



SANDHAM TOWN COUNCIL

— Communications Policy —

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APPROVED DATE:
REVIEW DATE: May-27
MINUTE NUMBER:

1. AIMS

- 1.1. To establish clear, easy to use channels of communication between Sandown Town Council, the Clerk, Councillors and the residents of Sandown and vice versa.
- 1.2. To provide information on important matters in an appropriate manner so as to facilitate and encourage informed comment from interested individuals and groups.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1. Each Councillor has a duty to represent, without bias, the interest of the whole community and is available to help parishioners with regard to matters relating to Sandown.
- 2.2. They may be contacted by telephone or email (if available) and a contact list is displayed on the council notice board and on the council website.
- 2.3. If the matter is important, then a letter to the clerk or their deputy will ensure that this will be brought before the council and dealt in a suitable manner.
- 2.4. It is the council's intention to comply with the schedule as below.

3. NOTICE BOARDS

- 3.1. The following items will be displayed permanently:
 - Councillors with contact email addresses
 - Council meetings dates for the year
 - Notice of the annual audited accounts will be displayed when appropriate.
- 3.2. The agendas pertaining to council meetings will be displayed 5 days in advance of the meeting.
- 3.3. Notices of public meetings will be displayed as and when appropriate.

4. WEBSITE

- 4.1. The following items will be permanently available:
 - Councillors with contact email addresses
 - Council meeting dates for the year once confirmed
 - The approved minutes from the next council meeting.
 - Financial information including bank reconciliations and annual budget
 - The Mayors Annual Report
 - All statutory documents including Standing Orders and Financial Regulations
 - All adopted policies
 - Details of the Publication Scheme
- 4.2. The Clerk will ensure that information published on the website is kept up to date.
- 4.3. Council information published on the website must be approved by the Clerk and/or Mayor before publication.

- 4.4. Where appropriate, residents may be directed to the website to obtain information or services

5. CORRESPONDENCE

Council Correspondence

- 5.1. The clerk is the main point of contact for the town council.
- 5.2. All correspondence relating to the Council should be addressed to the Clerk in the first instance.
- 5.3. All correspondence to the clerk will normally be acknowledged within one week of receipt.
- 5.4. Official correspondence shall be issued by the Clerk in the name of the Council using approved Council stationery or email
- 5.5. Where correspondence is copied to another person, the recipient should be made aware through the use of a copy notification (cc).
- 5.6. No individual Councillor or Officer shall be the sole custodian of Council correspondence or information
- 5.7. Councillors and Officers do not have a right to obtain confidential information unless they can demonstrate a legitimate need to know.

Councillor Correspondence to external parties

- 5.8. As the Clerk should be sending most of the council's correspondence from a Councillor to other bodies, it needs to be made clear that it is written in their official capacity and has been authorised by the Town council.
- 5.9. A copy of all outgoing correspondence relating to the council or a Councillor's role within it, should be sent to the Clerk, and it be noted on the correspondence, e.g. "copy to the Clerk" so that the recipient is aware that the Clerk has been advised.

6. COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

- 6.1. The Clerk will clear official press statements and media comments with the Mayor or Chair of the relevant committee where appropriate.
- 6.2. Official press releases shall normally be issued by the Clerk or an authorised officer.
- 6.3. Unless specifically authorised by the Council, Councillors speaking to the media must make it clear when they are expressing a personal opinion.
- 6.4. Councillors must not represent personal views as the views of the Council.
- 6.5. Complaints received from members of the public shall be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Complaints Procedure.

7. COMMUNICATIONS WITH TOWN COUNCIL STAFF

- 7.1. Councillors must not give instructions directly to members of staff unless authorised through Council decisions or delegated powers
- 7.2. No individual Councillor, including the Mayor or Committee Chair, may issue instructions that conflict with Council decisions or delegated authority arrangements.

7.3. Telephone calls and communications should relate to legitimate Council business.

E-mails:

7.4. Immediate responses should not be expected from the Clerk unless urgency has been clearly identified.

7.5. Information to Councillors should normally be directed via the Clerk;

7.6. E-mails from Councillors to external parties should be copied to the Clerk;

7.7. Councillors should acknowledge receipt of emails when requested.

Meetings with the Clerk or other officers:

7.8. Appointments should be arranged wherever possible.

7.9. Meetings should relate to the responsibilities of the relevant officer.

7.10. Matters discussed should be legitimate Council business and not personal or political matters.

8. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE COUNCIL

8.1. Communications from the Council will meet the following criteria:

- a) Be civil, factual, and relevant.
 - b) Be factual, civil and relevant
 - c) Be lawful and respectful
 - d) Not contain defamatory, abusive, threatening, obscene or discriminatory content
 - e) Respect copyright
 - f) Protect personal information
- Comply with Council policies and legislation

9. ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

9.1. The Council uses electronic communications, social media and digital platforms to communicate with residents, organisations and Councillors.

