

Community Engagement Policy

1. Introduction

As representatives of the community the Parish Council's aim is to engage with residents, voluntary groups and local businesses to improve the quality and range of local services in the Parish. The council is committed to becoming actively involved in all parts of the community.

2. Informing the Community

This is achieved by:

- Publicising the work of the Parish Council through its website. This includes:
 - Agendas, Clerk's report and Minutes of meetings;
 - Timetable of meetings;
 - Weekly clerk's update;
 - Council Policies and Procedures;
 - Financial information;
 - News items;
 - Appropriate links to a variety of other topics.
- Publicising meetings and other council events on notice boards and council's website.
- Chairman's newsletter in the Rudgwick Parish Magazine (monthly publication distributed to all Rudgwick households).
- The website provides a link to the Rudgwick Parish Magazine, providing a comprehensive summary of facilities and organisations available within the parish.

3. Community Engagement

This is achieved through:

- Inviting members of the public to attend council meetings.
- Public Participation sessions during meetings, which are open to members of the press, the public, enabling all to make a statement or give a view on any item on the agenda.
- Annual Parish Meeting where the council explains what they have been doing over the past year and what plans they might have for the coming year. It is also the forum for electors to have their say on anything which they consider is important to the people of the parish. The meeting provides and encourages two-way communication between the community and councillors.
- Residents may submit items which they wish to be raised at a council meeting, or give their view on a particular topic to the clerk or any council member.
- Details of how to contact the Clerk are displayed on the website and notice boards.
- Consultation/surveys on specific items of interest are carried out where appropriate and the results made available.
- Where information affects a specific section of the community, the Council will ensure that the information is delivered directly to the village organisation representing that section e.g. the over 60's, mothers and toddlers, teenagers, youths and school children.

- Members of the public being part of working group committees.
- Quarterly “surgery sessions” in Rudgwick Hall, attended by two councillors and Horsham District Councillor where possible.
- “Village Hall” events, when appropriate, where local business, organisations and voluntary organisations as well as the council provide information on the services they provide.
- Councillor participation in community activities/events such as |book Exchange, Games Hub and Tots and Toddlers
- Providing financial support/grants to local organisations and groups.
- Liaising with voluntary organisations
- Council representation on external organisations.
- Work with others to produce and review community led policies such as the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Council participation in community activities and events.
- Where assistance has been requested the Clerk will, where appropriate, ensure that residents are referred to the correct department of Horsham District Council or other relevant organisation.
- When dealing with other authorities or organisation regarding issues affecting the community, the council will ensure that the opinions of the members of the community are made known.
- Promoting elections and the importance of the democratic process and the value of being a councillor.
- Providing councillors with a new members pack (on website).