PROTOCOL RE COMMUNICATIONS FOR COUNCIL MEMBERS

1. It is the policy of Barking & Dagenham Council to be open, honest and accurate in dealing with the media at all times. Our press and marketing activity supports and promotes the wide range of activities Cabinet Members and Council Officers undertake as they work on behalf of residents to build communities and transform lives.

2. All elected members of the Council, whatever political party, have a duty both to the Council and to residents to ensure that in commenting on the policies and work of the Council, they make every effort to ensure that everything they say, whether verbally or written (for example in leaflets), is factually correct. Although Members are entitled to comment on Council policies, they must not knowingly explain Council policies in factually incorrect terms.

3. Inaccurately explaining Council policies can result in tension in the community and damage the reputation of the Council and its work on behalf of all residents that live in the borough.

4. The Council does not allow Members acting in their role as a councillor (or anyone on their behalf) to independently arrange filming, photo shoots or media interviews. All such requests should in the first instance be referred to the Marketing and Communications Team who will, if deemed appropriate, make arrangements. Filming, video recordings, photography and media interviews are generally not allowed within Council buildings or on Council premises.

5. Failure to follow this Protocol could lead to a Member being in breach of the Members' Code of Conduct. Breaches of the Code will be referred to the Standards Committee.

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