

# **Lackford Parish Council**

## **Protocol for Dealing with Correspondence**

All correspondence to the parish council should be addressed to the clerk. This will ensure that the matter is recorded and passed to the parish council for their attention at the next meeting.

All official correspondence from the parish council should be sent by the clerk in the name of the parish council. Correspondence from individual parish councillors should be avoided; however, there may be exceptional situations when it is appropriate for a parish councillor to issue correspondence in his/her own name. Such correspondence must be authorised by the parish council.

When an e-mail/correspondence is received the clerk will action it in one of the following ways:

- If it is a routine enquiry about a task the clerk is delegated to deal with without consulting the Council the clerk will acknowledge receipt of the e-mail, deal with the query and notify the sender within 20 working days as to what action has been taken.
- If an e-mail is received 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 as decisions can only be made by the full council at meetings. The e-mail will also be forwarded on to all the parish councillors.
- The sender will be invited to attend the public session to discuss his/her queries with the Council and to stay for the meeting to hear the Council's discussions
- 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. Individual responses to e-mails will not routinely be sent unless the Council feels it is appropriate in specific cases.
- Any e-mails sent to individual councillors will be forwarded to the clerk to be actioned following the procedure outlined in a - e above
- If a parishioner wishes a subject to be raised, and it is appropriate for discussion at a parish council meeting, then the clerk will have to be notified seven days before the publication of the agenda.
- The parish council will determine the response, if any, to correspondence received.
- The Council will not respond to vexatious, abusive, threatening, or unreasonable e-mails.
- The Parish Council reserves the right not to respond to any correspondents that are taking up a disproportionate amount of the clerk's time. This includes the repeated and/or obsessive pursuit of any matter where lengthy explanations of the Parish Council's actions, or stance have already been provided. The clerk will refer vexatious or persistent communications to the Parish Council who will decide if a response is required.

This document was approved by Lackford Parish Council at the meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2021.