

DRAFT PRESS/MEDIA POLICY

Kirkbymoorside Town Council welcomes enquiries from the Press & Media and recognises that this facilitates a key line of communication with the residents which is of tantamount importance.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that the Town Council is seen to communicate in a professional and objective manner.

The Council's approach to the media should be:

- Open and honest
- Proactive
- Responsive and timely

There are two types of press release:

Official Council Releases

An official Council release is made on behalf of the Council as a whole, this will be written and issued by the Town Clerk in accordance with the minute of the meeting at which the matter was agreed. It is non-party political and may include a quote from Councillor(s).

The following protocol applies:

- All official Council press releases are to be issued on a template that includes the Town Council logo.
- In the years when elections occur, during periods from the issue of the Notice of Election until the day of the Election, no releases will be issued quoting Council Members. During this time any quotes will be from the Town Clerk.

Councillor Releases

Councillor's press releases are personal and are written and issued by the Councillor responsible. When speaking to or submitting written communication to the media, unless a Councillor has been specifically authorised by the council to make representation on a particular issue, Councillors should make it clear that it is their personal view and ask that it be clearly reported as such. This release may or may not be political and should not include reference to the Town Council office as a point of contact. Copies of intended releases, especially those of a factual nature, should be provided to the Town Clerk. Council Members are solely responsible for the writing and distribution of all councillor press releases and any Editors Letters to the media.

Should the Council receive a Freedom of Information request on a topic on which there is correspondence (email or written) from or with Members, normally that correspondence would have to be disclosed, unless it was exempt. The fact that the disclosure of the correspondence may prove embarrassing would not, of itself, prevent disclosure. In addition, care should be taken when processing personal data.

The Data Protection Act 1998 prevents the use of personal information other than for the purposes for which it was supplied. Members should bear this in mind when using any personal data which may be supplied to them by their constituents.