

STRATTON ST MARGARET PARISH COUNCIL

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

May 2024

Stratton St Margaret Parish Council aims to be responsive to the needs of the local community and to involve its parishioners in the Council's decision-making about the issues which affect them including planning, delivery of services and the future of the area. To achieve this, the Council will provide its parishioners with:

- Relevant information about services, policies and decisions that might affect or interest them.
- Opportunities for them to have their say about decisions, services and plans through consultations, surveys and conversation.
- Opportunities to get involved, over and above informing and consulting, to give them a greater influence over decisions and delivery.

In doing so, the Council will follow the principles set out below and will:

HONESTY AND OPENNESS

- Make clear the purpose of any engagement activity and use the right methods (proportionate to the significance of the issues) to engage the local community.
- Be clear about what can be influenced.
- Use honest, accurate and unbiased information.

LISTENING

- Listen and respond to individuals and communities, enabling and empowering parishioners to play an effective role in setting priorities, designing services and influencing decisions to shape their local area.

INCLUSION

- Undertake fair and impartial engagement to a high standard to ensure that all parishioners are offered equal opportunities to participate in issues that may affect them and make a difference.

WORKING TOGETHER

- Act together when appropriate with a consistent approach to community engagement.
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Share knowledge and information openly with parishioners and partner organisations, whilst respecting confidentiality.

- Use what has been learnt from contact with local people to better understand and engage with the community, and to improve the services it delivers.

KEEPING IN TOUCH

- Provide feedback and demonstrate the changes that are made as a result of engagement.

The Council will use the following tools to:

Inform;

- Posters, fliers and publications including Parish Newsletter.
- Information stall eg at Summer Festival, Annual Parish Meeting.
- Public and specific meetings including Parish Council meetings, Annual Parish Meeting.
- Presentations, briefings.
- Website updates, email, Instagram, facebook.

Consult;

- Questionnaires and surveys.
- Online surveys and e-consultation (via the internet).
- Community groups.
- Discussion/focus groups/forums/e-forum.
- Written consultation through letter or email.
- Consultation events/workshops/exhibitions/general events.
- Public, neighbourhood or specific meetings.
- Documents or information available in offices, public buildings or online.
- Verbal consultation.

Involve;

- Working parties.
- Public or specific targeted discussion meetings with interested parties.
- Public or stakeholder workshops to identify issues and shape options.
- Online discussion forums.
- Community led plans e.g. neighbourhood plan.
- Comments and complaints.