



Chiseldon Parish Council Amanuensis Policy, to include “Listening Companions”

The Parish Council recognises the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010, s149) and to maintain confidentiality.

An amanuensis is someone who writes down or keys a councillor's dictated words and reads materials aloud to a councillor. A “Listening Companion” will relay information to a councillor by spoken word, sign language or written information as required.

A councillor with a disability that impairs their ability to carry out day-to-day council communications shall have an amanuensis or Listening Companion appointed to (a) assist them with their responsibilities and (b) safeguard council rules of confidentiality, which would otherwise be breached if a councillor were to share confidential information or materials. A relevant disability is any physical, intellectual or mental health disability that affects written or spoken communication, and could involve, for example, impaired vision, hearing, dexterity, literacy or numeracy.

A councillor who declares a relevant need shall have an amanuensis or Listening Companion appointed to them as soon as possible after taking up office. It shall be the responsibility of the clerk to the council, together with a designated councillor, to organise the appointment of an amanuensis or Listening Companion, in discussion with the councillor. An amanuensis or Listening Companion shall be acceptable to the councillor, the clerk and the Parish Council.

An amanuensis or Listening Companion shall be subject to the same rules of confidentiality as the councillor to whom they are appointed. An amanuensis or Listening Companion shall not advise or offer an opinion to the councillor on a council matter or join in discussion with the councillor as though they were a member of the council. An amanuensis or Listening Companion shall be able to produce an accurate record of the councillor's words. They must be able to write legibly and use a keyboard. They are not expected to have a knowledge of council terminology or regulations.

It is the councillor's responsibility to direct the amanuensis or Listening Companion in day-to-day needs. The amanuensis or Listening Companion:

- shall write or key communications and other documents exactly as they are dictated
- shall read communications and other documents exactly as they are written
- shall offer no content suggestions or interpretations to the councillor
- shall not advise the councillor on what to think or how to respond to an issue
- shall be subject to the same rules of confidentiality as the councillor.
- shall sign an agreement stating they will not divulge any information heard during a confidential agenda item.



You can read about reasonable adjustments here:

[Reasonable adjustments in the workplace - British Dyslexia Association](#)

Approved.....9.12.24.....

Minute reference.....24/154.....

Date of next review.....12.26.....

