



# **Windlesham Parish Council**

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## **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF WINDLESHAM PARISH COUNCIL'S COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE Held on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> August 2025 at 9.30am at Lightwater Library, 83A Guildford Road, Lightwater, GU18 5SB**

<b>Bagshot Cllrs</b>		<b>Lightwater Cllrs</b>		<b>Windlesham Cllrs</b>	
Willgoss	P	Malcaus-Cooper	P	Lewis	A
Wilson	-	Stevens	P		

**In attendance:** Joanna Whitfield –Clerk to the Council  
S Kiernan – Communications and Engagement Officer  
Cllr Turner – Lightwater Councillor

Cllr Malcaus Cooper took the Chair

P - present      A – apologies      PA – part of meeting      - no information  
S – Substitute      E- Ex-Officio

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		<b>Action</b>
<b>COMM/25/10</b>	<b>Apologies for absence</b>  Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Lewis.	
<b>COMM/25/11</b>	<b>Declarations of interest</b>  None	
<b>COMM/25/12</b>	<b>Public question time</b>  A question was raised by Cllr Turner, requesting that the Committee publish a statement correcting misinformation about the Parish Council, currently being circulated in Windlesham	
<b>COMM/25/13</b>	<b>Exclusion of the press and public.</b>  Agreed that the following items be dealt with after the public, including the press, have been excluded under S1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960:	

	<b>There were no items to be discussed in the confidential part of the meeting.</b>	
<b>COMM/25/14</b>	<p><b>To discuss Challenges and Solutions in Sharing Council Communications on Community Social Media Platforms</b></p> <p>Members discussed the challenges posed by the Council's reliance on third-party social media platforms to communicate with residents, particularly in the context of the ongoing Community Governance Review (CGR). Following a public question raised earlier in the meeting, which highlighted the circulation of misinformation within Windlesham, Members also considered how the Council could respond effectively to ensure that residents are equipped with accurate information, despite limitations on Council access to local social media groups.</p> <p>To address these concerns, Members received a summary of the alternative communication strategies currently being employed. These included the strategic boosting of a Facebook post relating to the CGR, which had reached 6,650 views and resulted in 95 link clicks to date — demonstrating a positive response.</p> <p>In addition, Members considered the potential benefits of establishing a presence on the Nextdoor platform. It was noted that this is used by a number of other local councils to engage with residents who may not use Facebook, and would serve to broaden the Council's digital reach.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. It was unanimously resolved to delegate authority to the Clerk, in conjunction with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Communications Committee, to establish a verified Nextdoor account for Windlesham Parish Council. This is to further broaden the Council's communication channels, particularly for residents not active on Facebook.</b></li> <li><b>2. It was resolved to delegate authority to the Clerk, in conjunction with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Communications Committee, to publish a fact-check news bulletin on the Parish Council's website and media pages. This will provide accurate information relating to the Council.</b></li> </ol> <p>Members noted public concerns raised in a Facebook discussion thread, which highlighted the risks of relying on third-party social media platforms for official Council communications. The thread called for the Council to consider how it engages with residents who are not digitally enabled.</p> <p>The Communications Officer informed Members that indicative costs had been obtained for a direct mailshot to all households within the Parish. In response, the Clerk advised Members to carefully consider the cost versus the potential benefit of this approach. It was highlighted that, given the timing, a mailshot would likely not be delivered until the latter stages of the current consultation period, which would significantly limit its effectiveness. While the importance of ensuring residents are well-informed during the Community</p>	<p><b>Clerk, Chair &amp; Vice Chair</b></p> <p><b>Clerk, Chair &amp; Vice Chair</b></p>

