Exmouth Town Council
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Press Policy

Exmouth Town Council welcomes enquiries from the Press and Media and recognises its relationship with the Press helps communication with residents. The Council seeks to be as transparent as possible, cooperating at all times with the Press and using the opportunities of the Media to publicise the activities of the Council.

The Press are permitted to attend all meetings of the Council and its committees, unless excluded under the Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960. They are not, however, invited to attend informal Council meetings which are fact finding sessions only and are not scheduled official Council meetings.

1. Policy statement

The aim of the policy is to ensure that Exmouth Town Council is seen to communicate in a professional and objective manner and reflects the corporate view of the Council.

2. The scope of the policy

The Press Policy covers:-

a. Official Council Press Releases
b. Councillor Press correspondence
c. Freedom of Information Requests
d. Press Protocol

3. Policy

a) Official Council Press Releases

i) Official Council Press releases and statements will be prepared by the Town Clerk in consultation with other Members as required;

ii) The Town Clerk will act as the Council's Press Officer. Any official contact with the Media concerning the Council's policies, the decisions it makes and services it provides are to be initiated through the Town Clerk;

iii) Members who identify a Media opportunity should discuss this with the Town Clerk who will, in consultation with other Members as appropriate, decide how this will be followed up;

iv) If a Member or an employee receives an approach or enquiry from the Media about any matter relating to the Town Council, it should be referred to the Town Clerk.

b) Councillor Press Correspondence

i) Individual Councillors can make their own statements relating to local issues and this policy is not designed to prevent any Member expressing a personal opinion through the Media. Members must make it clear however, that any view expressed is their own personal view and should be recorded as such;

ii) Such releases, political or non-political, should bear no reference whatsoever to the Council or any Officer and must not use the Council logo. Neither the Council address, telephone number nor website should be included as a point of contact;

iii) Where a journalist wishes to confirm what was said by an individual Councillor during a Council meeting, they will be referred to the Town Clerk.

c) Freedom of Information Requests

i) All requests received under the Freedom of Information Act must be referred to the Town Clerk who will arrange for the request to satisfied in accordance with the legislation.

ii) Members should be aware that any Council-related information that they hold on personal devices can be the subject of a FOI request.

d) Press Protocol

i) The Town Clerk is responsible for issuing official Press releases on behalf of the Town Council;

ii) Official Press releases will not identify the political party or group affiliation, if any, of a Member(s) quoted in the release;

iii) When the Media seeks information on an issue that is, or likely to be, subject to legal proceedings then advice will be obtained from the Council's solicitor before any response is made;

iv) All Press releases and other materials are filed for reference by the Town Clerk.

v) During an election year, from the issue of the Notice of Election until the day following the election (Purdah), Officers will not normally issue Press releases;

It should be noted that whilst the Town Clerk is the Press Officer, the spokesperson for the Council shall ordinarily be the Mayor or in his/her absence, the Deputy Mayor.

Reaffirmed 18th May 2026
Review date: May 2027