



## WESTGATE-ON-SEA TOWN COUNCIL

### WEBSITE POLICY

ADOPTED 6<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2017

#### **Policy Statement**

This policy outlines the management of the Westgate-on-Sea Town Council website.

This policy is intended to cover:

- The Scope of the website
- The management of the website
- Criteria and procedures for making changes to the website

#### **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 Westgate-on-Sea Town Council nor any political affiliation.
- 1.2 The host must be one of several 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, the Town 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, factual 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 town, 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.
- 3.3 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.
- 3.4 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.
- 3.5 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.
- 3.6 Councillors are minded that the Town Clerk is accountable to the Town Council as a corporate body and not to any individual Councillor.