



FRAMLINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

It was agreed at the November meeting of PR & Markets that a proposal be prepared for communications between Councillors. This is to ensure that Councillors are kept appropriately informed of activities on Committees, sub groups, Working Groups etc on which not all Councillors sit.

This follows discussion of a briefing paper on the subject at the FTC strategy meeting in October and discussion in FTC and PR&M in February.

General principles

Councillors are collectively responsible for most decisions made by the Council, and thus have a common law right, and a justified need, to access all Council information unless there are overriding privacy or other concerns.

Access to information

1. All Councillors should have access to all committee papers on request (without waiting for them to be presented to the Council) unless there are overriding privacy or other considerations.

- Councillors may request copies of Committee or WG documents from the Committee/WG Chair or from the Clerk.
- The Council is investigating secure document storage for Committee and other documents that will allow access to Council and Committee papers by all Councillors (except where overriding privacy etc issues apply)¹.
- The office staff, when sending papers to the Council, Committees or WGs, will in general store them on a password-protected web site with email links to the documents (rather than the documents themselves).
- All councillors will have access to all the Committee pages on the website.

2. Councillors working on Committees or working groups should ensure early direct notification of information to all Councillors (including those not on a particular Committee or WG), for example:

- when the full Council will need to make a decision on complex matters and Councillors will need time to study and consider the issues
- where the matter is controversial or of public interest
- where significant sums of money are involved

- where input from other Councillors not on the Committee or subgroup would be of benefit to the work.

3. Committees and sub groups should consider whether the Chairman or other nominated member should be responsible for identifying and suggesting to the Committee matters for dissemination to the wider Council membership.

Note that points 2 and 3 above are intended as guiding principles, not hard rules. It must be for the judgement of Committees to decide when Councillors outside the Committee would benefit from direct notification of Committee (or WG/SG) information, or when principles of Open Government make it advisable.

¹ This does not imply that *all* documents sent by email are stored on the website. The aim is that those normally circulated to all Councillors, to Committee members or to WG/SG members will be stored on the website, and available electronically to all Councillors (except where specific confidentiality applies).