

Statement of Intent as to Community Engagement

1. Aims and Objectives

Quedgeley Town Council aims to build on the way it engages and consults on important issues by ensuring that it:

- Represents and promotes the interests of Quedgeley and all its people
- Works more closely with residents, business and community groups, to understand their concerns and effectively use those views as an integral part of the decision-making process
- Engages with as many people as possible who want to participate in decision making, monitoring services and planning for the future
- Ensures that residents have the opportunity to be heard
- Promotes equality of opportunity and opposes discrimination
- Is open and accountable in all it does (total transparency)
- Supports development which is environmentally, socially and economically sustainable

This strategy is part of the Council's commitment to creating and maintaining effective working relationships with all sectors of the community, based on trust, openness and contrastive challenge.

The outcomes the Council hopes to achieve include:

- Improved communication with the local community, by means of increasing and improving ways of communication, ie more notice boards, social media etc
- A better understanding within the community of the role of the Town Council and of its Councillors
- Local people being involved in decision making
- Improved satisfaction with local public services and the inclusive discussion as to what additional services the Council should look to implement

2. Defining the Community

The Council considers the community of Quedgeley to consist of:

- All residents of the town, including residents of care or residential homes
- All users of the town council's services
- All those who work within the town council area
- All those who own businesses within the town council area
- All young people who live and/or go to school within the town council area
- All local voluntary organisations, clubs and societies

Community Engagement Policy

- Any group or organisation that represents some, or any, of the above cross sections of the community.

Additionally, the Council recognises that there are certain bodies that are crucial to the quality of life in Quedgeley and aims to maintain excellent working relationships with these bodies, including; the Police, Quedgeley Community Trust, other tiers of local government and neighbouring town and parish councils.

3. Provision of Information to the community and opportunities for community involvement

- Information is provided by the Town Council to the community in a number of ways, including via: The Town Council Offices at 9c School Lane, Quedgeley, Gloucester. GL2 4PJ, open Monday to Friday – 9.30am – 2.30pm and Kingsway Community Centre, Thatcham Avenue, Kingsway, Gloucester, open Tuesdays 9.30am – 1.00pm (term time only), providing a wide range of information on both council services and other quedgeley activities and issues.
- The Town Council website www.quedgeley-pc.gov.uk which provides comprehensive information both on the work of the town council and on other services, local events, local groups and organisations as well as an up to date Twitter feed.
- Various notice boards around the town which are used to display agendas for Council meetings and contact details for local Councillors as well as other information of interest to the local community. A community noticeboard is now in Tesco which seeks to highlight the roles of the Councillors and the level of service a local resident can expect to receive.
- The Town Council newsletter, published in advance of events where appropriate and delivered to as many households within the parish as possible.
- Bi-monthly joint surgeries are held at Tesco alongside the Police and Quedgeley Library to provide more awareness of support available in Quedgeley to the residents. Councillors are on a rota to support these surgeries.
- A monthly update on the town council activities published in the Quedgeley News which is delivered to as many households within the parish as possible.
- The Annual Report, produced in May each year and available at the Annual Town Assembly or from the Town Council offices or on the website.
- Meetings of the Town Council and its committees and sub- committees which are open to the public and a period of up to 20 minutes is set aside in each meeting for public questions/public engagement.
- Public meetings, called to gauge public opinion concerning important issues affecting the parish such as major planning applications, incinerator etc.
- Questionnaires sometimes used to ask local people's opinions about specific matters.
- Public Events, held annually in Quedgeley and advertised to all residents by means of noticeboards, Quedgeley News, local media.

4. Opportunity for Community Input

- Saturday Surgery's take place bi-monthly at Tesco, Quedgeley, providing an opportunity for the public to raise concerns/discuss opportunities face to face with town councillors and town council staff.
- All councillors are visible and available to talk to at community events. Feedback forms are provided for the community and are handed out at each event to gauge general feelings about the events.
- Feedback forms are available at each community centre and residents are encouraged to fill them in and place in designated feedback boxes. Staff empty these boxes on a weekly basis.
- Comments are received from the community via the Quedgeley Town Council website and answered on a daily basis.
- Complaints, concerns and praise are logged in a complaint handling folder which is fed back to the councillors at council meetings to enable appropriate steps to be taken to address any concerns.
- All noticeboards have councillor details on them with advice on how to contact the council in the event of a concern or just to provide information.
- SurveyMonkey.com will be used in order to gain views from the residents regarding ongoing projects within the community.

5. Opportunities for Formal Representations to the Council

Formal representations to the Council may be made at any time in writing (including email) to the Town Clerk

- Or at a Town Council/Committee Meeting

6. Involvement in Partnerships

The Town Council often works in partnership with other organisations such as Gloucester City Council, Gloucestershire County Council, the Police, the Environmental Agency, QCT, local schools, especially Severn Vale School, Glos Ambulance Service, Community Payback Scheme and many voluntary charitable sectors.

The Town Council is also actively involved with the following local organisations:

- Quedgeley Community Voice
- Gloucestershire Constabulary
- Quedgeley News

Community Engagement Policy

- GAPTC
- Gloucestershire Chartered Parish Group
- Severn Estuary

7. Role of Council Members and Officers

Council members (Councillors) are the elected decision makers of the Town Council

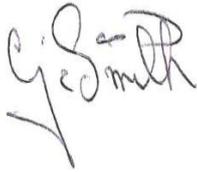
Their contact details are available from the Town Council Offices and on the Town Council website.

Members of the public are welcome to contact Councillors to raise any issues.

The Council's officers are employed by the Council to carry out the day to day functions of the Council, making sure the Council effectively and efficiently serves the local community.

The Town Clerk is the Proper Officer of the Council and is responsible for ensuring procedural/financial protocol is correct and has overall responsibility for managing the Council's affairs on a daily basis and its employees.

Reviewed and agreed by Full Council on Monday 15th July 2019



Signed:
Graham Smith – Chair

Minute Ref: