

Black Torrington Parish Council

Communications Policy

Aims:

To establish clear channels of communication between Black Torrington Parish Council and members of the local community.

To provide information on important matters affecting the community and to encourage comment from interested individuals and groups.

To represent, without bias, the interests of the whole community.

An individual councillor cannot respond to enquiries outside of Parish Council meetings other than to acknowledge such an enquiry. Neither can an individual councillor, nor the chairman, make a decision or respond on behalf of the Parish Council.

A contact list of parish council members is available on the Parish Council notice-board at the entrance to the Village Playing Field.

Means of Communication

Minutes of meetings of the Parish Council are published on the Parish Council website and displayed on the Parish notice board where the following items will also be displayed:

- The contact details of Parish Council members and the Parish Council clerk.
- Parish Council meeting dates.
- A copy of the agenda for the forthcoming meeting.
- Information important to the parish.

Parish Council Meetings

The Parish Council meets in the Methodist Chapel Schoolroom at 7.30pm generally on the first Wednesday of every other month:- *September 2nd, November 4th, January 6th, 2016, May 4th, March 2nd, July 6th*

The agenda for the meeting is posted on the notice-board and website a minimum of three working days before the meeting.

Public Participation is welcome before the start of every parish council meeting to enable members of the public to raise a matter of concern or to comment on an item on the agenda.

After the conclusion of the public participation session, members of the public are not permitted to contribute to further agenda items unless it is felt necessary to accept a contribution from a member of the public following a resolution by the council

Annual General Meeting of the Parish Council

This meeting will be held in May. It is in effect a normal parish council meeting except that item one on the agenda has to be 'The Election of the Chairman.'

The Annual Meeting of the Parish This is a meeting of the Parish and not the Parish Council. Seven clear days notice of the meeting will be given. The Annual Meeting of the Parish will usually be held on the same evening as the Annual General Meeting of the Parish Council. This is an opportunity for the organisations in the parish, such as the school, playing field, village hall, health centre and police to meet the public and give an update of their activities and plans.

Correspondence

Correspondence relating to the parish should be addressed to the Parish Council Clerk. This will ensure that the matter is recorded and passed to the Parish Council for their attention at the next meeting.

Correspondence to the Parish Council Clerk should be acknowledged within seven days of receipt. If email is used then an acknowledgment will be sent by email.

All correspondence and communication/documents must be received by the Clerk no later than 24 hours prior to a meeting. Exceptions to this rule are planning and other documents which require a response prior to the next meeting of the Parish Council and representations or presentations from the public & outside speakers regarding a planning issue.

If a parishioner wishes a subject to be raised, and it is appropriate for discussion at a Parish Council meeting, then the Parish Council Clerk must be notified seven days before the publication of the agenda.

The Parish Council will determine the response, if any, to correspondence received.

The Parish Council reserves the right to not respond to any correspondents that are taking up a disproportionate amount of the Parish Council Clerk's time.

Review

This Communication Policy to be reviewed annually.

Date approved.....

Signature of Chairman.....