9.2. The Council currently uses:

- Website
- Email
- Facebook
- Other platforms approved by the Council from time to time

9.3. Social media will not be used for the dissemination of any political advertising

9.4. Official Council social media content shall be moderated by authorised Council representatives.

9.5. Employees and Councillors must comply with this policy whenever using social media in connection with Council business.

9.6. Breaches by employees may be dealt with through the disciplinary procedure.

9.7. Breaches by Councillors may be dealt with under the Code of Conduct and referred to the Monitoring Officer where appropriate.

Town Council email

- 9.8. The Clerk shall maintain an official Council email account.
- 9.9. The Council email account will normally be monitored during office hours.
- 9.10. The Clerk is responsible for managing incoming correspondence and distributing it as necessary.
- 9.11. Official Council communications will normally be issued by, or copied to, the Clerk.
- 9.12. Where personal data is provided by members of the public, appropriate consent procedures shall be followed where required.
- 9.13. Councillors may communicate directly with residents regarding personal views, provided they do not imply they are speaking on behalf of the Council unless authorised to do so.
- 9.14. Councillors should use Council-provided email accounts for Council business whenever possible.
- 9.15. Emails relating to Council business may be subject to the Freedom of Information Act and other statutory disclosure requirements.
- 9.16. Personal information must not be disclosed without lawful authority.

10. OTHER METHODS OF COMMUNICATION

10.1. This policy applies equally to:

- SMS messaging
- Video conferencing
- Online meeting platforms
- Instant messaging services
- Any future communication technologies used for Council business

Volunteers and Authorised Community Representatives

- 10.2. The Council may, from time to time, authorise volunteers or community representatives to assist with the circulation of official Council communications.
- 10.3. Volunteers may share or recirculate Council-issued information only where they have been specifically authorised by the Clerk or Council to do so.
- 10.4. When sharing Council information, volunteers must not alter, interpret, or add commentary that could misrepresent the original message.
- 10.5. Volunteers must not issue statements, respond to public enquiries on behalf of the Council, or present themselves as official Council spokespeople unless formally authorised in writing.
- 10.6. All activity undertaken under this section must comply with this policy, the Council's Code of Conduct (where applicable), and all relevant data protection legislation.

11. CONFIDENTIALITY, DATA PROTECTION AND CODE OF CONDUCT

- 11.1. Councillors and employees must handle all information securely and appropriately.
- 11.2. Confidential information obtained through Council duties must not be disclosed without proper authority.
- 11.3. Care should be taken when using email distribution lists and the "Reply All" function.

11.4. Councillors and staff must comply with:

- The Council's Code of Conduct
- UK GDPR
- The Data Protection Act 2018
- The Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Any other applicable legislation

11.5. Failure to maintain confidentiality or comply with data protection requirements may result in disciplinary action, Code of Conduct proceedings, or referral to appropriate authorities.

11.6. This policy also applies to other forms of communication used for council business including but not limited to SMS Messaging and video conferencing (skype, zoom, teams etc.)

11.7. Councillors are expected to abide by the Code of Conduct and the Data Protection Act in all their work on behalf of the Council

11.8. As more and more information become available at the press of a button, it is vital that all information is treated sensitively and securely.

11.9. Councillors are expected to maintain an awareness of the confidentiality of information that they have access to and not to share confidential information with anyone.

11.10. Members should also be careful only to cc essential recipients on emails i.e. to avoid use of the 'Reply to All' option if at all possible, but of course copying in all who need to know and ensuring that email trails have been removed.

11.11. Failure to properly observe confidentiality may be seen as a breach of the Council's Code of Conduct and will be dealt with through its prescribed procedures (at the extreme it may also involve a criminal investigation).



SANDHAM GARDENS PLAYZONE

Safeguarding Policy

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Approval Date:

Minute Number:

Review Date: May 2027

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The PlayZone is committed to providing a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment for all users, particularly children, young people and adults at risk.
- 1.2. We recognise our duty of care and our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all who use the facility.
- 1.3. This policy sets out the standards, procedures and expectations that ensure the PlayZone operates safely and in line with the Football Foundation, The FA's Safeguarding Framework, and statutory guidance including Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023).

