

Community engagement strategy-communications

Introduction

Community Engagement is about giving local people a voice and involving them in the decisions that affect them in their community. It is about the development of relationships and clear communication to deliver better services and projects.

The aim of a community engagement strategy should be to engage residents and encourage their participation in decision-making to secure better services and to create a more active and informed community. This strategy sets out how Walton Parish Council will engage its community across a broad range of its activities and sets out short, medium, and long-term aims.

Current means of communication

At present residents and other interested people/organisations can communicate with or receive information from the Council in the following seven ways:

1. Newsletter – Published a minimum of three times a year this includes the name and contact details of the Clerk, details of forthcoming meetings and surgeries, information on local issues, and council activities. This is circulated to all residents of Walton.
2. Annual Report – Includes details of council activities, achievements, organisations, grants awarded, and a summary of accounts. Circulated to all residents of Walton, MDC, and SCC.
3. Website – www.waltonpc.org Information and photographs are updated regularly and details include information on the council and its activities, financial information, local amenities and organisations, current issues, and events.
4. Facebook page – Walton Parish Council - Information and photographs are updated regularly and details include information on the council and its activities, current issues, and events. Clear links to the parish council website are also included.
5. Annual Meeting of the Parish Residents – This is held each year [generally in May] at the village hall and gives electors of Walton a chance to air their views and or ask questions on matters relating to Walton. A speaker agreed by the Council may give an address on a local issue, Parish awards, if any, are announced.
6. Public Speaking at Meetings – at all meetings of the parish council residents have a chance to speak on local issues which are on the agenda for that meeting. There is no requirement to make a formal request to speak before a meeting. There is also an opportunity, at every parish council meeting, for residents to request items to be placed on the agenda of a future meeting. Extraordinary meetings are held as necessary to consult local people on new projects.
7. Contact with the Clerk – This can be made by telephone, email, post, or via the parish council website. The Clerk is happy to meet with residents by appointment.
8. Parish surgeries – Arranged at any time a request is received by the Clerk or Chairman. A
9. member of the Council will be available to speak to residents about local matters.

Aims for improving communication

Short term aims

- a. To publicise the availability of the councillor's surgeries through the newsletter and website
- b. To publicise information relating to parish council projects through leaflets, local press, and website and to invite residents to contact the council with their observations. To carry out local consultations.

Medium-term aims

- a. Increased information on all aspects of the Council activities and the promotion of local democracy and citizenship [such as information on registering to vote, where and when people can vote, standing for the Council or functions and councillors] to be published regularly through leaflets, and posters distributed to the nearest library, shops and other public spaces and to be available on the website. Articles to appear in the local press where possible.

Long term aims

- a. To disseminate information on all aspects of the council and Walton community in several forms such as website, leaflets, newsletter and local press to many different places and organisations including those involved with young people and hard to reach groups.
- b. To receive comments from residents and local bodies on issues affecting Walton

Assessment of the needs and views of the community

The council will aim to find out what the community wants or expects from the council and how content it is with the existing services, by circulating information on activities regularly and inviting residents to submit their observations to the council. All relevant and appropriate comments will be considered by the council. If few responses are made on any subject it will be assumed that the majority of people, including hard to reach groups and young people, are satisfied with the work being carried out by the council.

Adopted February 2010

[Website and contact details updated as required]

Latest Review:

Walton Parish Council 12th November 2021 amended and adopted –

Signed by Chairman

Date
