BARTESTREE with LUGWARDINE GROUP PARISH COUNCIL

WEBSITE POLICY

Adopted by the Parish Council
at a Meeting on 8th May 2018

This policy covers the management of the Bartestree with Lugwardine Group Parish Council Website, in particular: -

- The scope of the website.
- Management of the website, roles of the Website Working Party, the Webmaster and the Parish Clerk.
- Criteria and procedures for making changes or additions to the Website.

Definitions

Parish	-	Bartestree with Lugwardine
Parish Clerk	-	Parish Clerk to Bartestree with Lugwardine Group Parish Council
Council	-	Bartestree with Lugwardine Group Parish Council
Councillor	-	Councillor on Bartestree with Lugwardine Group Parish Council
Website	-	Bartestree with Lugwardine Group Parish Council Website
Webmaster	-	Person who works directly on the website
Working Party	-	Website Working Party on Bartestree with Lugwardine Group Parish Council
Archive or Archival Material		
	-	Material that is a record of Parish Council business, e.g. meetings, reports, surveys, plans or correspondence referred to in the Minutes, Official correspondence received or sent out by the Parish Council.

1. Website Hosting Arrangements

1.1   The Council is committed to operating a website hosted by a third party provider, having no other connection with the Bartestree with Lugwardine Group Parish Council. The present host is a company who provides website hosting services to other local authorities. The current system is a 'Content Management System' where the Council itself has direct control of day-to-day editing, updating and maintenance.

2. Who determines what should be on the Website

2.1   Subject only to the requirements of the law, the Council has the right to determine what should or should not be included on the Website.

3. What the Website should contain

3.1   The Website shall contain material that arises from Council business such as agendas and minutes, policies, factual information about the Council and Councillors. It should also include any material that has been commissioned by the Council, such as reports or surveys or material that is directly derived from these.

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3.2 The Website should also contain other material, such as history and geography of the Parish, news of local events, or any other material of a non-controversial nature that is appropriate for the Website on a 'custom and practice' basis. The Website may also possess interactive functionality, customary for such local authority websites (such as questionnaires, visitor response facilities, links to other sites etc.). The footprint of the Website may change from time to time according to requirements and circumstances, subject to approval by Council for significant changes.

3.3 The Website shall in principle not contain material of a deliberately contentious, offensive or disputatious nature, or material that criticises or implies criticism of one or more members of the public, individual Councillors, groups of Councillors or the Council as a whole. However, Council meetings can be disputatious, and this is recorded in the Minutes and, once passed, this material may appear on the Website in the minutes or otherwise. Additionally, it can happen that Council may approve material for inclusion on the Website that not everybody necessarily agrees with.

3.4 Regardless of what has been voted on by Council, the Website shall not contain any material that is libellous or defamatory or in any way against the law or which could expose the Council to legal challenge.

4. Website Working Party - composition and main function

4.1 The day-to-day working of the Website is subject to the control of the Website Working Party, which should be in permanent session. The Working Party shall contain a minimum of two councillors, neither of whom may be associated with a business or group that might be seen to have a conflicting interest. The Website Working Party is empowered by Council to make routine updates to the Website without prior reference to Council.

5. The Webmaster

5.1 It is highly desirable that a Councillor volunteers to be the Webmaster and that this Councillor enjoys the confidence of the Council, either explicitly with a motion or implicitly from the nature of the proceedings. If there is more than one Webmaster, it may be advisable to apportion a specific area of the site to each Webmaster.

5.2 The function of the Webmaster, working as part of the Website Working Party, is to manage the Website, adding or deleting material, and editing pages as required. As long as they enjoy the confidence of the Council, the Webmaster shall be empowered to update the Website as he sees fit without prior reference to Council and subject to Section 7 below.

5.3 Other than for totally routine matters, like uploading minutes, the Webmaster should keep the Website Working Party informed of activities he may have conducted on the Website. This is in case Councillors make enquiries at Council meetings about changes on the Website, when it would be helpful to have more than one person who can explain what the Webmaster has been doing.

5.4 The Webmaster may ask for professional help as necessary, subject to reasonable cost limits and prior agreement with the Council. Such expenditure should normally be planned and budgeted for the year ahead.

5.5   The Webmaster is accountable to the Council as a whole, not to any individual Councillor.   Further, as the Webmaster is a volunteer, accountability will be on a 'best efforts and goodwill' basis. If the Webmaster is unable or unwilling to implement a decision or wish of the Council, the Council may engage further help to execute its wishes as necessary, without otherwise prejudicing the role of the Webmaster or the Website Working Party.

