LAVERSTOCK AND FORD PARISH COUNCIL
DEVELOPER ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Purpose/Principles	To set clear guidelines to potential developers seeking to engage with the Parish Council
Scope	Employees, Councillors, Public
Date adopted:	October 19, 2026
Minute Reference:	PC26.129(a)
Previous versions (Dates):	PC23.025 (February 2023)
Next review:	November 2030
Policy owner:	Finance and General Purposes Committee
Supersedes:	PC23.025

1. Introduction

Laverstock & Ford Parish Council recognises that engagement between developers, landowners, planning agents and the Council can be beneficial in helping all parties understand local issues, community aspirations and planning considerations at an early stage.

The Council welcomes constructive engagement while recognising that it has a statutory role in commenting on planning applications and must do so in an open, transparent and impartial manner.

This Policy sets out the arrangements that will apply where developers, landowners or their representatives seek to engage with the Council regarding existing or potential development proposals within the parish.

Nothing in this Policy shall prejudice the Council's consideration of any future planning application.

2. Planning context

Developers are encouraged to familiarise themselves with:

- The adopted planning policies of Wiltshire Council.
- Emerging planning policy documents and consultations.
- The Made Laverstock & Ford Neighbourhood Plan.
- Any other relevant national, regional or local planning guidance.

Developers should also have regard to local community priorities and the distinctive character of the parish.

3. Community engagement

The Council strongly encourages developers to engage with residents, community organisations and other stakeholders at the earliest practicable opportunity.

Meaningful community engagement undertaken before proposals are finalised can assist in identifying local issues, concerns and opportunities and may help shape better development outcomes.

Such engagement does not imply support for a proposal by the Parish Council.

4. Provision of information

Developers seeking engagement with the Council should provide sufficient information in writing or electronic form to enable Councillors and Officers to understand the nature and scope of the proposal.

This information should normally include:

- The location of the site.
- Details of the proposed development.
- Plans, drawings or site layouts, where available.
- Timescales for preparation and submission of any planning application.
- Details of any public consultation already undertaken or proposed.

5. Transparency and confidentiality

The Council is committed to openness and transparency in accordance with relevant legislation and good governance principles.

Developers should be aware that:

- Information provided to the Council may be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or Environmental Information Regulations.
- Agendas, reports and minutes of Council meetings are placed in the public domain unless legally exempt.
- Information received may be circulated to Councillors as necessary to enable the Council to undertake its functions.

Where commercially sensitive information is submitted, developers should clearly identify the reasons why confidentiality is requested. Any such request will be considered by the Council but cannot be guaranteed.

6. Meetings with developers

Requests for meetings with Councillors shall be made through or by the Parish Clerk or other appropriate officer, if the Clerk is unavailable.

The Parish Clerk, or another appropriate officer, shall normally attend meetings between developers and Councillors.

A written note or record of any meeting shall be maintained.

Where individual Councillors are approached directly by developers, they should:

- Avoid expressing a concluded view on the merits of a proposal.
- Make clear that they cannot predetermine the Council's response.
- Notify the Parish Clerk of any discussions relating to development proposals.

Attendance at meetings or discussions shall not imply support for any proposal.

7. Presentations to the council

Developers may be invited to address a meeting of the Council or an appropriate committee or working group where this is considered beneficial.

Any such presentation:

- Shall take place in accordance with the Council's adopted arrangements for public participation and meeting management.
- Shall not constitute an endorsement of the proposal.
- Shall not prevent members of the public or other interested parties from expressing alternative views.

The Council reserves the right to determine whether such opportunities will be offered.

8. Planning obligations and community infrastructure

The Council recognises that discussions may arise regarding community infrastructure, public open space, community facilities, highways improvements, Section 106 obligations, Community Infrastructure Levy matters or other potential planning benefits.

Participation in such discussions shall not:

- Constitute support for a development proposal.
- Create any expectation that the Council will support a future planning application.
- Prejudice the Council's consideration of any subsequent planning consultation.

Any views expressed shall be treated as preliminary unless formally adopted by the Council at a properly convened meeting.

9. Role of Councillors

Councillors must comply with:

- The Council's adopted Code of Conduct.
- Relevant legislation relating to standards in public life.
- The principles of openness, accountability, integrity and impartiality.

Councillors should avoid situations that could give rise to an actual or perceived conflict of interest.

Members should remain mindful of the need to retain an open mind until any planning application has been formally submitted and considered.

10. Gifts and hospitality

The Council operates an approach of openness regarding gifts and hospitality.

Councillors and officers shall not seek nor accept gifts, hospitality or other benefits that could reasonably be perceived as influencing, or attempting to influence, their role in relation to planning matters.

Any offers of gifts or hospitality shall be dealt with in accordance with the Council's adopted policies and procedures.

11. Review

This Policy shall be reviewed periodically by the Council, or sooner if required by changes in legislation, national policy or local circumstances.

== POLICY ENDS ==