

Hartley Wintney Parish Council – Community Engagement Statement of Intent

1. Aims and Objectives

1.1 Hartley Wintney Parish Council is committed to high standards of engagement with its community. Our council is part of a tier of local government which belongs to, is part of and is directly accountable to its local community. Councillors play an important role as they are elected to make decisions on matters affecting our parish. We aim to make a measurable difference to the quality of life of the community we serve and to be responsive to the needs of our community. This statement sets out how we ensure the community is kept informed about and can contribute to the activities and decision-making of this council to the benefit of this parish.

2. The Parish Council's aims are:

2.1 To make best use of our resources in terms of staff, money, buildings and land to achieve the best outcomes for local people.

2.2 To provide opportunities and support for local residents, businesses and groups to take an active role in their community.

2.3 To provide a range of services to support residents in our community.

2.4 To strive to keep the Parish of Hartley Wintney a safe place to live and visit.

2.5 To lead on the development of the Parish of Hartley Wintney by encouraging business growth, supporting the visitor economy, creating employment opportunities to make it an even better place to live.

2.6 To support transport improvements and tackle traffic issues and highways safety.

2.7 To aim to make Hartley Wintney greener and cleaner.

2.8 To encourage more people to engage in and enjoy arts, culture and physical activity.

3. What is Our Community?

3.1 We believe our community is everyone within the boundaries of our parish including all ages, any organisations, groups and individuals within it. We also recognise that residents pay for the activities of the parish council and that visitors to our community form an important part of the vibrancy of community life. We understand that there are certain bodies that are crucial to local quality of life and we strive to achieve excellent working relationships with these bodies including village organisations, the Police, neighbouring councils, schools and other tiers of local government.

4. Provision of Information to the Community

4.1 This council ensures that all documents which reflect its decisions are published and readily available for the public to view. These documents include the agendas, minutes and annual reports of the council which are:

Published on the Parish Council website at www.hartleywintney-pc.gov.uk

- Available to view, by request and prior arrangement in the Parish Office.
- Agendas posted on notice boards in the Parish.
- Annual Report is distributed to every household at the beginning of April each year and is available in local public locations.

4.2 Under the Local Government Transparency Code 2014 the council is required to publish a range of information on their website including expenditure over £500, procurement information, contracts awarded over the value of £5,000, land assets, grant awards and an organisation chart.

5. Opportunities for involvement and representations to the Council

5.1 Agendas for committees and full council meetings contain an invitation to the public and press to attend. Agendas give an indication of the business to be transacted so that members of the public can decide whether to attend or make views known by some other means prior to the meeting. In accordance with the Council's Standing Orders, member of the public can speak at the start of Council meetings during Open Forum for up to two minutes each.

5.2 The Council also facilitates Listening Post where residents can make an appointment to speak with District and Parish Councillors once a month prior to Full Council. Please contact the Parish Office to make an appointment.

5.3 Meetings are the forum for business and decision-making and it is important that this business can be conducted with ample time for due consideration of issues before councillors. However, at committee and council meetings there is also an opportunity for the public to make representations in person prior to decisions being made. We welcome representations but inevitably have to apply a two minute time limit and if members of the public are concerned that there might be insufficient time to make their points known, representations may be made in writing prior to the meeting.

5.4 We give representatives from the Police, Fire Brigade, District and County Council an opportunity to make reports to full council meetings. This provides the public and councillors with more information and an opportunity to ask questions on matters of interest to them.

5.5 The council will also call an annual meeting of the parish on a day falling between 1 March and 1 June inclusive. This is a meeting for residents where there will be an opportunity to hear from the Council and to ask questions. It is also possible to raise matters of concern to the community.

6. Involvement in Partnerships

6.1 The council endeavours to have representatives on and to attend as many meetings of external bodies which make decisions affecting the local community. Information obtained from these meetings is reported to full council meetings.

7. Role of Councillors

7.1 Councillors are the decision-makers of the council. The contact details for all councillors are available from the clerk and are also published on the Parish Council noticeboard, in the quarterly newsletter and on the website. Councillors also hold the Clerk and any other officers to account. Councillors welcome contact with members of the public, endeavour to be available immediately prior to council meetings and committees for anybody wishing to speak with them and they will listen to the representations residents make to them at council and committee meetings whether attendance is made in person, by asking another person to raise matters on their behalf or if comments have been provided in writing.

7.2 The contact details for the Clerk to the council are published on agendas, the Parish Council notice board, the website in Contact and the Annual Report. The Clerk is the Proper Officer of the council and is the appropriate contact in most cases for raising matters with or requesting information from the Council.

Please feel free to contact the Clerk for more information on anything in this Statement.

8. Specific Areas for Community Involvement

8.1 In some circumstances, we also provide additional information sheets, carry out consultations and/or provide additional public meetings in the event that exceptional issues arise which are of particular interest to the community. We envisage that these might include plans for significant planning development, exceptional spending plans and any emergency situations that arise.

8.2 Contact details for the council are:

Parish Office
Appleton Hall
West Green Road
Hartley Wintney
RG27 8RQ

Tel: 01252 845152

clerk@hartleywintney-pc.gov.uk

www.hartleywintney-pc.gov.uk, www.facebook.com/hartleywintneypc, www.twitter.com/thehwpc

The Parish Office is open to the public Monday to Friday 9am – 1pm and every afternoon by prior appointment.

Additional Information

For further information, please contact the Executive Clerk or the Chairman of the Policy Committee.

Amendment Record

Version 1: Approved by Full Council – April 2011

Version 2: Reviewed by Policy Committee – 23rd April 2018

Approved by Full Council – 6th August 2018