

NAVENBY WITH SKINNAND PARISH COUNCIL
SOCIAL MEDIA & ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Adopted: January 2026

Review: May 2026

Introduction

1. The use of digital and social media and electronic communication enables Navenby with Skinnand Parish Council to interact in a way that improves the communications both within the Council and between the Council and the people, businesses and agencies it works with and serves. Navenby with Skinnand Parish Council has a Website and Facebook page and uses email to communicate. The Council will always try to use the most effective channel for its communications. Over time the Council may add to the channels of communication that it uses as it seeks to improve and expand the services it delivers. When these changes occur, the Policy will be updated to reflect the new arrangements. The Council Facebook page intends to provide information and updates regarding activities and opportunities within our parish and promote our community positively.

General Principles

2. Communications from the Council will meet the following criteria:
- a. Be civil, tasteful and relevant.
 - b. Not contain content that is knowingly unlawful, libellous, harassing, defamatory, abusive, threatening, harmful, obscene, profane, sexually orientated or racially offensive.
 - c. Not contain content knowingly copied from elsewhere, for which we do not own the copyright.
 - d. Not contain any personal information.
 - e. If it is official Council business, it will be moderated by either the Chair/Vice Chair of the Council or the Clerk to the Council.
 - f. Social media will not be used for the dissemination of any political advertising.
3. In order to ensure that all discussions on the Council page are productive, respectful and consistent with the Council's aims and objectives, we ask you to follow these guidelines:
- a. Be considerate and respectful of others. Vulgarity, threats or abuse of language will not be tolerated.

- b. Differing opinions and discussion of diverse ideas are encouraged, but personal attacks on anyone, including the Council members or staff, will not be permitted.
- c. Share freely and be generous with official Council posts but be aware of copyright laws; be accurate and give credit where credit is due.
- d. Stay on topic.
- e. Refrain from using the Council's Facebook page for commercial purposes or to advertise market or sell products.

4. The Council's Facebook site is not monitored 24/7 and we will not always be able to reply individually to all messages or comments received. However, we will endeavour to ensure that any emerging themes or helpful suggestions are passed to the relevant people or authorities. Please do not include personal/private information in your social media posts to us.

5. Sending a message/post via Facebook will not be considered as contacting the Council for official purposes and we will not be obliged to monitor or respond to requests for information through these channels. Instead, please make direct contact with the Clerk and/or members of the Council by emailing.

6. We retain the right to remove comments or content that includes:

- a. Obscene or racist content.
- b. Personal attacks, insults, or threatening language.
- c. Potentially libellous statements.
- d. Plagiarised material; any material in violation of any laws; including copyright.
- e. Private, personal information published without consent.
- f. Information or links unrelated to the content of the forum.
- g. Commercial promotions or spam.
- h. Alleges a breach of Council policy or the law.

7. The Council's response to any communication received not meeting the above criteria will be to either ignore, inform the sender of our policy or send a brief response as appropriate. This will be at the Council's discretion based on the message received, given our limited resources available. Any information posted on the Facebook page not in line with the above criteria will be removed as quickly and as practically as possible. Repeat offenders will be blocked from the Facebook page. The Council may post a statement that 'A post breaching the Council's Social Media Policy has been removed'. If the post alleges a breach of a Council's policy or the

law, the person who posted it will be asked to submit a formal complaint to the Council or report the matter to the Police as soon as possible to allow due process.

Website

8. Where necessary, we may direct those contacting us to our website to see the required information, or we may forward the question to one of our Councillors for consideration and response. We may not respond to every comment we receive particularly if we are experiencing a heavy workload.

9. The Council may, at its discretion, allow and enable approved local groups to have and maintain a presence on its website for the purpose of presenting information about the group's activities. The local group would be responsible for maintaining the content and ensuring that it meets the Council's 'rules and expectation' for the website. The Council reserves the right to remove any or all a local group's information from the website if it feels that the content does not meet the Council's 'rules and expectation' for its website. Where content on the website is maintained by a local group it should be clearly marked that such content is not the direct responsibility of the Council.

Email

10. The Clerk to the Council has an email address: office@navenbypc.org.uk The email account is monitored during office hours, Monday to Thursday, and we aim to reply to all email questions as soon as we can. The Clerk is responsible for dealing with email received and passing on to members 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.

11. All new emails requiring data to be passed on to an agency or organisation other than Navenby Parish Council, will be followed up with a data consent form for completion before action is taken with that correspondence.

12. Individual Councillors are at liberty to communicate directly with parishioners in relation to their own personal views if appropriate, copied to the Clerk. Any emails copied to the Clerk become official and will be subject to The Freedom of Information Act.

13. These procedures ensure that a complete and proper record of all correspondence is kept and that personal information is not passed on to other people or groups outside the Council (including names, addresses, email, IP addresses and cookie identifiers) without proper consent.

SMS (texting) and Video Conferencing (e.g. Skype)

14. Councillors and the Clerk may use SMS and Video Conferencing as convenient ways to communicate at times. All are reminded that this policy also applies to such messages and the use of video conferencing.

Internal communication and access to information within the Council

15. The Council is continually looking at ways to improve its working, and the use of social media and electronic communications is a major factor in delivering improvement. Councillors are expected to abide by the Code of Conduct and the Data Protection Act in all their work on behalf of the Council.

16. As more information becomes available at the press of a button, it is vital that all information is treated sensitively and securely. Councillors are expected to maintain an awareness of the confidentiality of information that they have access to and not to share confidential information with anyone. Failure to properly observe confidentiality may be a breach of the Council's Code of Conduct and will be dealt with through its prescribed procedures (at the extreme it may also involve a criminal investigation).

17. Councillors should also be careful only to cc essential recipients on emails i.e. to avoid use the 'Reply to All' option if at all possible but, of course, copying in those who need to know and ensuring that unnecessary email trails have been removed.