

Meeting	Full Council
Date	23 rd February 2021
Report Title	Media Policy Reminders
Agenda Reference	11.2
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Background

On Thursday May 6th May 2021, there are Swindon Ward Borough Elections, PCC Elections and potentially a Parish Councillor By-Election in half the Parish (Haydon End). The period of Purdah¹ starts 6 weeks before the election on Friday 26th March 2021.

Item 1

Once we enter the Purdah period, it is important that this Council, its employees, and Councillors do not engage in activities or publicity that could be seen as influencing the outcome of the election.

This does not prevent a Councillor from expressing their views, as long as they are clear that they are acting in a personal capacity.

Item 2

We all have different roles in our lives; with regard to the Parish, and role of Parish Councillor, it is important that the lines are not blurred between the role of private individual, Parish Councillor and in some cases Borough Councillor. The role of Parish Councillor should not be used to promote personal activities or Borough Council activities.

Emails should not be used for non-parish correspondence. And email signatures should not include links to non-Parish websites and Facebook pages.

Item 3

Councillors are reminded that, ANY press releases in which you are described as a Parish Councillor and/or describe your work as a Parish Councillor must be distributed by the Clerk, to ensure they are factually correct and are a true representation of the Parish Council position of any matter. (NOTE: rules are slightly different when all Parish Councillors are up for election)

Item 4

If a resident's query needs referring to the Borough Council, and you are inclined to included Borough Councillor details, all three Councillors in a ward should be

¹ Purdah - The pre-election period, previously known as 'purdah', describes the period of time immediately before elections or referendums when specific restrictions on communications activity are in place. The term 'heightened sensitivity' is also used.



referenced, not just one. As Parish Councillors we should not be seen to be promoting a specific Borough Councillor.

NOTE: The current media policy will be reviewed at the next Community Development Working Party Meeting in March to incorporate additional social media guidelines.

Local Government Association Guide

The [Local Government Association has also issued a short guide to publicity](#) during the pre-election period which should be read and observed by local authorities. And published [Frequently Asked Questions](#).