



UPPINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

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To: All Councillors

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Guidance on Pre-Election Publicity

Under the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity, the period between the notice of an election and the close of poll (known as Purdah) precludes proactive publicity in all its forms of candidates in an election and other politicians involved directly in the election, including political parties, groups, organisations or pressure groups involved in the election and fielding candidates.

There are three elections on Thursday 7th May 2015: Parliamentary, District Council and Town Council.
Publication of Notice of Election is on 30th March 2015.

The application of these rules apply to the Town Council as a corporate body and apply when any election or referendum is taking place in our parish, or part of the parish, regardless of whether or not it is our own election, for example a European Parliament election.

The rules are applicable to publicity, not to the undertaking of business by the Council or its Committees. Although, decisions of the Council or its Committees which are likely to be controversial, attract a significant public and media interest and/or could be the subject of an election campaign should be avoided in this period unless there is a need to determine the issue or delay would have a significant detrimental impact.

The following are examples of things the Town Council must not do:

- issue publicity directly quoting a candidate or other person involved in an election;
- issue publicity which can be used to promote a candidate or political group involved in an election;
- organise events which attract a significant numbers of the public and the media and provide a role or a platform for a candidate or other person involved in an election;
- allow its premises or property to be used for political meetings, rallies or events or allow publicity, posters, leaflets or other election material to be displayed on its premises or property (including parks, notice boards and website).

The following usual business can be undertaken by the Town Council:

- factual responses to customer enquiries;
- publication of statutory documents (e.g. accounts, minutes etc);
- meetings of the Council and its Committees (although items which are not required or are non urgent and may give rise to promoting a candidate/political party, as set out above, should be avoided).

The simple principle underpinning purdah is that state resources (physical, financial and personnel) should not be used (directly or indirectly) to support election candidates or the political parties, groups, organisations or pressure groups involved in the election. If you have any queries or concerns please do not hesitate to contact the Town Clerk on 01572 822681 or clerk@uptown.co.uk