2. SCOPE

- 2.1. This policy applies to:
 - All staff, volunteers, councillors, contractors and partners involved in the management or oversight of the PlayZone
 - All organised groups, clubs, schools and hirers
 - All users of the facility, including children, parents, carers and spectators
- 2.2. It covers safeguarding, welfare, behaviour, access, supervision, and reporting concerns.

3. SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES

- 3.1. We commit to:
 - Prioritising the safety and wellbeing of children and adults
 - Creating an environment where concerns can be raised without fear
 - Responding promptly and appropriately to safeguarding issues
 - Working in partnership with statutory agencies, schools, clubs and the Football Foundation
 - Ensuring policies are reviewed annually or following any incident

4. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR FACILITY USERS

- 4.1. All users must:
 - Treat others with respect
 - Use the facility safely and appropriately
 - Follow booking rules and access arrangements
 - Not climb fences, gates or structures
 - Not bring scooters, bikes or unsafe equipment onto the pitch
 - Not engage in bullying, harassment, intimidation or anti-social behaviour

- Leave the facility clean and free of litter
- Breaches may result in removal, suspension of access, or referral to police or safeguarding agencies.

5. SUPERVISION AND USE BY CHILDREN

- 5.1. Children under 11 should be supervised by a responsible adult unless part of an organised session.
- 5.2. Unsupervised use by older children is permitted, subject to the facility rules, behaviour expectations and community reporting arrangements.
- 5.3. Any concerns about a child's welfare should be reported without delay to the appropriate statutory agency. If a child is at immediate risk of harm, contact the police on 999.
- 5.4. Photography or recording of children during organised activities must comply with safeguarding and consent procedures.

6. SAFER RECRUITMENT

- 6.1. Any staff, volunteers or contractors engaged in activities involving children, young people or adults at risk may be subject to safer recruitment procedures.
- 6.2. Where a role is legally eligible for a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, the appropriate level of check will be obtained in accordance with DBS eligibility requirements.
- 6.3. Individuals working in such roles may be required to:
 - Complete safeguarding training appropriate to their role
 - Comply with this policy and associated safeguarding procedures
- 6.4. A criminal record will not automatically exclude an individual. Risk assessments will be carried out where appropriate.

7. MANAGING RISK AT THE PLAYZONE

- 7.1. A facility-specific risk assessment will be maintained and reviewed regularly. Key risks include:
 - Climbing or breaching fences
 - Unauthorised access
 - Anti-social behaviour
 - Fire hazards or vandalism
 - Slips, trips and falls
 - Weather-related risks
 - Hazardous items left on the pitch

- Mitigation includes signage, CCTV (where used), regular inspections, and clear reporting routes.

8. REPORTING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

8.1. Anyone may report a safeguarding concern. Concerns may relate to:

- A child or adult
- Inappropriate behaviour
- Bullying or harassment
- Criminal or anti-social behaviour
- Welfare concerns
- Unsafe conduct or environments

8.2. Reports should be made to the relevant agency. If a person is at immediate risk, call 999.

8.3. Allegations concerning councillors, staff, volunteers or contractors will be recorded and referred to the appropriate safeguarding, regulatory, or law enforcement agency where required. The Council will cooperate with any resulting enquiries or investigations within its remit.

8.4. Contact Details

Town Clerk

Email: clerks@sandowntowncouncil.gov.uk

Tel: 01983 300329

External Contact Details

Isle of Wight Children's Services: 01983 823435

Police: 999 emergency / 101 non-emergency

NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000 / help@nspcc.org.uk

Isle of Wight Adult Social Care: 01983 823 900/ safeguardingconcerns@iow.gov.uk

9. DATA PROTECTION AND CONFIDENTIALITY

9.1. Safeguarding records will be stored securely and shared only with those who need to know, in line with data protection legislation.

9.2. Where CCTV is in operation, signage will be displayed and footage managed in accordance with UK GDPR and relevant council CCTV policies.

10. REVIEW

10.1. This policy will be reviewed annually or following any safeguarding incident, change in legislation, or Football Foundation requirement.



SANDHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Safeguarding Policy

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Approval Date:

Minute Number:

Review Date: May 2027

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Sandown Town Council is committed to providing a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment for all members of the community, particularly children, young people and adults at risk.
- 1.2. We recognise our duty of care and responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of those who engage with the Council through services, events, facilities, volunteering and community activities.
- 1.3. This policy sets out the standards, procedures and expectations that ensure the Council operates safely and in line with statutory guidance including Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023), relevant safeguarding legislation, and best practice.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1. This policy applies to:
 - All councillors, staff, volunteers, contractors and partners involved in Council services or activities
 - All organised groups, clubs, schools and hirers using Council-managed facilities
 - All users of Council facilities, services and events, including children, parents, carers and members of the public
- 2.2. It covers safeguarding, welfare, behaviour, access, supervision, recruitment and reporting concerns.

3. SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES

- 3.1. We commit to:
 - Prioritising the safety and wellbeing of children and adults at risk
 - Creating an environment where concerns can be raised without fear
 - Responding promptly and appropriately to safeguarding concerns
 - Working in partnership with statutory agencies, schools, clubs and community organisations
 - Ensuring safeguarding policies are reviewed annually or following any incident

4. CODE OF CONDUCT

- 4.1. All persons covered by this policy must:
 - Treat others with dignity and respect
 - Behave responsibly and appropriately
 - Follow Council rules, procedures and instructions
 - Not engage in bullying, harassment, intimidation or anti-social behaviour
 - Maintain appropriate boundaries with children and adults at risk
 - Use Council facilities safely and responsibly

- 4.2. Breaches may result in removal from activities, suspension, termination of volunteering arrangements, or referral to police or safeguarding agencies.

5. SUPERVISION AND ACTIVITIES INVOLVING CHILDREN

- 5.1. Children attending Council-run organised activities must be appropriately supervised.
- 5.2. Responsibility for the supervision of children and young people remains with their parents, carers, clubs, hirers, and activity leaders at all times unless alternative arrangements have been expressly agreed in writing by the Council.
- 5.3. The Council reserves the right to require evidence of appropriate supervision arrangements and to take action where it reasonably believes that children or young people are not being adequately supervised or where safeguarding concerns arise.
- 5.4. Any concerns regarding a child's welfare or safety should be reported without delay to the appropriate statutory agency. Anyone who becomes aware of a safeguarding concern is encouraged to report it.
- 5.5. Photography or recording of children during organised activities must comply with safeguarding and consent procedures.

6. SAFER RECRUITMENT AND DBS CHECKS

- 6.1. Any councillor, staff member, volunteer or contractor involved in organised activities, youth engagement or work with adults at risk may be subject to safer recruitment procedures.
- 6.2. This may include:
- Application or registration processes
 - Identity verification
 - References where appropriate
 - Suitability discussions or interviews
- 6.3. Where a role is legally eligible for a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, the appropriate level of check will be obtained in accordance with DBS eligibility requirements.
- 6.4. Individuals working in roles involving children, young people or adults at risk may be required to:
- Complete safeguarding training relevant to their role
 - Comply with Council safeguarding procedures
- 6.5. A criminal record will not automatically exclude an individual. Risk assessments will be carried out where appropriate.

7. REPORTING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

- 7.1. Anyone may report a safeguarding concern. Concerns may relate to:
- A child or adult at risk

- Inappropriate behaviour
- Bullying or harassment
- Criminal or anti-social behaviour
- Welfare concerns
- Unsafe conduct or environments

7.2. Reports should be made to the relevant agency. If a person is at immediate risk, call 999.

7.3. Allegations concerning councillors, staff, volunteers or contractors will be recorded and referred to the appropriate safeguarding, regulatory, or law enforcement agency where required. The Council will cooperate with any resulting enquiries or investigations within its remit.

7.4. Contact Details

Town Clerk

Email: clerks@sandowntowncouncil.gov.uk

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8. DATA PROTECTION AND CONFIDENTIALITY

8.1. Safeguarding records will be stored securely and shared only with those who need to know, in line with data protection legislation.

8.2. Where CCTV is in operation, signage will be displayed and footage managed in accordance with UK GDPR and relevant Council CCTV policies.

9. REVIEW

9.1. This policy will be reviewed annually or following any safeguarding incident, legislative change, operational change, or best practice update.



SANDOWN TOWN COUNCIL

Volunteer Policy

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Approval Date:

Minute Number:

Review Date: May 2027

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Sandown Town Council is committed to providing a safe, welcoming and inclusive volunteering environment.
- 1.2. This policy sets out the standards, expectations, and responsibilities applying to all volunteers working with or on behalf of the Town Council.
- 1.3. The Council values volunteers and recognises their contribution to community activities, events, services, and local initiatives. This policy is intended to promote safe, respectful, and professional volunteering arrangements.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1. This policy applies to all volunteers engaged by the Town Council, including individuals assisting with:
 - Community events
 - Environmental or grounds activities
 - Administrative support
 - Heritage, tourism, or visitor services
 - Youth, wellbeing, or community programmes
 - Advisory groups or committees where applicable
- 2.2. Volunteers are not employees and this policy does not create a contract of employment.

3. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

- 3.1. The Council is committed to equality, diversity, and inclusion and will not discriminate unlawfully on grounds protected by applicable legislation, including the Equality Act 2010.
- 3.2. Volunteers are expected to treat all members of the public, councillors, staff, and fellow volunteers with dignity and respect.

4. VOLUNTEER STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

- 4.1. Volunteers must:
 - Act honestly, responsibly, and in the public interest
 - Follow lawful instructions given by authorised Council officers or project leads
 - Behave respectfully toward councillors, staff, residents, and other volunteers
 - Maintain appropriate professional boundaries
 - Avoid harassment, bullying, intimidation, or abusive conduct
 - Take reasonable care of Council property, equipment, and facilities

5. VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

5.1. Volunteers will:

- Receive appropriate induction and guidance.
- Be given information about the activities they are undertaking.
- Have a named contact within the Council.

6. CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION

6.1. Volunteers may have access to confidential or personal information during their activities.

6.2. Volunteers must:

- Keep confidential information secure
- Not disclose personal, confidential, or restricted Council information without authorisation
- Comply with applicable data protection requirements, including the UK GDPR and Data Protection legislation

7. HEALTH AND SAFETY

7.1. The Council is committed to providing a safe volunteering environment.

7.2. Volunteers must:

- Follow health and safety instructions
- Use equipment safely and only when authorised/trained
- Report hazards, accidents, incidents, or near misses promptly
- Cooperate with safeguarding or risk management procedures where relevant

8. SAFEGUARDING

8.1. Where volunteering involves children, young people, or vulnerable adults, volunteers must comply with all safeguarding procedures, training requirements, and reporting obligations.

8.2. Where a role is legally eligible for a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, the appropriate level of check will be obtained in accordance with DBS eligibility requirements.

9. COMMUNICATIONS, SOCIAL MEDIA, AND PUBLIC COMMENTARY

9.1. Volunteers represent the Council when participating in authorised activities and are expected to communicate responsibly.

9.2. Volunteers must:

- Communicate in a respectful, professional, and factual manner in public statements, including social media, interviews, meetings, messaging groups, and written correspondence relating to Council matters
- Not make statements that are knowingly false, misleading, defamatory, malicious, or intended solely to damage the reputation of the Council, its councillors, officers, employees, volunteers, or services
- Not present personal opinions as official Council positions unless expressly authorised

9.3. Nothing in this policy prevents volunteers from:

- Raising genuine concerns or complaints
- Reporting misconduct or safeguarding concerns
- Making protected disclosures
- Expressing lawful personal opinions or fair and constructive criticism regarding Council decisions, policies, or services

9.4. Concerns relating to Council operations should first be raised through appropriate internal procedures or formal complaints channels.

10. USE OF COUNCIL PROPERTY AND RESOURCES

- 10.1. Volunteers must use Council resources appropriately and only for authorised purposes.
- 10.2. Council property must not be misused, removed without permission, or used for personal gain.

11. ENDING A VOLUNTEER ARRANGEMENT

- 11.1. A volunteer arrangement may be ended at any time by either the volunteer or the Council.
- 11.2. The Council may suspend or end volunteering where there is:
- Serious misconduct
 - Repeated breaches of this policy
 - Safety concerns
 - Breakdown of trust or suitability concerns
 - Failure to comply with safeguarding, confidentiality, or conduct requirements
- 11.3. Where appropriate, the Council will seek to discuss concerns with the volunteer before ending the arrangement.

12. POLICY REVIEW

- 12.1. This policy will be reviewed periodically by the Town Council to ensure legal compliance and operational suitability.



SANDOWN TOWN COUNCIL

Volunteer Policy

Acknowledgement Form

Volunteer Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Telephone: _____

Volunteer Role/Activity: _____

Start Date: _____

Emergency contact: _____ (tel) _____

Relationship: _____

I confirm that:

- I have received, read, and understood the Town Council Volunteer Policy.
- I agree to comply with the standards, responsibilities, and expectations set out in the policy.
- I understand my responsibilities relating to conduct, confidentiality, health and safety, safeguarding (where applicable), data protection, and communications.
- I understand that volunteering is not employment and does not create a contract of employment.
- I understand that failure to comply with the Volunteer Policy may result in my volunteer arrangement being reviewed, suspended, or ended.

I agree to raise any concerns, complaints, or questions regarding my volunteering through appropriate Council channels.

Volunteer Signature: _____

Date: _____

Council Representative Name: _____

Position: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Office Use Only

Policy issued on: _____

Induction completed: Yes / No

DBS required (if applicable): Yes / No

DBS completed (if applicable): Yes / No.