

# Moulsoe Parish Council Communications Policy

## Introduction

Each Parish Councillor has a duty to represent, without bias, the interests of the whole community.

They will always try and do their best and are available to help villagers with regard to matters relating to the Parish of Moulsoe.

Parish Councillors may be contacted via the Clerk or using their Parish Council email addresses.

It is the Parish Council's intention to meet the timescales detailed below but there could be occasions when this is not possible. When this happens the Parish Council will review their procedures and where necessary make changes to the policy or procedures.

## Aims

To establish clear, easy to use channels of communication between the Parish Council and parishioners, and vice versa.

To provide information on important matters in a timely manner so as to enable and encourage informed comment from interested individuals and groups.

## Parish Council Meetings

The Parish Council meets on the second Tuesday of every other month.

The Parish Council will normally meet in the Millennium Hall, Cranfield Road, Moulsoe from 8pm.

Public participation will be held from 8pm to enable discussion on agenda items.

Members of the public wishing to address the Council during the formal meeting or wishing to record the meeting are asked to make the Chairman aware of their intention before the meeting starts.

## Notice Boards

The following items will be displayed on the noticeboard.

- Parish Council meeting dates for the year
- Contact details for the Clerk
- The meeting agenda of Moulsoe Parish Council - which will be posted at least 3 working days in advance of each meeting
- Notices of village events
- Notices of events from other outside bodies/charities at the parish council's discretion

The information displayed on the Parish Notice Board will be kept up to date.

## Correspondence

All correspondence relating to the Parish should be addressed to the Parish Clerk in the first instance via email at [parish.clerk@moulsoeparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:parish.clerk@moulsoeparishcouncil.gov.uk). This will ensure that the matter is recorded and passed to the relevant person or organisation as soon as practically possible. However, all Parish Councillors have their own Council email addresses which have the format [firstname.lastname@moulsoeparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:firstname.lastname@moulsoeparishcouncil.gov.uk).

The Clerk is responsible for dealing with email received and passing on anything relevant to Councillors or external agencies for information and/or action. All communications on behalf of the Council will usually come from the Clerk, and/or otherwise will always be copied to the Clerk. All new email requiring data to be passed on may be followed up with a data consent request before action is taken with that correspondence. Individual Councillors are at liberty to communicate directly with villagers in relation to their own personal views, if appropriate, with a copy to the Clerk.

It is important to note that any emails sent to Moulsoe Parish Council email addresses will be subject to The Freedom of Information Act requirements. These procedures will ensure that a complete and proper record of all correspondence is kept.

It is imperative that all correspondents never forward personal information on to other people or groups outside the Council, this includes names, addresses, email, IP addresses and cookie identifiers.

All correspondence to the Parish Clerk will be acknowledged within one week of receipt if possible. If email is used, then an acknowledgment will be sent via email.

Councillors will be notified of correspondence, but the addressee will not be named on minutes of meetings unless requested. Anonymous correspondence in any form will be recorded as received but not responded to.

Email should be thought of in the same way as a letter. A subject line, the sender's name and the content should be in the main body of the email, not as an attachment.

Attachments will not be opened unless the Clerk has prior knowledge of the subject. The Council regrets that, for reasons of computer security and virus protection, anonymous emails and those with no subject in the title will not be opened or actioned.

A parishioner may raise any issue directly with the Parish Clerk or any Councillor. If a satisfactory answer cannot be given immediately, the issue may be placed on the agenda for the attention of the full Council.

The Clerk will acknowledge all Freedom of Information requests within seven working days and will reply fully within 20 working days of receipt of the request. If this is not possible, a further holding letter/email will be sent with an expected completion date.

## Website

The Parish Clerk will arrange for the agenda and associated papers to be posted on the Moulsoe Parish Council website ([www.moulsoeparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.moulsoeparishcouncil.gov.uk)) at least three clear

days before the meeting and for the draft Minutes to be posted as soon as possible after the meeting.

The Parish Clerk is the Webmaster for the Parish Council website.

The Parish Clerk will ensure that the Parish Council email address is publicised.

### **Social Media**

The use of social media does not replace existing forms of communication but is used to enhance communication with a wider range of the population.

A full social media policy has been adopted.

### **Annual Parish Meeting**

The Annual Parish Meeting is convened by the Chairman of the Parish Council and is generally held between 1 March and 1 June each year to provide parishioners with a summary of the activities of the Parish Council and other village groups over the previous year and the opportunity to debate local issues and celebrate local events and activities.