

ANCASTER PARISH COUNCIL

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

1 INTRODUCTION:

1.1. It is a requirement under the Parish Council's (Power to Promote Well-being) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2008 for an eligible Council to have published a Statement of Intent as to Community Engagement if it is to use the power of well-being.

2. DEFINITION:

2.1 The Statement of Intent as to Community Engagement is a policy document which forms an integral part of the Parish Council's Standing Orders and sets out how, when and who the Council will seek to involve in the decision-making process and is the Council's commitment to involving the residents of Ancaster in:-

- the preparation and formulation of the budget each year commencing with the Annual Parish Meeting.**
- discussions and advice on the policy issues which affect the village.**
- the everyday issues which affect residents.**

2.2 The aim is to ensure early community involvement in all those major issues of concern, so as to present a co-ordinated approach to external agencies who see this as a basic requirement.

3 CORE PRINCIPLES:

3.1 Purpose: To set out a standard and arrangements on how the Parish Council consult and report back to those people and organisations engaged in the process.

3.2 Consultation: To involve a wide variety of interested parties and individuals in the decision-making and policy formulation by creating a dialogue and sharing the relevant information.

3.3 Benefits: It is a two-way process and can bring benefits to both the Council and the community by:-

- giving greater public ownership and support to the decisions taken**
- concurs with the aspirations of the residents**
- provides an improved influence in the decision-making process**
- contributing to the well-being of the community**
- provides an opportunity to view other ways and ideas for achieving objectives**
- improving community cohesion and sense of inclusion**
- ensuring a transparency and openness to the whole process of decision-making**

3.4 Access to Information:

- all of the information relating to major issues will be available on the Council's website
- similarly, residents will be kept informed of both the issues and decisions in the bi-monthly newsletter which is hand-delivered to every household
- any resident under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 can obtain copies of any documents held by the Parish Council, which is not of a confidential nature
- if any residents require information they can contact any Member of the Council, or the Clerk to the Council, whose contacts names and addresses are listed on the website and noticeboard.
- there is an opportunity at the start of every Parish Council meeting for any resident to raise an issue which they consider to be important, or they can attend any of the parish Council meetings.
- each year the Parish Council's Annual Report will not only list the achievements for the year but also highlight those issues which it considers to be important for the following year.

4.0 LINKS TO OTHER AGENCIES:

4.1 The Parish Council's Statement of Intent as to Community Engagement will link to both the County Council's and District Council's Consultation Strategies and has been developed to complement and build upon the principles set out in both Corporate Strategies.

4.2 Similarly, the SICE will provide a framework which will link the Sustainable Community Strategy prepared by Principal Authorities for promoting or improving the well-being of its area and for which a Parish Council must have regard to in exercising the power of well-being.

5.0 IMPLEMENTATION:

5.1 Before any Parish Council can introduce a SICE it must go through the process of consultation with the community as a whole and all those other organisations which it is likely to be involved with in the decision-making process e.g.,

Residents	Adjacent Parish Councils
County Council	Voluntary Sector
District Council	

5.1 It is only after this process of consultation has been completed can the Parish Council adopt its Statement of Intent as to Community Engagement.