Woodbury Parish Council

(serving Exton, Woodbury, and Woodbury Salterton)

Community Engagement Policy

Woodbury Parish Council intends to have meaningful engagement and collaboration with the community as part of its working practice.

1. Introduction

This policy aims to detail the standard for engagement with its residents and partners.
The services this Council provides should reflect the needs of our residents and the locality.
We appreciate as representatives of the community that engagement with residents is important.
Residents should be involved in decision making that affects them and their neighbourhood as well as to help in shape its future.

2. Aims

The Council aims to work proactively to improve and strengthen working relationships with our residents, partners, statutory bodies, local businesses, and volunteering organisations in the parish.
We are committed to.

- Inform, consult and involve;
- Engage and be inclusive;
- Be proactive in joint working;
- Ensure constructive ideas and views are listened to, to enable enhanced and improved services, protection of the environment and quality of life for residents of the parish.

3. Objectives

According to local needs and priorities the Council's vision is to improve, plan and shape the future of the parish by;

- Improve the quality and delivery of services;
- Engage with residents to be able to make informed decisions and to make sure decisions; made are fit for the purpose to meet the needs of residents;
- Enhance the wellbeing of residents;
- Prioritise and focus resources on what matters to residents;
- Make sure the assets of the Council are managed to the maximum benefit to residents;
- Have good financial control through policy, procedures and quality auditing making sure funds are spent on the needs of the community.

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Exton Cllrs: Mrs. S. Cole, S. Parks, C. Hoar
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Woodbury Salterton Cllrs: S. Andrews, B. Girvin, Ms. H. Morrell

4. How will this be achieved?

The Council will engage with residents by communicating, consulting, supporting, and working together with residents.
Engagement will be in different forms,

- **Annual Parish Meeting**
  The Council will host an annual meeting and residents will be encouraged to attend. The meeting is held between 1st March and 1st June each year. The Chairman will report on the activities over the last year and usually reports are heard from District and County Councillors and perhaps village groups. It is a platform for residents to question any issues relating to the village. As it is not governed in the same manner as Parish Council meetings, residents are permitted to make statements on relevant matters during the meeting.
- **Parish Council Website**
  A website providing a wealth of information including parish council, agenda, minutes, associated documentation, and planning. Local information, including outdoor activities, footpath network, assets, and places of interest. Community groups and clubs.
  We update the information regularly.
- **Council Facebook page and X**
  Posts are used to pass on information and activities relevant to residents of the parish.
- **Woodbury News / Parish Newsletter**
  A regular newsletter is published providing updates, activities, and other information. They will be found in Woodbury News and on our website.
- **Meetings**
  Monthly Full Council and Committee meetings are held and are open to the public. The meetings provide an opportunity for the public to participate at the start of the meeting for items on the agenda and at the end to raise awareness of any other matter. The latter the Council will not make a resolution and if necessary, the item will be added to a future agenda.
- **Parish Office**
  Based in Woodbury, residents have the opportunity to pop into the office during the opening hours (Monday – Thursday) and speak to the Parish Clerk / Admin Staff or by appointment a Councillor.
- **Email / telephone**
  Council staff and Councillors can also be contacted via email or telephone.
- **Councillor Surgeries**
  Opportunity for residents from each Ward to meet with their Councillors face to face to raise any concerns or ideas.
- **Consultations**
  The Council will continue to hold consultations to give residents an opportunity to make comment. This could include planning, asset improvements i.e. play park refurbishment, Neighbourhood Plan, services, or any other important issue. The consultations could be in the form of a meeting/drop in or a questionnaire (online / hard copy) so that all members of the community have an opportunity to respond.
- **Working Together**
  The Council will support and work with residents, user groups, and partners to try and find solutions to local issues. The Council has a five-year action plan arising from an initial consultation and going forward further engagement and working with the community will ensure decision making and policy drafting will ensure a voice to help make a difference to improve our quality of life.

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5. Roles

Woodbury Parish Council members and officers will engage with the community through an array of ways as detailed above. Additionally, members might sit as a representative on local organisations and other groups to give support and be a conduit between them and the Council.

6. Measuring Success

Annual review of this policy and others to ensure that there is continual improvement to engagement with residents and others.

Policy adopted: 11th March 2024

Reviewed: Annually

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