

EAST GOSCOTE PARISH COUNCIL

ANONYMOUS COMMUNICATIONS POLICY



Approved by:	Full Council	Date: 28.7.25
Last reviewed:	12 th October 2022	
Next review due:		

Anonymous Communications Policy

INTRODUCTION

East Goscote Parish Council will not consider anonymous communications unless there is corroborating evidence/information which suggests that content of the communication might be substantiated.

This policy determines how East Goscote Parish Council will act where: -

- a) it has received information by means of an anonymous communication as defined in section 4
- b) a person or persons communicating with EGPC by any means, requests that their identity remains confidential (“confidential communications”) as defined in section 6.

SCOPE

The Policy applies to all Councillors and employees of the Council.

AIM

To provide a consistent approach to dealing with anonymous communications.

DEFINITION OF ANONYMOUS COMMUNICATION

Consistent with General Data Protection Principles an anonymous communication is defined as one lacking personal data “capable of identifying a natural person, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, identification number, location data or online identifier”. This may include phone calls, “round robins”, newsletters, letters emails, texts, blogs, websites, social media, and all forms of electronic communications.

VERBAL ANONYMOUS COMMUNICATIONS

As a general principle all anonymous contacts should be encouraged to provide their contact details and be directed to contact the Clerk for recording and for deciding on further action. Any Member receiving a verbal anonymous communication should respond by stating that EGPC will not take any action in respect of such a communication unless the Member determines that the communication is so “exceptional” that the need for immediate action by EGPC overrides the need to obtain a written communication. In these circumstances the Member will inform the Clerk of the communication and its content at the earliest opportunity.

If no written communication is provided by the contact, a note summarising what verbal communication took place should be created by the member and passed to the Clerk.

EXPRESSLEY CONFIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS

Communications where the Data Subject has provided contact details but has asked for anonymity, their right to privacy should be respected and the communication shall be sent to

the Clerk at the earliest opportunity. N.B. this does not abrogate EGPC from any legal or quasilegal responsibilities arising from such communications.

ACTIONS TO CONSIDER

EGPC expressly reserves the right to take no action unless the anonymous communication raises:

- a) significant health & safety issues
- b) allegations that a criminal offence has been committed
- c) allegations of fraud or irregularity within EGPC
- d) issues of a profound effect on the community
- e) allegations impugning the integrity or the credibility of EGPC members or the EGPC as a corporate body and, in all cases, only where sufficient information is provided to corroborate the allegation(s) and enable a thorough investigation to be carried out.

Anonymous communications or indeed any form of communication considered to be vexatious or malicious must be brought to the immediate attention of the Clerk and dealt with in the manner outlined in EGPC's Complaints Policy.

Following investigation and if appropriate, the Clerk may forward the communication to the correct authorities.

EGPC will provide whatever assistance it can to support those authorities in carrying out their investigation.

OTHER MATTERS

The record of anonymous communications should be periodically reviewed to identify any developing trends.

Where the writer has provided contact details but has asked for anonymity their right to privacy should be respected.

This policy should be reviewed periodically to check compliance with legislative changes which may occur in the future.

Signed.....

(Chair)

Date.....