	<p>Governance Review consultation was acknowledged, Members were reminded that this is only the initial phase of a wider process. The Clerk emphasised the need to weigh the financial implications against the likely impact at this stage.</p> <p><b>3. It was resolved that, at this initial stage of the Community Governance Review consultation, the cost of a direct mailshot was disproportionate to the anticipated benefit. Instead, Members resolved to delegate authority to the Clerk, in conjunction with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Communications Committee, to produce and publish posters and leaflets for distribution in prominent public spaces throughout the villages. This activity is to be undertaken within the agreed communications budget. It was also resolved that the same information would be made available via the Parish Council's website and social media platforms to ensure consistent messaging and maximise public engagement across both digital and non-digital channels. The option of a direct mailshot will be reconsidered at a future meeting, should circumstances or the stage of consultation warrant wider outreach.</b></p> <p>Cllr Malcaus Cooper proposed the establishment of an e-newsletter for Windlesham Parish Council, including the creation of an online sign-up facility to build a subscriber database and broaden the Council's communications reach.</p> <p><b>4. It was resolved to proceed with the implementation of an e-newsletter and to set up a MailChimp account for this purpose, with any associated costs to be met from the existing marketing budget.</b></p>	<p>Clerk, Chair &amp; Vice Chair</p> <p>Comms Officer</p>
COMM/25/15	<p><b>Review and Amendment of the Communications Strategy and Media Policy</b></p> <p>Members were presented with a recommendation to amend the social media policy to remind members of the public that comments and feedback are welcome via social media; however, these will not be regarded as official correspondence, and the council is not obliged to respond to any such messages.</p> <p>Members discussed the importance of ensuring that this policy also applies to Councillors when interacting with or commenting on official Council posts, to maintain consistency and clarity in public communications.</p> <p><b>It was resolved to amend and adopt the wording presented to ensure it is clear that the policy applies equally to Councillors when engaging with Council social media content. See amended wording below:</b></p> <p><u>Status of Social Media Communications</u> The Council welcomes public engagement across a range of platforms; however, posts or messages from members of the public</p>	<p>Comms Officer</p>

via social media platforms (such as Facebook and Instagram) shall not be regarded as official correspondence.  
The Council is not obliged to respond to any such messages.  
Residents wishing to contact the Parish Council formally must do so by:

- Emailing the Parish Clerk at [clerk@windleshampc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@windleshampc.gov.uk)
- Submitting a written letter to:  
*The Council Office, The Avenue, Lightwater, GU18 5RG*
- Using the online contact form on the Council's official website:  
[www.windleshampc.gov.uk](http://www.windleshampc.gov.uk)

### **House Rules for Social Media Engagement**

All users (including Councillors) engaging with the Council via social media must comply with both the respective platform's Terms of Use and the following conditions:

- You are wholly responsible for any content you post, including shared material.
- Posts considered inappropriate by the Council may be removed in part or in full.
- The Council will report and remove any social media accounts misusing Windlesham Parish Council branding or imagery without permission.

The Council reserves the right to hide or remove posts, comments, or private messages that contain:

- Graphic, sensitive, or offensive imagery
- Abusive or obscene content
- Discriminatory language or conduct
- Misinformation, disinformation, or malinformation
- Off-topic or irrelevant comments
- Public mentions of Council staff by name
- Derogatory or accusatory remarks about individual Officers or Councillors
- Private or personal information about staff or Councillors irrelevant to their role
- Intellectual property infringement
- Content in breach of legal or regulatory obligations
- Spam, trolling, or persistent disruptive behaviour

Before any content is removed, the Council may take screenshots of the material and retain it in line with the Council's privacy policy to justify the moderation action.

Repeat violations may lead to the user being blocked or reported to the platform provider. A private warning message will typically be

	<p>issued before such action is taken, explaining the breach and potential next steps.</p> <p>The Council also reserves the right to challenge or correct inaccurate or misleading public information, including escalating complaints to the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO) where necessary.</p> <p>Users who witness a post they believe violates these rules are encouraged to report it directly through the platform's moderation tools.</p>	
<b>COMM/25/09</b>	<p><b>Communications Officer Update</b></p> <p><b>Nothing to report</b></p>	

**There being no further business, the meeting closed at 10:48**