Alvechurch Parish Council
Working with the Community

Alvechurch Parish Council Developer Engagement Policy
Purpose

The Parish Council recognises that development proposals may affect the future character of the parish. The Council has a responsibility to represent the interests of residents and to seek the best possible outcomes for the community.

The Council (delegated remit to the Planning & Highways Committee (P&H Committee)) may engage with developer[1]s, land promoters and their representatives before planning applications are submitted. Such engagement shall be undertaken solely to understand proposals, communicate community priorities and influence outcomes in the public interest. It shall not imply support for any proposal.

The Council recognises that public confidence depends not only on the absence of actual conflicts of interest, but also on avoiding situations that could reasonably give rise to a perception of undue influence or personal benefit.

Core Principles
All engagement shall be conducted in accordance with:

- The Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life.
- The Parish Council Code of Conduct.
- The principles of transparency, accountability, fairness and impartiality.
- In line with Alvechurch Parish Council Neighbourhood Priorities Statement

The Council must not only act with integrity but must be seen to do so.

Equality of Access

1. The P&H Committee will make itself available to engage with any developer, land promoter or landowner with a potential development interest in the parish.
2. No developer shall receive preferential access, treatment or influence.
3. Engagement with one developer does not imply endorsement and does not create any obligation to engage differently with others.

Notification of Approaches

4. Any approach by a developer, land promoter, landowner or their representatives seeking a meeting or engagement with the P&H Committee shall be notified to the Clerk/Committee Clerk at the earliest opportunity.
5. The Clerk/Committee Clerk shall ensure that all councillors are informed of such approaches before any meeting is arranged.
6. A record shall be maintained of requests for meetings, whether accepted or declined, including the date of the request, the organisation making the approach and the reason for any decision.
7. Decisions regarding whether and how the Full Council engages with developers shall be made transparently and, wherever practicable, by resolution of the P&H Committee.

[1] 'developer' refers to any form of development, regardless of size or scale

8. Councillors who are approached directly by developers, land promoters, landowners or their agents regarding potential development proposals shall not enter into substantive discussions on behalf of the Parish Council and shall refer the matter to the Clerk Committee Clerk for recording and consideration under this Policy.

Meetings and Contact

9. As a general rule, meetings with developers shall take place only through formally convened P&H Committee or Full Council Meetings or separately advertised meetings authorised by the Council.

10. Delegated Authority to an Officer/Two Members must be correctly bestowed by the P&H Committee (or Full Council) if they are to represent the views of the Parish Council in meetings with developers.

11. No councillor is authorised to meet alone with a developer, land promoter or agent regarding a potential development proposal.

12. Where contact occurs outside a formal meeting, details of the contact shall be disclosed to the Clerk/Committee Clerk and recorded at the next available P&H Committee meeting.

13. At least two councillors and an Officer must be present at any authorised meeting with developers.

14. Written notes of meetings shall be produced and made available to Councillors and if so agreed and not commercially sensitive, made publicly available.

15. Presentation materials supplied by developers shall be published unless there is a clear legal reason preventing publication. Any decision to withhold material shall be recorded together with the reason

16. Developers are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the Alvechurch Parish Neighbourhood Priorities Statement in advance of any meetings with the Council.

Maintaining Impartiality

16. Councillors may listen to proposals and communicate community priorities, as set out in the Neighbourhood Priorities Statement, but shall not indicate support for, negotiate on behalf of, or give assurances to developers regarding future Parish Council responses.

17. No councillor shall make commitments, promises or agreements on behalf of the Parish Council outside a formal P&H Committee/Council resolution.

18. Participation in meetings with developers shall not prejudice the Parish Council's ability to consider and comment on any future planning application impartially, objectively and in the interests of the community.

Community Priorities

19. When engaging with developers, the P&H Committee should direct developers to the Alvechurch Parish Neighbourhood Priorities Statement and themselves may communicate community priorities, including:

- Protection of the Green Belt and countryside.
- Appropriate scale, density and design.
- Infrastructure provision.
- Affordable and local-needs housing.
- Traffic, transport and parking impacts.

- Flood risk and drainage.
- Biodiversity and environmental enhancement.
- Community facilities and open space.

20. The P&H Committee may encourage developers to undertake meaningful public consultation before submitting planning applications.

Gifts, Hospitality and Interests

21. Councillors shall not accept gifts, hospitality, meals, travel, accommodation or any other benefit from developers or their representatives, except for light refreshments provided during meetings.

22. Any offer of hospitality beyond this level shall be declined and reported to the Clerk/Committee Clerk.

23. Relevant interests shall be declared in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct.

Conflicts of Interest and Financial Benefit

24. Councillors must not use their position, knowledge gained through their role, or contacts established through Parish Council activities to secure financial, commercial or professional advantage for themselves, their family, their employer, their business or their associates.

25. Any councillor who has a professional, business or financial interest that could reasonably be perceived as relating to a development proposal, developer, landowner or associated consultant shall declare that interest in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct.

26. Councillors shall not seek or accept paid work, consultancy commissions, contracts or other commercial opportunities arising from relationships established through Parish Council business unless these have been openly declared and managed in accordance with the Council's adopted procedures and legal requirements.

27. Councillors should not provide paid services to the Parish Council, whether directly or through a company, partnership or other business in which they have an interest. In exceptional circumstances where such an arrangement is legally permissible and demonstrably in the interests of the Parish Council, the councillor concerned shall declare the interest, take no part in any discussion or decision, and all applicable legal, procurement and governance requirements shall be strictly observed.

Public Reporting

28. The Clerk/Committee Clerk shall maintain a register of formal meetings between the Parish Council and developers.

29. The register shall include:

- Date of meeting.
- Attendees.
- Organisation represented.
- Site or proposal discussed.
- Summary of matters raised.

30. The register shall be available for public inspection. Information may only be withheld in exceptional circumstances where publication would be unlawful or would disclose genuinely commercially confidential information. Any such decision shall be approved by the Council and the

reasons recorded in the minutes. The Council shall publish as much information as possible, consistent with those requirements

Review

31. This Protocol shall be reviewed every four years or sooner if required.

Adopted by: Alvechurch Parish Council
Date: Oct 12th 2026
Review Date: May 2027