UPTON BY CHESTER AND DISTRICT



PARISH COUNCIL

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**UPTON BY CHESTER AND DISTRICT COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY**

**INTRODUCTION**

Upton by Chester and District Parish Council recognises the need to consider the impact of its actions on others and surrounding environment. The Parish Council will encourage and make it as easy and attractive as possible for individuals and groups to become involved.

1.1 The Council consider that the community of Upton by Chester comprises:

a. All residents of the Parish

b. All users of the Parish Council services

c. All those who work or own a business within Upton by Chester

d. All young people who live or go to school in Upton by Chester

e. All voluntary organisations, clubs and societies as well as groups or organisations representing sections of the community.

1.2 The Council recognises that other bodies are crucial to the quality of life in Upton by Chester it will maintain the strong working relationships with Cheshire West and Chester Council, Chester Zoo, The Countess of Chester Hospital and neighbouring Parish Councils.

1.3 The Council defines communication as the process of informing the community about decisions that have been made or the passing on of information.

1.4 The Council defines engagement as involving the community to help form opinion and review decisions.

1.5 The Council is open to receiving both positive and negative feedback and has a commitment to encouraging the community to engage with the Council.

1.6 All communications will avoid jargon and misleading public information.

**COMMUNICATION**

2.1 The Parish Council website is the primary source of information on the Council for the community and will be kept up to date with content routinely monitored. The Council aims to actively publish a wide range of information on its work and activities.

2.2 The Council will make best possible use of Social Media in line with the Council’s Social Media Policy.

2.3 The Council will prepare regular press releases to be sent to local news/information providers and continue to produce its biannual newsletter that will be delivered to every household.

2.4 The Council will use noticeboards located at Upton Pavilion, Upton Lane, Long Lane and Newhall Road.

2.5 The Communications Committee will routinely consider ways to improve and add to a variety of communication methods.

ENGAGEMENT

3.1 The Council shall continue to set aside time at every Council and Committee meeting for members of the public to address the Council.

3.2 The Council shall continue to arrange an interesting and informative Annual Assembly Meeting with the aim of increasing attendance and providing time and space for open community discussion.

3.3 The Council shall continue to provide opportunities for members of the public to discuss issues with Councillors and the Clerk.

3.4 The Council shall continue to appoint members to represent the Council on community organisations as requested.

3.5 The Council shall continue to use social media and its website for receiving and responding to comments from the community.

**CONSULTATION**

4.1 When to Parish Council is seeking views on a specific project or idea it will consult with the community.

4.2 Whilst the majority of consultations will be open to the entire community, it may on occasion consult with specific stakeholders only.

4.3 When planning a consultation the Council will identify the key stakeholders for that specific consultation exercise to ensure they are directly consulted.

4.4 Consultations will be publicised as widely as possible and will have a defined end date for submissions.

4.5 The Council will be clear about why it is consulting and how the consultation will be used in the Council’s decision making process.

4.6 The timing of consultation s will be considered for example to coincide with events or to avoid untimely clashes.

4.7 The Council shall consider the format of the consultation which may include:

a. Open consultation on the Council website

b. Consultation documents at key venues around the parish

c. Direct consultation (letters/leaflets/social media etc)

d. Focus groups

e. The use of consultation engagement events such as public meetings, exhibitions and community event stands.