

PRESS STRATEGY FOR THE TOWN COUNCIL

1. OBJECTIVE

The objective of our press strategy is to increase the perception amongst the local public of Godalming Town Council as a proactive, effective organisation that represents the interests of the local population.

2. PROVIDING INFORMATION

At each committee call-over, the Committee Chair and Town Clerk will identify those items that they consider likely to be of interest to the press and will ensure a draft press release about each item is prepared. As soon as practical following the committee meeting the draft press release will be amended as required to reflect the outcomes of the agenda item and the final press release will be distributed to local media and other interested organisations. .

3. RESPONDING

Although the Town Council does inform the local media organisations that, if they are publishing anything about the Council originating from another source, the Town Clerk would expect to be contacted and given the opportunity to make a statement, changes of personnel within organisations means that this does not always happen. If the Town Council is not contacted, a letter of complaint (not for publication) should normally be sent to the Editor and a letter making the Council's comment sent for publication, to appear in the next issue. The decision as to whether the Council should send one or both of the letter described will be made by the Town Clerk in consultation with the Mayor and the Leader of the Council

4. CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY

Where there is any media comment or any letters published in the local press that may merit a response from the Council, it will be the responsibility of the Leader of the Council, in consultation with the Town Clerk, to produce a response. The Mayor, Leader of the Council and Town Clerk, or other specifically delegated Councillors, are the only individuals who should act as a spokesperson for the Council. Councillors are, of course, free to express opinions to the media provided they make it clear the capacity in which they are speaking or writing.

If press comment or a published letter constitutes a comment or attack on an individual councillor, that councillor has the right to respond, although the individual is always encouraged to seek advice from the Town Clerk or relevant committee chairman.

5. SUPPORTING POLICIES AND GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS

- Acceptable Use of Social Media
- Acceptable Use of IT Facilities
- Communications Policy
- Freedom of Information - Publication Scheme
- GDPR – Privacy Notice