Website Policy
2024 - 2025

www.denhambucks-pc.gov.uk

This policy covers the management of the Denham Parish Council Website (address above), in particular:

- The scope of the website.
- Management of the website,
- Criteria and procedures for making changes or additions to the Website.

Definitions

- Parish – Denham Parish
- Parish Clerk - Parish Clerk to Denham Parish Council
- Council - Denham Parish Council
- Councillor - Councillor on Denham Parish Council
- Website - Denham Parish Council Website
- Webmaster - Person who works directly on the Website, in this case a member of the office team, in conjunction with the Chair of a standing committee or Council.
- Archive, or "Archival Material" - Material that is a record of Council business, e.g. meetings, reports, surveys, plans, or correspondence referred to in the Minutes, Official correspondence received or sent out by Council.

1. Website Hosting Arrangements

1.1 The Council is committed to operating a website hosted by a 3rd party provider, having no other connection with the DPC. The present host: Vision ICT is one of a number of companies who provide website hosting services to 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, Council and the Clerk 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, information about the Council and Councillors. It may also include any material that has been commissioned by the Council, such as reports or surveys or material that is directly derived from these.

3.2 The Website may 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 which 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.

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.

3.5 Consent has to be obtained from an individual or guardian of a child if under 18, before photographs can be placed on the website if the individuals can be identified.

4. Website composition and main function

4.1 The day-to-day working of the Website is subject to the control of the Clerk and their team. The Clerk is delegated with the authority 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 oversee the website and monitors the website regularly and advises the Webmaster on content and updates.

5.2 The function of the Webmaster, is to monitor the Website, advising on adding or deleting material, and editing as required. The Webmaster shall be empowered to advise on updates to the Website as they see 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 residents informed about future Council activities.

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.

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.

5.7 Council may appoint an 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.

6. Procedure for adding new material to the Website

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

7. What are the specific powers of the Webmaster in determining what can go on the Website or in 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 their actions at 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, he may consider it for deletion. If the deletions are substantial, it would be advisable to 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.
The Webmaster should be prepared to answer for their actions from 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 Chair shall adjudicate in the first instance, and if this fails to provide a resolution, 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 for the Webmaster

8.1 Parish Projects

- Neighbourhood Plan

Your Council

- Councillors
- Committees
- Policies and Regulations
- Finance

About Denham - Home Page
Contact Us
Site Map
Get Involved

- Denham Good Neighbour Scheme

Responsibilities

- Allotments
- Right of Way
- Bus Shelters
- Dog Bins
- Grass and Hedge Cutting

Your Parish

- In and Around
- Events
- Denham History
- Halls
- Groups
- Play Areas

9. Webmaster working relationship with the Council

9.1 The Webmaster and the Council co-operatively manage the Website. In case of disagreement the normal rules governing the relationship of the Parish Clerk with individual Councillors and with the Council shall apply.

10. Social Media

10.1 The Webmaster and the Council are required to review and finalise any messages that are to be posted onto the Denham Parish Council's Twitter Account and the externally managed Denham Community Facebook page.

Derek Wilson
Executive Clerk and RFO March 2024