5.6   Where the Webmaster has managed the Website in a manner contrary to the will of the Council, the Council may require the Webmaster to make good any deficiencies, or in extreme cases, pass a motion of 'No Confidence' in the Webmaster and relieve them from their role on the Website. In that case, the Parish Clerk should take back control of the Website password and block any further activities by the Webmaster.

5.7   In these circumstances it will be highly desirable for a replacement Webmaster to be appointed. Failing this, it will be necessary for the Parish Clerk to take over control of the entire Website subject to approval by Council.

5.8   Council may appoint a non-councillor external consultant to operate as Webmaster, provided that the external consultant has no conflicting interest nor is part of any identifiable pressure group or political party where those activities and interests might be relevant to the business of the Council.

5.9   If there is no Webmaster, e.g. after an election if the previous Webmaster is not re-elected, the Parish Clerk shall update the Website in a caretaker role within the time that they have available until such time as a new Webmaster can be found.

6.   Procedure for adding new material to the Website

6.1   Any Councillor may submit material for inclusion on the website provided that it is consistent with the general policies in Section 3, and also falls within any limits of technical feasibility to upload.

7.   Specific powers of the Webmaster in determining what can go on the Website and editing what is already there

7.1   Routine updates
The Webmaster may make routine updates to the Website without prior reference to Council. Examples of routine updates could be:
- Correcting errors of spelling, syntax or grammar and factual errors.
- Repairing and restoring links that have ceased to work properly.
- Routine structural changes where this improves the organisation of the Website.
- Replacing out of date documents with current versions.

7.2   Responding to requests to upload material
So long as the Webmaster enjoys the confidence of the Council, they are empowered to edit or exclude any material submitted for uploading to the Website, without explanation to any Councillor or to the person submitting the material. Nevertheless, it would be normal for the Webmaster to attempt to explain outright refusal to upload or major editing actions, and, in order to retain the confidence of the Council, the Webmaster must be prepared to answer for his actions in a full Council meeting.

7.3 Preservation of Archival Material

It is understood that Archival Material (as in 'Definitions' section above) should be preserved without change to the content, but can be reorganised or re-structured as required. If the Webmaster considers other 'Non-Archival' material to be out of date and no longer relevant, such as advertising an event that no longer takes place; they may consider it for deletion. If the deletions are substantial, the Webmaster must check with Councillors prior to making significant deletions or significant changes to existing material, for example, by creating an 'update plan' that Council can approve.

7.4 Webmaster uploading material

Being a Councillor, and only as long as they enjoy the confidence of the Council, the Webmaster may upload material to the Website without explanation to any other individual Councillor subject to the provisions of Section 3 above. However, the Webmaster should be prepared to answer for his actions in Council and be prepared to delete the material should Council pass a motion to that effect. Where it is anticipated that there might be disagreement, it is advisable for the Webmaster to obtain the prior approval of Council.

7.5 Resolution of Disputes

If there is a dispute about the Webmaster's decisions or activities the matter shall be referred to full Council whose majority vote shall be considered final. In case of further difficulty see Paragraphs 5.6 and 5.7 above.

8. Allocation of tasks between the Webmaster and the Parish Clerk

8.1 Parish Clerk
Contact Us/Your Comments
Council Business
Council Events/Diary
Agendas and Minutes
Council Elections
Newsletter - tbc
County and District Councillors
Committees - tbc
Policies/freedom of info
Accounts/Budgets
Elections/Casual Vacancies
Staffing/all vacancies
Highways/local issues
Parish Planning
Grants

8.2 The Webmaster
Home Page
History
Parish Maps
Parish Footpath Map
Photos of the Parish
Parish Councillors (including Photo - tbc)
Parish Map
Playing Fields Info
Police contact details
Local Events

Useful Links
Useful Information
Useful telephone numbers
Surveys/Reports
Weather Forecast Plugin

9. Webmaster working relationship with Parish Clerk

9.1 The Webmaster and the Parish Clerk should operate co-operatively on the management of the Website. The Parish Clerk or the Webmaster may from time to time help in each other's areas, but in the interests of good and harmonious practice, changes (other than trivial typographical corrections) to each other's areas should be done with some kind of consultation with the other party.   In case of disagreement the normal rules governing the relationship of the Parish Clerk with individual Councillors and with the Council as a whole shall apply.