

# BENTHAM TOWN COUNCIL

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## Website Policy and Procedure

### POLICY ADOPTED 7<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2022.

#### 1 Purpose

- 1.1 The main purpose of the website is to provide a platform for the Town Council to discharge its legislative duties in providing the relevant information to the community as set down in various Acts of Parliament.
- 1.2 As a secondary benefit, the website also creates a communication platform which is of benefit to parishioners and promotes their engagement.

#### 2 Aims

- 2.1 To enable the Town Council to meet its legislative duties and communicate the required information to the residents of the Parish. For example, this may include agendas, minutes, directory of council members, and any other relevant Parish Council documents.
- 2.2 To support the engagement of residents of the Parish with the Town Council. This may include providing contact details for Parishioners to raise concerns or questions with the Town Council, and help to provide a mechanism to facilitate surveys and/or consultations where appropriate.
- 2.3 Provision of information in a timely, accurate, fair, and objective manner.
- 2.4 Provision of information useful to residents of the Parish including available services and events within the Parish.
- 2.5 Promote the use of the website with Parishioners as a source of information and guidance to community activities, businesses and clubs in the Parish.

#### 3 Website content

- 3.1 It is not practical for all decisions regarding individual notices and items of content to be approved by the Parish Council. Therefore, this document sets out the day-to-day editorial activities of the website to be delegated to the Town Clerk and Website Managers, whilst providing a clear framework of what is acceptable and unacceptable. This may be reviewed by the Town Council from time to time.
- 3.2 The website will focus upon providing factual content.
- 3.3 The website will not publish opinions, except where these are the correctly approved opinions of the Town Council, or where these opinions form a part of Town Council business (for example as part of sharing views upon a consultation or planning application).
- 3.4 All content will be published by the Town Clerk and/or the Website Managers. There will be no open access ability for the public to directly publish content on the website.
- 3.5 If anyone outside the Town Council wishes to suggest content to be published, they should use the contact details available on the website.
- 3.6 In the interests of efficient and timely publication of information, the Town Clerk shall have delegated authority to publish content that fits one or more of the following criteria, and provided that the other parts of this policy and procedure allow the publication:
  - 3.6.1 Town Council documents which are approved or legally required for publication. An example of this may be agendas, minutes, register of councillors' interests.
  - 3.6.2 Any notice which is approved for publication on the Town Council noticeboard.

- 3.6.3 Any notice sent to the Town Council which is intended for public circulation and where publication is in the public interest (for example Police notices, road closures or formal consultations).
- 3.6.4 Details of any public event held within the Parish which is substantially operated on a not-for-profit or charitable basis. It is recognised that events that may be primarily of a not-for-profit or charity nature may contain peripheral commercial activities for example catering facilities at a charity event may be provided on a commercial basis. This should not prevent the inclusion of such events where this does not form a material part of the event.
- 3.6.5 Details of any clubs, societies or public services based within, or which primarily target residents of, the Parish.
- 3.6.6 Content which is likely to encourage usage of the website without materially impeding the website's primary purpose, nor causing any material harm – for example local news and weather feeds, or photographs of recent village events (copyright permitting).
- 3.7 The website will not carry "paid for" advertising nor publish notices which are primarily of a commercial nature without approval of the Town Council. However, the local nature of some businesses may warrant their inclusion on the website to support parishioners and the Parish in general, such as public service business i.e., Post Office.
- 3.8 Other content and/or functionality can be implemented as instructed by, and approved by the Town Council, on submission of a proposal as an agenda item by the Town Clerk.
- 3.9 The Town Council reserves the right to remove content and / or Town Clerk's access to the website without notice in certain circumstances but will normally give at least 1 months' notice should this become necessary.

#### **4 Website Links**

- 4.1 The website may contain links to other third-party websites and webpages where these fit one or more of the following criteria:
  - 4.1.1 Links that provide further information on an event, club, society, public service, or other permitted body within the website content policy.
  - 4.1.2 Links to mainstream news and weather sites covering the local area.
  - 4.1.3 Links to other local council, government, or government agency websites.
  - 4.1.4 Links approved by the Town Council for inclusion.

#### **5 Complaints process**

- 5.1 In the event of an objection that content does not comply with the policy, the Town Clerk will seek guidance as soon as reasonably practical from no fewer than two independent councillors as to whether either:
    - 5.1.1 The content concerned should remain in place and be reviewed at the next available Town Council meeting, OR
    - 5.1.2 The content concerned should be removed pending review at the next available Town Council meeting.
  - 5.2 The objector will be informed as soon as possible what action the Town Council has taken and will be referred to the Town Council complaints procedure.
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## **6 Website Procedure**

6.1 The procedures below have been developed from the policy above, and any changes to the policy may impact on the procedures and vice versa. Therefore, both should be read as one document and approved by the Town Council.

## **7 Website Access**

7.1 Access to the website will be provided to Website Managers via the Town Clerk, who will liaise with Creative Theory for logins and passwords.

7.2 Website Managers are appointed by the Town Council. All Website Managers must adhere to the council's adopted Website Policy and this procedure.

7.3 If a Website Manager fails to adhere, the Town Council will consider suspending or terminating their editorial access to the website.

## **8 Website build**

8.1 The following points should be adhered to when adding content:

8.1.1 Words should not be in capitals or underlined as it proves difficult for those with accessibility problems to access. Any other formatting should be kept to a minimum.

8.1.2 Privacy policy and contact details will be uploaded by the Town Clerk into the appropriate area of the website.

8.1.3 All documents must be held within the website itself.

8.1.4 Website Managers must ensure that content and images uploaded onto the website are not copyright protected. This is the sole responsibility of each individual website manager. Credit must be given to the owner if they agreed to the use of images or content.

8.1.5 All Website Managers should consider the use of images in content held within the main website, as overuse of images may slow the website down especially when using mobiles and tablets.

8.1.6 Creation of Homepages or Categories is the responsibility of Creative Theory and Web Managers should only use those provided by the administrator.

8.1.7 Retention of documents on website must be in line with the Town Councils Retention Policy and if not, a statement must be made on the website explaining the reasons of the variation.

## **9 Website Managers and Responsibilities**

9.1 The Website Managers will be the Town Clerk, a paid external Website Manager, and up to two nominated councillors.

9.2 The Town Clerk may add, remove and update items on the website.

9.3 All Web Managers may update items in all areas.