
For Information

Website Policy - 2026/27

Adopted: 02/07/2026

Chairman: Cllr. D Peat

Minute Ref.: 260207/8

*Administered by Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer to
Simonstone Parish Council.*

Review Date: July 2027

This policy covers the management of the Simonstone Parish Council website in particular -

- The scope of the website.
- Management of the website, the Parish Clerk and the Webmaster.
- Criteria and procedures for making changes or additions to the Website.

Definitions:

- **Council** – Simonstone Parish Council
- **Councillor** – Councillor of Simonstone Parish Council
- **Parish** – Simonstone
- **Parish Clerk** – Parish Clerk to Simonstone Parish Council.
The Parish Clerk is an Editor responsible for routine matters such as adding agendas, minutes and meeting dates etc. see section 7.1.
- **Website** – Simonstone Parish Council Website
- **Webmaster** – Easy Web Sites
- **Archive or Archival Material** – Material that is a record of Parish Council business, e.g. meetings, reports, surveys, plans or correspondence referred to in the Minutes, Official correspondence received or sent out by the Parish Council.

1. Website Hosting Arrangements:

The Council is committed to operating a website hosted by a third-party provider, having no other connection with the Simonstone Parish Council. The present host is Easy Web Sites who provide website hosting services to other parish councils in and around the Ribble Valley and also provide and host the Council's email domain.

The current system is a 'Content Management System' where the Parish Clerk and nominated Councillors have direct control of day-to-day editing and updating.

2. Who determines what should be on the Website:

Subject only to the requirements of the law, the Council has the right to determine what should or should not be included on the Website.

3. What the Website should contain:

- 3.1 The Website shall contain material that arises from Council business such as agendas and minutes, policies, factual information about the Council and Councillors. It should also include any material that has been commissioned by the Council, such as reports or surveys or material that is directly derived from these.
- 3.2 The Website should also contain other material, such as history and geography of the Parish, news of local events, or any other material of a non-controversial nature that is appropriate for the Website on a 'custom and practice' basis. The Website may also possess interactive functionality, customary for such local authority websites (such as questionnaires, visitor response facilities, links to other sites etc.). The footprint of the Website may change from time to time according to requirements and circumstances.
- 3.3 The Website shall in principle not contain material of a deliberately contentious, offensive or disputatious nature, or material that criticises or implies criticism of one or more members of the public, individual Councillors, groups of Councillors or the Council as a whole.
However, Council meetings can be disputatious, and this is recorded in the Minutes and, once passed, this material may appear on the Website in the minutes or otherwise. Additionally, it can happen that the Council may approve material for inclusion on the Website that not everybody necessarily agrees with.
- 3.4 Regardless of what has been voted on by Council, the Website shall not contain any material that is libelous or defamatory or in any way against the law or which could expose the Council to legal challenge.

4. The Editors.

- 4.1 The current nominated Editor is the parish clerk.
- 4.2 The function of the Editor is to manage the Website, adding or deleting material, and editing pages as required. So long as they enjoy the confidence of the Council, the Editor shall be empowered to update the Website as they see fit without prior reference to Council and subject to Section 7 below.
- 4.3 The Editor may ask for professional help as necessary, subject to reasonable cost limits and prior agreement with the Council. Such expenditure should normally be planned and budgeted for the year ahead.
- 4.4 The Editor is accountable to the Council as a whole.
- 4.5 Where the Editor has managed the Website in a manner contrary to the will of the Council, the Council may require the Editor to make good any deficiencies, or in extreme cases, pass a motion of 'No Confidence' in the Editor and relieve them from their role on the Website.
- 4.6 In these circumstances it will be highly desirable for a replacement Editor to be nominated.
- 4.7 Council may appoint a non-Councillor external consultant to operate as an Editor, provided that the external consultant has no conflicting interest nor is part of any identifiable pressure group or political party where those activities and interests might be relevant to the business of the Council.

5. Procedure for adding new material to the Website.

Any Councillor may submit material for inclusion on the website provided that it is consistent with the general policies in Section 3, and also falls within any limits of technical feasibility to upload.

6. Specific powers of the Editors in determining what can go on the Website and editing what is already there.

6.1 Routine updates:

The Editor may make routine updates to the Website without prior reference to Council.

Examples of routine updates could be:

- Correcting errors of spelling, syntax or grammar and factual errors.
- Repairing and restoring links that have ceased to work properly.
- Routine structural changes where this improves the organisation of the Website.
- Replacing out-of-date documents with current versions.
- Uploading agendas, minutes and other parish documents as required.

6.2 Preservation of Archival Material:

It is understood that Archival Material (as in the 'Definitions' section above) should be preserved without change to the content but can be reorganised or restructured as required. If the Editor considers other 'Non-Archival' material to be out of date and no longer relevant, such as advertising an event that no longer takes place; they may consider it for deletion. If the deletions are substantial, the Editor must check with the council prior to making significant deletions or significant changes to existing material, for example, by creating an 'update plan' that Council can approve.

6.3 Editor uploading material:

The Editor may upload material to the Website with prior agreement, subject to the provisions of Section 3 above. However, the Nominated Editor should be prepared to answer for their actions in Council and be prepared to delete the material should Council pass a motion to that effect. Where it is anticipated that there might be disagreement, it is advisable for the Editor to obtain the prior approval of the Council.

6.4 Resolution of Disputes

If there is a dispute about the Editor's decisions or activities the matter shall be referred to the full Council whose majority vote shall be considered final. In case of further difficulty see Paragraphs 4.6 and 4.7 above.

7. Allocation of tasks to the Nominated Editor:

- Contact Us /Your Comments /Council Business
- Council Events/Diary
- Agendas and Minutes
- Council Elections
- County and District Councillors Committees, Policies /freedom of info Accounts /Budgets /Elections /Casual Vacancies Staffing /all vacancies. Highways /local issues
- Parish Planning
- Grants
- Social Media Channels

- Home Page
- Items of news
- Local history
- Local Business Directory
- Parish maps
- Parish footpath map and PROW
- Photos of the Parish
- Parish Councillors
- Planning application updates
- Playing Field information
- Police contact details.
- Local events.
- Surveys /Reports
- Useful links
- Useful information
- Useful telephone numbers