



Strategic Communication Plan Policy

1. The Council's Vision

Carn Brea Parish Council aims to foster an informed, engaged and empowered community by ensuring that all communication is clear, timely, accessible, transparent, and conducted in a professional and respectful manner.

The Council strives to strengthen connections with the local community by communicating openly, honestly and consistently.

2. Introduction

Effective communication is essential for the Parish Council to fulfil its statutory duties, represent the interests of parishioners, and promote community involvement in local initiatives and decision-making.

This Strategic Communication Plan Policy sets out how the Council will communicate internally and externally, the standards expected of councillors and employees, and the mechanisms the Council will use to evaluate the effectiveness of its communication activities.

The policy applies to:

- The Clerk and employees of the Council.
- All Parish Councillors.
- Volunteers acting on behalf of the Council.

3. Communication Strategy

The Council's communication strategy is founded on the following principles:

3.1 Accuracy

Information must be factual, verified, and approved before publication.

3.2 Transparency

All key decisions, processes, and policies are communicated openly to the community.

3.3 Accessibility

Communications will meet accessibility requirements under the **Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018**, ensuring content is perceivable, operable, understandable, and robust.

3.4 Timeliness

Information is shared promptly and updated regularly.

3.5 Professionalism

Carn Brea Parish Council is a Civility and Respect pledge Council, and all Councillors and employees must be courteous and communicate respectfully.

3.6 Engagement

Two-way communication methods will be used to gather community views and encourage participation.

3.7 Legislative Compliance

Communication will comply with relevant legislation, including GDPR, the Local Government Act, and the Code of Conduct.

4. Methods of Communication

4.1 Council Website

The website is the primary source of official Council information and will include:

- Meeting agendas, minutes, and statutory notices.
- Policies and governance documents.
- Financial reports & Transparency Code data.
- News updates, community initiatives, events, and consultations.
- Contact details for the Clerk and Councillors.

The Clerk (or designated officer / employee) is responsible for website updates and data accuracy.

4.2 Social Media Accounts

Official social media accounts may be used to share timely updates, emergency information, and engagement opportunities.

Standards & Rules

- Posts must be factual and neutral.
- Only authorised officers / employees may publish content.
- Comments will be moderated according to the **Council's Social Media Policy**.
- Councillors **must not** use personal accounts to express Council policy.
- Complaints or FOI requests will not be handled via social media.
- Social Media is **not** to be used for debating previous Council decisions.
- Any comments received on Council social media posts must only be responded to by authorised officers / employees.

The Clerk (or designated officer / employee) is responsible for social media updates and data accuracy.

4.3 Recording and Streaming of Council Meetings

To improve public access, meetings may be recorded or live streamed in accordance with the **Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014**.

The Council will:

- Notify attendees in advance.
- Store recordings according to retention schedules.
- Publish recordings when appropriate.

Recordings must not be edited in a way that misrepresents the meeting.

4.4 Parish Noticeboards / Phone Boxes

Carn Brea Parish Council has 5 Notice Boards located in Carnkie, Tregajorran, Carn Brea Village, at the Parish office and at the Co-Op on Higher Broad Lane.

These noticeboards will be used to display:

- Statutory notices (agendas, elections, announcements).
- Key community information.
- Emergency notices.

The Council owns and maintains 3 Phone Boxes in Piece, Penhallick and Carn Brea Village which are used as community book shares.

The Phone Boxes also contain useful contact information for the Council and Cornwall Council services.

The Clerk (or designated officer / employee) is responsible for maintaining and updating the Council's notice boards and phone boxes.

4.5 Parish Newsletter

The Council's newsletters will be published digitally every 6 months as a minimum.

The content will:

- Provide updates on Council decisions and services.
- Share community news.
- Provide updates on projects and initiatives.
- Use accessible, plain-English language.

Any resident who wishes to receive the newsletter in paper form can register their details with the Parish Office and be added to a mailing list.

