NARBERTH TOWN COUNCIL
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POL

Communications Protocol

Document Control	Details
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Supersedes	New policy; no verified predecessor
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Classification	Council governance – adoption-ready

Revised 6 October 2026: WhatsApp group status clarified. Proposed wording remains subject to Council adoption.
Based on SLCC MD55 Communications Protocol, February 2026. © SLCC 2026. Localised for Narberth Town Council and consolidated with local provision LP3. SLCC copyright remains with SLCC; use and adaptation are for the member council.

1. Town Council Correspondence

1.1 The point of contact for the Town Council is the Clerk. All correspondence for the Town Council should be addressed to the Clerk.

1.2 The Clerk should deal with all correspondence arising from or requiring action following a meeting.

1.3 No individual Councillor or Officer should be the sole custodian of correspondence or information held in the name of the Town Council, a committee, sub-committee or working party. Councillors and Officers may receive confidential information only where they have a legitimate need to know it for Council business.

1.4 Most official correspondence should be sent by the Clerk in the name of the Council using Council letterhead or an authorised Council email account. Where authorised Council correspondence is sent by another person, a copy must be provided to the Clerk.

1.5 Where correspondence from the Clerk to a Councillor is copied to another person, the addressee should be told that the copy is being forwarded, for example by marking the other recipient as copied.

2. Agenda Items for Council, Committees, Sub-Committees and Working Parties

2.1 Agendas should be clear and concise. Motions should contain enough information for Councillors to make an informed decision and for the public to understand the matter being considered and any decision to be taken.

2.2 Items for information should be kept to a minimum on an agenda.

2.3 Where the Clerk or a Councillor wishes fellow Councillors to receive a matter for information only, it should normally be circulated through the Clerk.

2.4 Brief factual updates may also be shared through the informal WhatsApp group used by councillors in accordance with the Social Media and Electronic Communication Policy. Adoption of this Protocol does not establish or approve any WhatsApp group as an official Council communication channel. Such updates do not replace formal reports, agenda submissions or referral of matters requiring action to the Clerk.

3. Communications with the Press and Public

3.1 The Clerk will clear Council press releases and official comments to the media with the Chair of the Council or the Chair of the relevant committee, as appropriate.

3.2 Press reports from the Council, its committees or working parties should be issued by the Clerk or arise from a reporter's own attendance at a meeting.

3.3 Unless authorised by the Council to speak to the media on a particular issue, a Councillor asked for comment must make clear that they are expressing a personal view and ask that it be reported as such.

3.4 Unless reporting an agreed view of the Council, a Councillor must make clear to members of the public that they are expressing a personal view.

3.5 A complaint received by a Councillor should be referred promptly to the Clerk and handled under the Council's complaints arrangements in force at the time.

4. Councillor Correspondence to External Parties

4.1 As most Council correspondence should be sent by the Clerk, a Councillor writing to another body on behalf of the Council must make clear that they are writing in an official capacity and have been authorised by the Council. A Councillor writing in a personal capacity must not imply that their view is the Council's view.

4.2 A copy of outgoing correspondence relating to Council business or a Councillor's official role should be sent to the Clerk and the correspondence should show that the Clerk has been copied.

5. Communications with Town Council Staff

5.1 Councillors must not give instructions to any member of staff unless authorised to do so through a lawful Council decision or properly delegated authority.

5.2 No individual Councillor, including the Chair of the Council or a committee, may give instructions to the Clerk or another employee which conflict with Council decisions or the Council's arrangements for delegated authority.

5.3 Telephone calls should be appropriate to the work of the Council.

Emails

5.4 Instant replies should not be expected from the Clerk. Where a matter is genuinely urgent, the reason for urgency should be stated.

- information to Councillors should normally be directed through the Clerk;
- emails from Councillors to external parties on Council business should be copied to the Clerk;
- Councillors should acknowledge emails when reasonably requested to do so.

5.5 The communication hours and right to switch off provisions in the Social Media and Electronic Communication Policy apply to routine communications under this Protocol, including requests to acknowledge emails.

Meetings with the Clerk or Other Officers

- wherever possible, an appointment should be made;
- meetings should be relevant to the work of the officer concerned;
- Councillors should ensure that the matter is legitimate Council business and is not driven by a personal or party-political agenda.