



CORFE MULLEN TOWN COUNCIL

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: STATEMENT OF INTENT AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Corfe Mullen Town Council aims to ensure that, using 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.

Corfe Mullen Town 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
- 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.

THE COMMUNITY

Corfe Mullen Town 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 Dorset Council and the neighbourhood policing team and the Church. The Town Council is also committed to engaging with any persons who appear to have an interest in matters relating to the economic, social and environmental well-being of its area.

PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO THE COMMUNITY AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Corfe Mullen Town 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 etc.

Corfe Mullen Town Council will therefore use many ways to actively seek the views of its parishioners and involve them in its work:

- **Publications:** The Town Council will communicate with parishioners through regular articles in the monthly parish magazine, as well as the annual report which will contain up to date information about payments and receipts and monies held by the council on parishioners' behalf, and the local press when appropriate.
- **Website:** The Town Council website is a community resource which publishes information about the Parish, the Council, and the many organisations which flourish in Corfe Mullen. The Town Council agendas, minutes, accounts and other

documents are consistently posted on the website for parishioners' information. Parishioners are invited to contact the Town Council via the website, or email at office@corfemullen-tc.gov.uk Corfe Mullen Town Council is committed to developing and improving the website, and will actively encourage parishioners to use it to garner information and as a means of improving communication.

- **Direct Access:** Notice Boards will be used to display agendas and information directly advertising other important events e.g., notices relating to the annual audit of accounts; casual vacancies, elections and forthcoming meetings etc. Details of the Town Council's publication scheme and the address of the Dorset Council Monitoring Officer will also be displayed on the website for parishioners' information.
- **Co-option:** Except for the Full Council, Corfe Mullen Town Council encourages the involvement of the community in the work of the Council through co-option. Any standing committee or working party of the council is empowered to co-opt interested members of the community onto any standing committee or working party.
- **Meetings:** Notice of all Council meetings are published on the Town Council notice boards and on the website. Parishioners are encouraged to attend Full Council and Committee Meetings, where time is set aside at all meetings for public participation for raising items in relation to the agenda. Parishioners are also actively encouraged to attend the Annual Parish Meeting, which is advertised as above.
- **Surveys:** Corfe Mullen Town Council will undertake surveys and other related forms of information gathering from time to time to ascertain the community's views on a particular issue.
- **Specific Projects:** From time-to-time Corfe Mullen Town Council will undertake specific projects for the benefit of the community. The normal method for undertaking these is via working parties set up under a standing committee. Co-option (see above) is used to ensure that the community is fully represented and involved in these projects.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR FORMAL REPRESENTATIONS TO THE COUNCIL

Representations to Corfe Mullen Town Council will normally be considered at the next meeting of the relevant standing committee. If, however, they require the provision of information only, then the clerk will provide it in accordance with the council's publication scheme. The Town Council has a Code of Practice for handling complaints, which is available from the Town Council Office and is published on the website and reviewed annually. The publication of agendas on the Town Council's notice boards and website gives parishioners the opportunity to make representation to the council before agenda items are discussed. All formal representations received are responded to in writing.

INVOLVEMENT IN PARTNERSHIPS

Corfe Mullen Town Council is committed to partnership working where it will be of benefit to the Parish, or to fulfil its statutory requirements.

ROLE OF COUNCIL MEMBERS AND OFFICERS IN CONSULTATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Elected members are powerful advocates for their community and their leadership role enables them to have a major input into the consultation and engagement process.

Corfe Mullen Town Councillors are very accessible:

- Their contact details are published on the notice boards, on the website in the annual report to parishioners and occasionally in the Town Council newsletter.
- They are available to talk to parishioners during the public session prior to each Full Council and at the Annual Parish Meeting.
- In a private capacity, they belong to many other local clubs, societies and organisations, where they may promote the work of the Town Council and be available to parishioners.