4.6 Public Consultation

The Council will consult residents on major decisions, using:

- Online and paper surveys.
- Public meetings and workshops.
- Drop-in sessions.
- Focus groups.

The Council will:

- Provide clear consultation material.
 - Publish consultation analysis.
 - Demonstrate how feedback influenced decisions.
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4.7 Press Releases and Statements

Press releases and statements may be issued on matters of significant public interest.

Standards & Rules

- The Clerk drafts and approves them with the Chairman of the Council.
 - Statements and releases must be factual and accurate.
 - Councillors must not issue personal statements or press releases purporting to represent the Council.
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4.8 Emergency Responses

During emergencies (e.g., weather events, local incidents), the Council will:

- Use social media, the website, and noticeboards to issue urgent updates.
- Share official guidance from Cornwall Council, Emergency Services or relevant agencies.
- Maintain calm, factual, and supportive messaging.

The Clerk acts as the communication lead (or designated officer / employee if the Clerk is unavailable.)

4.9 Internal Communication

Internal communication will be timely, professional, and respectful.

Methods include:

- Email.
- Secure document-sharing.
- Briefings and meetings.
- Clerk / Office communications to Councillors.

Councillors must:

- Maintain confidentiality of sensitive information.

4.10 External Communication - Correspondence

External communication includes correspondence and interactions with residents, businesses, organisations, community groups and partner authorities.

Standards:

- Councillors must clearly distinguish personal views from Council policy.
- Formal enquiries must be addressed to the Clerk.
- Communications must be courteous, and compliant with GDPR.
- Any correspondence received by letter or email will be acknowledged within three working days setting out a timeline for an appropriate response.
- Letters sent on behalf of the Council will be sent on headed paper with the Carn Brea Parish Council logo.
- Emails sent on behalf of the Council will be sent using a Council email address and will include contact details such as name, position, telephone number.

4.11 Council Meetings

Meetings of the Council can be attended by members of the Public where they can speak on agenda items.

- Agendas of scheduled Council meetings & committees are published at least 3 working days in advance on the Council's website.
- The Annual Parish Meeting gives residents the opportunity to have their say and present their views on all matters relating to Carn Brea Parish and advise the Council on what improvements they would like to see in the Parish. The agenda for the Annual Parish Meeting is published at least 10 working days in advance on the Council's website.
- Other meetings may be convened for specific topics or purposes such as for consultations regarding proposed improvements to Council owned open spaces.

5. Tone and Conduct

The Council expects the following communication standards:

Councillors and employees must use a tone that:

- Is respectful and courteous.
 - Encourages constructive engagement with the community.
 - Is neutral and non-confrontational.
 - Is clear, accessible, and jargon-free.
 - Maintains a professional high standard consistent with the Code of Conduct and Civility & Respect Pledge.
 - Avoids personal attack, inflammatory language or disrespectful communication.
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6. Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Communications

Carn Brea Parish Council may use Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools to support communications work where this enhances efficiency, accessibility, or clarity. AI may assist with tasks such as drafting or summarising content, but all outputs will be reviewed, amended where necessary, and approved by the Clerk or nominated Councillor or employee before publication.

The Parish Council retains full responsibility for all communications, in line with the principles of openness, accountability, and professionalism promoted by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC).

AI tools will not be used to generate misleading content, replace democratic decision-making, or process personal or confidential information unless compliant with data protection legislation, including UK GDPR.

The use of AI will be proportionate, lawful, and consistent with Carn Brea Parish Council's adopted policies and Code of Conduct.

7. Review of the Plan

The Council will review communication effectiveness annually through:

- Website and social media analytics
- Event, newsletter, and public consultation engagement levels
- Public feedback
- Emergency communication performance
- Audit of statutory communication compliance

The Clerk will provide a summary report to be presented to the Council each year.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Full Council or earlier if legislation or communication practices change.