



# Press and Media Policy

**February 2026**

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Press and Media Policy 2026

Next review: January 2028

### **1. Official Council Releases**

An official Town Council release is made on behalf of the Town Council as a whole, this will be written and issued by the Town Clerk. It is non-party political and includes a quote from the relevant Town Councillor(s). This is usually the Mayor or Committee Chairman.

### **2. Councillor Press Releases**

Town Councillor's press releases are personal and are written and issued by the Town Councillor responsible. This release may or may not be political and should not include the name of a Town Council Officer, or a Town Council telephone number as a point of contact. It would be beneficial for copies of intended releases, especially those of a factual nature, to be provided to the Town Clerk. Councillors seeking advice can either contact the Town Clerk or Deputy Clerk.

### **3. Press Release Protocol**

Spilsby Town Council welcomes enquiries from the Press and Media, and recognises that the relationship with the press helps us communicate with residents. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Members Code of Conduct.

The Town Council's approach to the media should be:

- Open and honest
- Proactive
- Responsive and timely

All official Town Council press releases will include a quotation from the relevant Town Councillor. In some circumstances, it may be appropriate to also include the District Councillor or other relevant Councillor promoting the scheme.

In line with service standards all official Town Council press releases are to be issued on a template provided by the Town Clerk. This template includes the Town Council logo.

Official press releases will not identify the political party or group affiliation of any Member(s) quoted in the release.

The Town Clerk is the first line of decision making in terms of what is newsworthy for official press releases, and shall make the final decision on whether a press release shall be issued, unless otherwise directed by the Town Council or Committee.

In the years when elections occur, during periods from the issue of the Notice of Election until the day of the Election, Officers will issue no releases quoting Town Council Members. During this time any quotes will be from Officers.

The role of Officers is to advise and provide support and advice to Town Council members in their communication activities.

Town Council Members are solely responsible for the writing and distribution of all councillor press releases and any Editors Letters to the media.

Town Council Member releases must not use the Town Council's logo, or use the Town Council or an Officer as a point of contact.

Officers and Town Council Members must act reasonably and responsibly.

Town Council Members are reminded that they must not misuse Town Council resources for political or other inappropriate purposes. 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.

In general, the Town Clerk will be responsible for interpretation of the Protocol.

#### **4. Speaking to the Media**

Unless a Town Councillor has been specifically authorised by the Town Council to speak to the media on a particular issue, Town Councillors who are asked for comment by the press should make it clear that it is a personal view and ask that it be clearly reported as their personal view.

When speaking to members of the public, unless a Town Councillor is absolutely certain that they are reporting the view of the Town Council, they must make it clear that they are expressing a personal view.

The information given will be factual and accurate and any comments will be non-party political and represent the agreed view of the council. If the Council has not taken an agreed view of the matter concerned, the press will be directed to a relevant Town Councillor for a personal comment.