Seeking information

The Clerk will answer all requests for information, if possible, at the time. If more complicated – the Clerk will ask that the request for information is put into writing – where it will then be subject to the FOI procedures and answered appropriately.

5.3 Calls / comments to Councillors

Councillors have a very relevant role in listening to local residents and also keeping them up to date with information. However, they should not feel intimidated in any way.

All Councillors can:

- Ask for an item to be added to the agenda for the next meeting – if they feel it is appropriate.
- Suggest to the resident that they put their comments / questions into writing and forward to the Clerk. In this way these will be added to the agenda for the next meeting (subject to notice etc as above) and the resident can attend the meeting and speak under public participation.