

Laverstock & Ford Parish Council

Communications & Community Engagement Working Group

Minutes

Meeting Date: 15th September 2026

Time: 13:00

Location: Cllr Estelle Williams Home Address

Attendance & Apologies

Attendees:

- Liz Holland
- Estelle Williams
- Bethany Coowar

Apologies:

- Lainey Baker
- Kevin Lynn

Setting Meeting Dates

Councillors objected to the suggestion of annualising the C&CE Working Group calendar due to logistical reasons relating to the size and function of the Working Group.

Updates on Actions

Communications Policy:

Councillors reviewed and discussed the comments and proposed amendments within the draft Communications Policy. The discussion also considered the wider accessibility of the councillor role and opportunities to support and encourage future councillor recruitment.

The Working Group agreed the final draft of the Communications Policy for submission to **Full Council on Monday 21 September 2026.**

It was noted that the policy intentionally uses the term '**should**' in relation to councillor behaviour. Councillors agreed that this wording reflects recommended good practice rather than a mandatory requirement and should remain distinct from '**must**'. It was agreed that this approach would be raised at Full Council for wider discussion.

ACTIONS:

- Communications Policy to be added to the agenda for the Full Council meeting on Monday 21st September

Councillor Recruitment:

Discussion of the Communications Policy highlighted an opportunity to review and potentially expand the current **Councillor Induction Pack**. Members discussed the importance of ensuring information about the councillor role is clear and accessible, with

the aim of removing potential barriers to recruitment while also setting appropriate expectations around councillor engagement and participation once in post.

Distribution of the Parish Newsletter:

Councillors discussed the impact of volunteer sickness or unavailability on the timely distribution of the Parish Newsletter. The importance of notifying the Council of any issues as soon as possible was noted, particularly due to the inclusion of time-sensitive information within each edition.

The Working Group also considered the staff time currently required to manually batch and prepare newsletters for distribution across the different areas of the parish. It was agreed that the Council should explore with the printer whether newsletters could be **pre-counted, batched and packed by delivery area** as part of the printing and packing process, with the aim of improving efficiency.

ACTIONS:

- EW to liaise with Richard to ensure newsletter delivery volunteers are aware of the process for reporting sickness or any other circumstances that may prevent them from completing their delivery round.
- BC to liaise with Blackmore Printers to explore the possibility of pre-counting and packing newsletter quantities to meet the requirements of each delivery area.

Additional Points for Discussion

Community Garden Initiative:

Councillors discussed the value of this asset and the potential for links with The Pantry in Old Sarum. At this time this is not something they can support but have an interest in. As an underused facility within the community, BC intends to write an article for the November/December issue of the Parish Newsletter to raise awareness within the community.

Retrospective update: The Parish Clerk subsequently confirmed that Karen Linaker and David Osper are working towards establishing a community group to lead the Garden. It was therefore requested that the proposed newsletter article be held until further clarity is available on the development and direction of the project.

Community Libraries:

Cllr Estelle referred to a recent discussion with Cllr Ian regarding the community libraries within the parish. Councillors discussed the potential for the Parish Council to take greater responsibility for their ongoing maintenance and repair, including the possibility of **asset tagging** the libraries to support their future management and upkeep.

ACTIONS:

- Estelle to email the Full Council and data gather on assets currently present

Date of Next Meeting

Not discussed. To be organised by WG.