

Abbotskerswell Parish Council Communications Advisory Group

Terms of reference

Abbotskerswell Parish – comprises Abbotskerswell village and the hamlets of Stoneyhill, The Priory, Two Mile Oak, Whiddon, including dwellings and businesses in the countryside but within the Parish Boundary.

Objective:

- The objective is to link people and places and to provide open and transparent information about the Parish and its people

Strategy:

- Covers website, social media, press relations and any non statutory external communications for the PC
- The Communications Advisory Group has been established to advise Abbotskerswell Parish Council (APC) on the content and style of its website and social media communications and the infrastructure within which these will be delivered.
- The group aims to ensure that there are transparent and consistent communications between the Parish Council and the residents of Abbotskerswell and also with the groups, organisations and other bodies with whom we need to relate
- Must ensure compliance with transparency requirements set out in the ICO document Parish Council Information Guide in <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/local-authority/>

Membership:

- Membership of the Group is open to Parish Councillors, the Parish Clerk and any other member of the public who has the capability of adding to the skill set for the benefit of Abbotskerswell and its residents
- The Group should have a normal operating membership of three as a minimum and a representative of two would be considered a quorum
- Casting vote with the most senior councillor

Accountability:

Accountability of the Group will be to the Parish Council.

Working methods:

Discreet responsibilities will normally be allocated to members for the delivery and development of areas of work but issues of substance requiring recommendation to APC shall be brought for discussion and endorsement to the Group.

The senior responsible person will involve all members of the group on progress of issues that are being dealt with.

Other people may be required to put input into the website and other media. As well as there being a substantial disclaimer in respect of non Parish Council input, there will be training provided and supervision as well as moderation over this input by members of this group.

Long term management will include annual (and more frequent if necessary) formal reviews of content and use of media as well as reports to PC.

It is conceivable that there might be an overly contentious issue to be managed and a Sub Group may be set up to manage this issue.

Specific working methods are as follows;

(1) Website delivery

- a. To identify the best strategy for enhancing and improving communication delivery within the parish and making appropriate recommendations to the Group
- b. To develop the new web site to meet the needs of APC and those associated organisations that the Council may decide to provide links to and or facilities for.
- c. To manage the administration of the day to day use of the site and establish and maintain secure protocols for access, including reporting where necessary
- d. To keep the website updated on matters relating to APC and the parish including local news
- e. To seek instructions from APC on messages that are not otherwise published elsewhere by APC or other Parish Groups
- f. To co-ordinate the messages with AbbTalk and with other external communications such as with the press

(2) Social networking

- a. To give advice and guidance to APC in all matters relating to social media including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn
- b. To develop relevant social networking media and co-ordinate the messages consistently with the website
- c. To keep the social networks updated on matters relating to APC and the parish including local news
- d. To seek instructions from APC on messages that are not otherwise published elsewhere by APC or other Parish Groups
- e. To co-ordinate the messages with the website, AbbTalk and with other external communications such as with the press
- f. No social media comments on parish matters to be made without the express agreement of the PC Chair or Deputy Chair or as otherwise authorised.
- g. Any independent comment must be clearly stated they are the view of the individual only.

(3) Other External Communications

- a. No press communications are to be made without the express agreement of the PC Chair or Deputy Chair or as otherwise authorised.
- b. Any independent comment must be clearly stated as the view of the individual only.

Meetings

- Meetings will be held as required to progress the work of the Group, with a minimum of one annual review.
- The agenda will focus on the report to the Council meeting and progress being made to deliver the role and aims of the group
- New topics maybe raised by shared Email notification
- It is intended that meeting papers will be electronic and issued via Email
- Meetings will consist of Group members and invited “experts” as needed

Terms of reference agreed: (next PC meeting) To be reviewed October 2016 and annually thereafter.

Last amended 12 October 2015