



## **Great Notley Parish Council Community Engagement Policy**

### **1. Objectives**

Great Notley Parish Council (the Parish Council) aims to ensure that through the use of a wide range of approaches to public consultation and community engagement it actively encourages residents to inform its decision-making process and make an input into decisions which affect their day to day lives in the parish.

The Parish Council is committed to creating and maintaining effective working relationships with all sectors of the community. The Council recognises that there are different levels of engagement and will endeavour to involve the community in the following ways:

- Inform people about its work and the services it provides and signpost to other relevant information to assist residents.
- Consult with and seek out the views of the Community
- Encourage community participation in local government
- Collaborate with individuals, community groups and organisations where appropriate to achieve agreed aims for the benefit of the Parish
- Build up effective working relationships within the community and encourage a sense of ownership of assets, infrastructure and new projects

### **2. The Community**

The Parish Council seeks to engage with all sections of the community regardless of age, ability, gender, ethnicity, faith or sexual orientation i.e. parishioners (particularly hard to reach groups such as the young, disenfranchised, disaffected and the elderly), the local business community, the many clubs, organisations and societies which are active in the parish, its partners such as Braintree District Council and the neighbourhood policing team, the Church and our elected members for Braintree District Council and Essex County Council.

### **3. Forms of Liaison with the Community**

The Parish Council recognises that members of the community may wish to engage with it at different levels and in a variety of ways, from the occasional email or letter with a suggestion on how a service could be improved, to attendance at meetings. The Parish Council will therefore use many ways to actively seek the views of its parishioners and involve them in its work

## **Direct Access**

The Parish Council will publish a list of Councillors and how to contact them as well as the contact details for the Clerk on the 4 Parish Council noticeboards and also on the Parish Council website and in the Parish magazine the 'Great Notley Times'. There is a specific Parish Council telephone line and email address for the Clerk and email addresses for Councillors to enable residents to make such direct contact.

## **Parish Council Meetings**

Dates, times and venues of Parish Council meetings together with agendas, will be published on the Parish Council noticeboards, on the website and also a link to that information will be published in the Parish Council Facebook group. Parishioners are encouraged to attend Parish Council meetings and time is set aside at all meetings for public participation. A section in the website sets out what to expect at a meeting and how to participate.

## **Annual Parish Meetings**

Parishioners are also encouraged to attend the Annual Parish meeting which is advertised on the boards, website, Facebook and with direct liaison with community groups. Any issues raised at that meeting may be taken to the next Parish Council meeting for formal discussion.

## **Single issue public meetings**

The Parish Council may hold a single-issue public meeting or consultation event to provide an opportunity for residents to make their views known on a particular issue of particular relevance to the Parish. Such meetings will be publicised on the boards, website, Facebook and via community groups. A recent example was a consultation event on proposals to upgrade the skate area.

## **Surgeries**

The Parish Council hosts occasional ad hoc Residents Surgeries which on occasion, may be held on Zoom to allow residents to raise questions and queries in an informal environment with Councillors. It may be that the question can be answered forthwith or it may be added to a future agenda. If it is not a matter that can be dealt with by the Parish Council an attempt will be made to signpost to the relevant authority.

## **Website**

The Parish Council website [www.greatnotley.org.uk](http://www.greatnotley.org.uk) publishes information about the Parish, its Council, and other information about organisations within the Parish, together with wider information such as details of how residents may respond to consultations at a District, County and on occasional national level. Agendas, minutes, accounts, Parish Council policies and other documents will be regularly posted on this website for parishioners' information.

## **Facebook**

The Parish Council hosts a Facebook group which not only provides information about Parish Council activities but also promotes community activities within the Parish and also acts as a way in which residents views can be ascertained.

## **Community events**

The Parish Council organises events for the community to promote community spirit and cohesion including the annual service of Remembrance which involves youth organisations and a Christmas event. Community litter picks are being organised and in addition the Parish Council liaises with local community groups such as by attending meetings of the Notley Green Community Association (NGCA), ad hoc meetings of other community groups and also provides a stall at a school event where Councillors are available to speak to residents.

## **Magazine**

The Parish Council publishes the 'Great Notley Times' magazine 3 times a year which includes information relating to the work of the Parish Council and information about other community groups and organisations which is distributed to every home in the Parish.

## **Partnership working**

In organising community events the Parish Council works with other community groups such as Scouts, NGCA and Women's Institute and is committed to continue such partnership working moving forward. The Parish Council is also committed to partnership working with other groups and local authorities where it will benefit the residents of the Parish.

## **Surveys and liaison regarding specific projects**

The Parish Council carries out surveys in situations where the views of the wider community are useful for example for a specific project. In addition, the Parish Council may set up working groups for specific projects and may involve representatives from community groups to ensure the widest selection of views are available.

This Policy was adopted by Great Notley Parish Council on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2022

Date of review May 2024