

Lanchester Parish Council

Community Engagement – Statement of Intent

Community Engagement refers to the many ways in which the Council and the community work together.

Lanchester Parish Council is committed to the development of its community and values the contribution the community can make in formulating the direction and provision of quality services.

The aim of community engagement is to engage residents and interested persons to encourage their participation in decision making.

The outcome of community engagement will be to secure services and facilities that are required and needed by the community and to create a more active and informed community. Effective community engagement will benefit both the community and the Council and the outcome will be that the community feels that the Council is working on their behalf.

Lanchester Parish Council recognises that successful community engagement can only be achieved through a two-way process. Good communications and community involvement is critical to earning and maintaining the good will of the community served.

The Council will encourage all 'interested persons' to be involved in community engagement. The community engagement Statement of Intent applies to all residents and interested persons who appear to the Council to have an interest in matters relating to the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area.

The Council is aware of the need to engage with the community and to make itself available to discuss individual and group needs.

The Council recognises that successful community engagement requires different types of engagement. The council will at all times seek to present the most appropriate and effective form of engagement including:

- Public participation at all Council meetings – the community is informed of all meetings of the Council and encouraged to attend and participate under the Councils Public Participation Policy.
- Council surgeries – Councillors hold bi-monthly publicised surgeries to allow discussion of issues with individuals or groups
- Public consultations – the Council will organise public meetings to discuss and receive views of the community on specific projects. Views from the community will also be sought through articles in

the Councils quarterly newsletter, the Annual Report, the Council notice board and through articles in the local press.

- Direct involvement with interested persons
 - police
 - health authorities
 - local partnerships
 - community groups
 - schools
 - voluntary groups
 - businesses
 - individuals
- Working with specific groups – views from specific groups will be achieved through more targeted approaches i.e. views of young people through the local partnership youth forum and views of families through local schools
- Council website – the website allows opportunity for the public to communicate with the Council and to access significant amounts of information regarding Council activities.
- Partnership working - the Council works in partnership with a number of organisations. As a provider of services to the community it is necessary to work effectively with partners to enable best value to be achieved. Partnership working can be initiated by the Council itself or by the community or organisations within it. To enable partnership working to be effective there needs to be clarity of purpose, achievable objectives with sound communication channels.

Lanchester Parish Council is committed to achieving and maintaining quality standards and sees community engagement as a fundamental element in this process.

Interested persons are encouraged to contact the Council through:

- Writing to us by post or e-mail
- Attending a meeting and speaking to us
- Calling us

This statement of intent will be published through the 'Publication Scheme', the Council website, Council notice board and through articles in the Councils newsletter and local press.