



## WANSFORD PARISH COUNCIL

### Policy for Parish Council Letters, Emails, and Text Messages

This Policy forms part of Wansford Parish Council's Code of Conduct and applies to Councillors and the Clerk when communicating by letter, email, and text messages relating to parish council business. Recognition is given to the following risks in the use of unprofessional communications, as follows:

- Breach of Data Protection legislation
- Summons for presentation to tribunals/courts
- Disclosure under Freedom of Information requests
- Disenfranchise the public by conducting business remotely
- Non-compliance with democratic process

Wansford Parish Council and its Clerk aspire to uphold and promote the highest level of professionalism in all their communications, and agree to adhere to the following practices and **will not**:

- use language that could offend, discriminate or cause embarrassment
- make parish council decisions in its communications without the discussion, scrutiny and collective agreement of the parish council
- write about matters declared to be confidential
- infringe copyright
- use language that you would not want a third party to read
- make statement(s) which have potential to create legal liability to the Parish Council

Etiquette:

- will not write in capitals as this can be perceived as shouting
- Limit the use of exclamation marks as this can also be perceived as shouting
- use proper spelling, grammar & punctuation
- use appropriate terminology at the start and end of communications
- be polite and respectful
- the tone of communications must not 'bully' or 'harass'
- Not to send emails and text messages outside of normal business hours
- Respond to business requests within 24 hours of their receipt
- cc all emails to [clerk@wansford-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@wansford-pc.gov.uk)

**Wansford Parish Council agrees to review this policy on an annual basis as it is mindful that new and different modes of communication are being developed which may affect the information given above.**

May 2023