📌 Parish Council Groups – Guidelines for Respectful and Effective Communication 📌

Welcome to this parish council group. It is intended to be used as a communication tool for council related business. We ask all members to follow these guidelines to ensure a respectful, professional, and constructive environment. Participation in the group is subject to applicable council policies including the social media policy and civility and respect pledge[1] .

✅ Be Civil and Respectful
- Treat all members with courtesy and respect.
- Disagreements are natural, but personal attacks, offensive language, and inappropriate comments/content will not be tolerated.

✅ Stay on Topic
- Keep discussions relevant to the group's purpose.
- If a conversation becomes off-topic, please take it to private messages.
- The group is not a forum for complaints—please direct concerns and complaints through the proper council channels.

✅ Messaging Etiquette
- Be mindful of the time when sending messages—avoid late-night, very early, and weekend messages unless urgent.
- There is no expectation of an immediate response, as members may not always be available.
- If a matter requires more detailed discussion, consider arranging a meeting rather than using the group chat.

✅ Use Professional and Clear Communication
- Messages can be subject to public record, Freedom of Information Requests (FOI) and Subject Access Requests (SARS).

- Do not share confidential information.

- Avoid excessive use of emojis, GIFs, or informal language in formal groups.

✅ Moderation and Compliance
- The council has signed up to the civility and respect pledge; It agrees to treat everyone with courtesy and respect and asks for the same in return. As an employer the council has a duty of care to protect staff.

To protect users and the council, messages or members who breach these guidelines may be removed from the group and reported.

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[1] *Note: Further complementary information about the use of social media is available in the Social Media Civility and Respect Guide and Policy Supplement, Civility and Respect Project.*