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# Protocol for using Town and Parish Council Hub

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November 2022

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Corporate Policy and  
Governance

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1 Purpose and scope

- (a) This protocol outlines the expected conduct for using the Town and Parish Council Hub.
- (b) The protocol applies to all Town and Parish Councillors, Clerks and other staff who use the Town and Parish Council Hub.

### 1.2 Background

The Town and Parish Council Hub (“the Hub”) is an online site that has been created by Stroud District Council (SDC) to enable collaboration and communication between Town and Parish Councils in the Stroud District and SDC.

The Hub includes the ability to post comments on posts and news items, enabling Town and Parish Councils to interact with each other and share knowledge, information and good practice.

Please read this protocol carefully before accessing the Hub. By accessing the Hub, you agree to be bound by this protocol. Any use of the Hub, or the forum facility of the Hub, that goes against the conduct outlined in this protocol will result in access to the Hub being suspended or terminated.

## 2 PRINCIPLES

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- The Hub is intended to be for the benefit of all Town and Parish Councils within the Stroud district, to enable them to make comments or seek (and offer) advice amongst themselves.
- As part of the Hub’s forum facility, users may post, upload or contribute content to the Hub. You are solely responsible for all content that you post.
- In posting or sharing content to the Hub, please keep in mind that this will be accessible by other users and may be used and re-shared. SDC is not responsible for what you post or share on the Hub.
- The Hub may only be used by Town and Parish Councillors, Clerks, other Town and Parish Council staff and SDC officers. Access must be requested through SDC’s Corporate Policy and Governance team, and a list of authorised users will be maintained.
- Access will only be given to Town or Parish Council domain email addresses e.g. @camparishcouncil.co.uk; and not to personal email addresses or email addresses that do not have a dedicated domain name.
- Any information posted in the forum is for the designated users of the forum only.

### **3 DOS AND DON'TS**

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#### **3.1 Do**

- Use the Hub as a tool for sharing information and knowledge with other Town and Parish Councils and SDC.
- Review the Hub for information you are looking for before raising a query with SDC officers.
- Treat other users of the Hub with respect and only make posts that are polite and inoffensive.
- Contact the Corporate Policy and Governance team to update the list of authorised users for the Hub when there is a change in Councillors or staff.
- Search to see if your topic has already been raised and answered before you start a new post.

#### **3.2 Don't**

- Post comments that you would not be prepared to make face-to-face.
- Use the Hub or forum facility of the Hub to insult, abuse, defame or otherwise make negative, offensive or discriminatory comments about Council staff, service users, their family or friends, colleagues, SDC or Town and Parish Councils.
- Publish the personal data of individuals unless you have their express permission to do so for that purpose.
- Use the Hub to discuss individual or specific cases that would not be of benefit to other users of the forum e.g. particular planning applications.
- Use the Hub to seek to mislead other users in any way.
- Disclose confidential information.

Any posts considered unsuitable for any of the above reasons will be moderated or removed.

### **4 INFORMATION GOVERNANCE**

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Information on the Town and Parish Council Hub is held by Stroud District Council and therefore may be admissible as part of a relevant freedom of information or individual rights request.

Posts on the Hub will be kept for three years.

### **5 RELATED DOCUMENTS**

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- Parish and Town Council Charter

<b>Document Responsibility</b>		
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Policy & Projects Officer	Protocol for using Town and Parish Council Hub	Corporate Policy & Governance

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