

## 11. Authority to communicate

### Background

There are several partner agencies and outside authorities that have close links with the valley. The Parish council needs to maintain open channels of communication and foster an atmosphere of mutual respect and approachability with these bodies. This is the most effective way of getting co-operation and gathering best information for the parish.

The council has suffered from strained relations with some agencies recently.

### Current

Some councillors have insisted that the clerk and chairman must get permission before any communication is made with any of the above. They also insist that all councillors should be invited to come to all meetings with anyone. This is a newly requested restriction has not been requested of other councillors, clerks or previous chairmen.

Turning up en masse for an informal catch-up or progress report is oppressive and not conducive to fostering good relations. It would also hamper the building of bridges where people with whom relations had previously been strained still came along to the meeting.

Gathering of information will be delayed if the clerk or chair have to seek authority for every email or phone call, when it is clear from our standing orders that without authority a councillor cannot issue orders, instructions or direction. Councillors are also aware that they should only represent the views of the council.

### Decision

To resolve that the chair and clerk have authority to communicate freely with authorities and partner agencies to exchange and gather information, without having to seek prior approval, providing no instructions are issued or decisions made and at all times the view of the council is represented.