

## MALPAS Cheshire Online – Media Policy

### Scope:

The Malpas Cheshire Online web site and associated Facebook and Twitter pages are designed to support a community led non-commercial and non-profit making service.

The web site is for the benefit of the whole community, and as such, should not be dominated by local governance issues, nor be of a strong political (note 1) or sectarian nature.

Whilst promotion of local businesses will be considered, regional or national commercial enterprises will not be considered unless they have a direct positive impact on the local community.

The facility is currently funded by Malpas Parish Council.

The site editors/publishers will be responsible for scrutinising material for publication, generally checking for grammar or spelling errors, but the accuracy and authenticity of the content will always be the responsibility of the contributor, who should include a their name and a date of publication with their material.

### Virtual Area:

The area of interest is loosely defined as an area covered by the boundaries of the Shropshire Cheshire border at Grindley Brook, the Wych Valley to the River Dee, the River Dee to the A534 at (but not including) Farndon, the A534 to Ridley, and the A49 to Grindley Brook.

### Objectives:

To encourage interest and enhance the knowledge and understanding of the residents of Malpas, and the surrounding rural communities and visitors, through publishing integral information, documents and images relating to:

- Local businesses
- Local clubs and organisations
- Local Services and Facilities
- Schools in the area
- Churches in the area
- Transport Links
- Our heritage
- Events in the local area
- Local news
- Local Governance issues and information directly impacting on the community including information provided by democratically elected representatives defined as the constituency MP and Cheshire West and Chester Council's Local Councillors
- Other information from outside the domain area that is deemed of interest to local residents

## **Site Content:**

Material may be submitted by any individual for possible inclusion on the web site.

Contributors should normally be of 18 years of age or more, but material from minors will be accepted, if deemed appropriate and accompanied by a parent's or guardian's permission.

## **Appointment of Editors and Publishers:**

The Council will appoint a nominated Councillor or Councillors to act as moderator(s) responsible for monitoring the content of the community web site to ensure it complies with the Social Media Policy. The moderator will have authority to remove from our any posts made by third parties from our social media pages which are deemed to be of a defamatory or off a libellous nature.

The Parish Council content is managed by the Chairman and Clerk in accordance with their Social Media Relations Policy. New editor appointments may see individuals being allocated /restricted to specific areas of responsibility on the site.

New site editors are appointed by the moderators from time to time.

It is the responsibility of the Parish Council Clerk to update and maintain the Parish Council web pages as necessary.

## **Contributor Responsibilities:**

Malpas Cheshire Online exists to publish material that is informative and enhances the village's reputation.

All material if deemed helpful to local people and in the public interest should always be published in a sensitive manner.

The site editors/publishers will be responsible for scrutinising material for publication, generally checking for grammar or spelling errors, but to the accuracy and authenticity of the content will always be the responsibility of the contributor, who should include a their name and a date of publication with their material.

When participating in any online communication all contributors should:-

- a. Be responsible and respectful; be direct, informative, brief and transparent.
- b. Never knowingly make false or misleading statements.
- c. Not present themselves in a way that might potential damage the reputation of other people, the website or the community.
- d. Be mindful of the information being posted on site and make sure personal opinions are not published to give impression as being that of an organisation.
- e. Avoid material that might bring the Web Site into disrepute or is contrary to this social media policy.
- f. Keep the tone of any comments respectful and informative, never condescending or "loud."
- g. Use sentence case format, not capital letters, and write in red only to emphasise forthcoming dates or important points.

- h. Refrain from posting controversial or potentially inflammatory remarks.
- i. Language that may be deemed as offensive relating in particular to race, sexuality, disability, gender, age or religion or belief should not be published on any social media site
- j. Avoid personal attacks, online disputes and hostile communications.
- k. Never use an individual's name nor disclose information relating to another person unless you have written permission to do so, or in exceptional circumstances it is in the public interest to do so.
- l. Obtain permission to publish photographs or videos on the web site from the persons or organisations in the video or photograph before being uploaded.
- m. Not post any information or conduct any online activity that may violate laws or regulations, or be libellous and infringe copyright.
- n. Correct any errors promptly once they have been notified of them.

### **Message Handling:**

A "Contact Us" messaging facility exists on the site. Incoming messages relevant to local governance will be forwarded to the Parish Council Clerk, or another appropriate body.

Messages received will be responded to in a courteous manner, but editors should be mindful that not all communication will require a response.

Acknowledgement of receiving the message will be sent as soon as possible. If the request is for further information, a promise to respond should be dispatched to the sender with an estimate of when a reply can be expected.

It may not always be possible to respond immediately to messages, as they may need to be discussed with another editor before an agreed response is reached.

Responses to media requests for general information, questions relating to the facts of an issue, can be answered to explain the Web Team members understanding of the situation.

### **Data protection:**

Requests for contact details of individuals should not be given out to anyone, without the express permission being obtained from the appropriate individual.

### **Notes**

**1/** By law the Parish Council is not allowed to issue, or to help others to issue, material which is intended primarily to overtly affect public support for a specific political party. However, the issue of material with a political content is not prohibited, if this avoids the oversimplification of facts or arguments, or the reliance on slogans to capture the complexities of opposing viewpoints.

The Policy will be reviewed periodically.