

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

This engagement strategy has the aim of constructing a standard for engagement between the Parish Council and residents. It recognises that the services the Parish Council provides must reflect the needs of the residents and the parish Council strongly believes that our residents should be involved in decisions affecting them and in shaping the future of the parish.

### **2. AIMS**

The aims of the strategy are to improve the way in which the parish Council engage and consult with residents on issues that require consultation by:

- a informing, consulting and involving;
- b being inclusive and engaging with all residents; and
- c ensuring views are listened to.

### **3. OBJECTIVES**

- a To improve, plan and shape the future of the parish according to local needs and priorities;

To improve the quality and delivery of services;

- b To use engagement to inform decision making, ensuring decisions are fit for purpose and meet the needs of the residents;
- c To enhance the well-being of the parish; and
- d To be a stronger, more active and cohesive parish.

### **4. HOW THIS WILL BE ACHIEVED**

Community engagement will be achieved by communicating, consulting, supporting and working together with residents.

#### **Communication**

Communicating with residents to be achieved in many ways to ensure all sections of the community are reached. This to include:

- **The Consultation Notification**, where appropriate, will be delivered to every house, informing residents on important issues and will be developed as a medium for consultation. This will be followed up by proactive Councillor contact and an email option will be offered as an alternative
- **The Parish website** has a wealth of local information and includes minutes of meetings.
- **Information leaflets** to be available from the parish office and can also be downloaded from the website. New leaflets will be added as necessary.
- **Meetings** of the Council and its Standing Committees are open to the public and include an opportunity for residents to engage with councillors at the Chairman's

discretion normally at the start of the meeting. There may also be occasions when there may be meetings involving full public participation.

- **An Annual Plan** detailing the proposed Council initiatives for the forthcoming year will be advertised enabling residents to be informed and to ensure their views are taken into account.
- **Email communication** with Councillors to be enhanced through new and dedicated email addresses.
- **Communication** to be a standard Council Meeting agenda item to ensure the communication needs and strategy is agreed on a regular basis.

### **Consultation**

To consult all residents on important issues to be key to the strategy to ensure those most affected are able to put forward an opinion and given an opportunity to make a difference.

To ensure consultations include all members of the parish by identifying the hard to reach groups such as youths, the elderly, the housebound, the disabled, ethnic minorities etc. may require establishing different engagement channels for them.

### **Acting Together**

To act together with residents in finding solutions to local problems will ensure they will be accepted and fit for purpose.

To act together to carry out agreed action plans, will engage the community in working with the Council to enhance the environment and the quality of their lives.

To act together will ensure residents have a voice and can make a difference.

## **5. ROLE OF PARISH COUNCILLOR**

- To represent the views and concerns of residents at meetings
- To approach all decisions with an open mind, no personal preferences, bias or pre-determination and be seen to do this
- To consult with residents as and when needed and to represent their views, especially those that would be adversely affected by an issue
- To adopt an open and transparent approach to decision making

## **6. MEASURING SUCCESS**

Success will be measured by annual reviews of the consultation outcomes, monitoring the residents' participation in the consultation processes and increasing their involvement in local projects and events.

## **7. STRATEGY REVIEWS**

Annual reviews of the consultation processes and results will be used as a continual improvement process for changes or amendments to the strategy.

Adopted: May 2018