



**A QUALITY COUNCIL**

**MAWNAN PARISH COUNCIL**

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY**

**1. Introduction**

Mawnan Parish Council is in the process of developing a Community Engagement Strategy, which should create a common standard for engagement with residents and its partners.

The council realises that the services it provides should reflect the needs of its parishioners and the locality. It acknowledges that residents must be have more influence over local services and action, and be involved in decisions affecting them and their local area, and in the shaping the future of their parish.

**2. Aims**

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill places a duty on local government to engage with the communities they serve. The aim of the Community Engagement Strategy is to improve the way in which Mawnan Parish Council engages and consults its residents and partners on important issues, to ensure that :-

- They are fully informed, consulted and involved.
- They are all included in the engagement process, even ones which are socially excluded, and hardest to reach or consult with. This includes the young, elderly and infirm.
- Their views are heard and used to develop, enhance and improve services, the environment and the quality of life for residents.

**3. Objectives**

- To engage people with local council members, with politics, and with each other.
- To inform local residents clearly and comprehensively about the range of services available, performance achieved and perceived value.
- To consult with residents about their needs and aspirations for the area they live in, and they services they wish to receive.
- To improve the quality and delivery of services within the parish.
- To improve, plan and shape the future of the parish, according to local needs and priorities.
- To use engagement to inform decision making, ensuring decisions are fit for purpose and meet the needs of the parish.
- To enhance the general well-being of the parish and its residents.
- To strengthen the capacity of local councillors to act as leaders of the community they represent.
- To help create a stronger, more active and cohesive parish.

#### **4. How this will be achieved**

Improved community engagement will be achieved by Mawnan Parish Council by communicating, consulting, supporting and working together with residents.

##### **Communicating with residents**

This will be achieved in a number of ways, to ensure all sections of the community are reached :-

- The council's Annual Report, which is delivered to every household in the parish, informs residents on important issues, and will be developed as a medium for consultation, and include articles from members of the parish on topical issues.
- Similarly, the council's Quarterly Web Newsletters are published on the website and parish notice board, with copies available from the Post Office and the Parish Council office. These will also, in future, allow members of the parish to submit articles for inclusion.
- The parish website contains a vast amount of local information and is updated several times each week. Special events and important notices are added on a regular basis. Meeting Calling Notices & Agendas are displayed on the website and notice board, as required under the Local Government Act 1972. Meeting Minutes are displayed on the website and notice board within a month of every council or committee meeting. It may be possible, at some future date, to further develop the website to include a "Web Log" or residents' forum.
- Information leaflets are displayed on the notice board, available from the parish office, and can also be downloaded from the website.
- All Council and Committee Meetings are open to the public, and all include an opportunity for members of the parish to engage with councillors on matters on the agenda. There is an item for public discussion of items not on the agenda, at the end of every meeting.

##### **Consulting with residents**

One of the keys to a successful Community Engagement Strategy is consultation on important issues which affect residents. This will ensure those most affected are able to put forward their opinion, and given the opportunity to contribute.

The council is committed to ensuring that consultations include all members of the parish, by identifying hard to reach groups, such as the young, the elderly, the housebound or disabled, ethnic minorities, etc. These may require the establishment of different engagement channels, specifically targeted at reaching them.

##### **Supporting residents**

Supporting members of the community in shaping the future of their parish should bring about a more cohesive community.

Supporting local projects and participating in local events should raise the awareness of the Council and its aims and objectives.

Supporting local organisations and engaging with them should assist those organisations in meeting their own aims and objectives.

##### **Working together with residents**

By working together with residents and partners, it should be possible to find solutions to local problems, which will be accepted and fit for purpose.

Working together to carry out agreed action plans should engage the community in working with the Council, to enhance their environment and the quality of their lives.

Working together on decision making and policy drafting should ensure that residents feel they have a voice and can make a real difference.

**5. How this will be achieved**

Success should be measured against targets, with annual reviews of consultation outcomes, monitoring of residents' participation in consultation processes, and increases in their involvement in local projects and events.

**6. Measuring the success of this strategy**

Specific performance measures may include :-

- People feeling that they are kept well informed by the Council
- People feeling that the Council listens to their views, and acts on their concerns
- People feeling that complaints are handled well
- People feeling that the Council is trustworthy
- People feeling that Council involves them in making decisions about future priorities
- People feeling that they have opportunities to participate with the council, and can influence the decision-making process
- People feeling that they wish to be more involved in decision-making
- People being satisfied with the way the Council runs things, and with particular services provided by the Council
- People feeling that public services are joined up
- People feeling that the council provides value for money
- People exercising their right to vote at local elections
- The number of people with whom the council has engaged in consultation, discussion and participation or devolution during a specified period.

All of the above can be readily monitored over time to demonstrate the effectiveness of the council's strategy.

**7. Strategy Reviews**

Annual reviews of the consultation processes and results should be used to create a continual improvement process, with changes / amendments to the Community Engagement Strategy.

**8. Action Plan**

Following agreement of this strategy, an action plan will be drawn up by the council's Office & Finance Group. This will include a series of recommendations to a Full Council Meeting.

Following discussion and endorsement by the council, a detailed action plan will be drawn up, and appended to this document.

Adopted by Council Resolution,  
18<sup>th</sup> December 2008