

Agenda Item 14 - Web Site - <https://partonparishcouncil.com/>

Summary

To note the position on the new web site

Background

The Transparency Agenda requires a Parish Council to post certain information on its web site if it has one. This includes agendas, minutes, details of expenditure over £100, Budget, end of year accounts and external audit exemption certificate. Apart from that, in this day and age, it is helpful to our community to have a source of information about our work readily available. Our former Clerk did not post up agendas for meetings nor details of expenditure over £100 or the Budget and thus failed to ensure that our Council complied with these rules.

On his dismissal the Clerk controlled the former website and which had on it valuable historic information such as the earlier Council minutes. It would have been quite improper for the Council's web site to be under the control of an external source over which the Council did not have control. The Chair felt it important then that all the information on that site was downloaded and put onto another site in order to protect our position and Council information.

Legal Requirements

The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Smaller Authorities (Transparency Requirement)(England) Regs 2015. s111 Local Government Act 1972. Local Government Act 1986. The code of recommended practice on local authority publicity

Details

I obtained what I call a build your own web site for £ 84 and found a friend willing to build it for free and you all have details of the link to the site. I hope that you agree with me that it is a much better site than our old one. If anyone has any ideas for information to be added to the site please let me know. I would add here that I think that we need to keep the site informative about our business and on any events in the village but not so as to encourage advertising for any commercial activities.

Having made that comment it may be useful to the Council if it could secure some advertising for local businesses as a source of revenue. The NALC document the "Good Councillor guide" suggests that *"Your council should investigate other sources of funding such as grants and sponsorship to help implement its plans"*

It should be noted that legislation prohibits advertising that promotes a political party or homosexuality. It may be appropriate to also exclude any advertising of any Political nature; Adult entertainment; Money lending; Trade Unions; Gambling and betting; Fast foods and outlets.

If Council wishes to pursue this proposal it is suggested that we agree the following guidelines. All adverts must

- adhere to the codes of conduct laid down by the Advertising Standards Authority and not conflict with the council's aims and priorities.

- meet the national advertising standards code (CAP code) applied by the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA). The code covers taste and decency in the depiction of religion, race, gender, alcohol and products aimed at children.
- be legal, decent, honest and truthful
- not bring advertising into disrepute, in addition must not bring the council into disrepute
- conform to the Code
- respect the principles of fair competition.
- be subject to the Code of Practice on Local Government Publicity and the requirements of the Financial Services Authority.

It should be made clear on the website that

- Parton Parish Council does not support or endorse any company or organisation advertising on its website.
- The council is not responsible for the quality or reliability of the product or services offered within any advertisement.
- The council would never knowingly run an advertisement that is misleading, offensive, untrue or fraudulent.

The old site has now been taken off the Internet although Google still has a listing and we will have to see if this is removed.

I have notified relevant bodies of our new web site and contact details. Whilst Cumbria County Council amended our contact details immediately Copeland Borough Council has not done so at the time of drafting this report (Boxing Day). If all Councillors could also spread the word to parties not to communicate with the former Clerk that would be helpful

Budget Implications

The original fees for the site should be part and parcel of normal expenses for the management of the Council. The proposed budget includes for on-going fees. The new Clerk will be responsible for the updating of the site

Risk management Implications if any

None - other than compliance with the Data Protection Act in accordance with our current policy.

Recommendation

1. That the action taken be noted and that the expenses incurred in the sum of £84 be reimbursed to the Chair
2. That advertising be allowed on the web site subject to compliance with the conditions set out in this report. Any such advertising to be reported back to Council

Councillor Rob Huck