

Headbourne Worthy Parish Council

Community Engagement Policy

Introduction

Headbourne Worthy Parish Council aims to ensure that, through the use of a wide range of approaches, it actively encourages residents to make an input into decisions which affect day to day lives of member of the parish.

HWPC 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

HWPC seeks to engage with all sections of the community regardless of age, ability, gender, ethnicity, faith or sexual orientation. Also included are the clubs, organisations and societies which are active in the parish, its partners such as Winchester City Council, Hampshire CC and the neighbourhood policing team and the Church. The Parish Council is also committed to engaging with any persons who appear 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

HWPC 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 a letter to attendance at meetings etc. HWPC will therefore use many ways to seek the views of its parishioners and involve them in its work:

Publications

HWPC will communicate with parishioners through articles in the parish newsletter and the local press when appropriate. The newsletter is published 3 times a year and delivered to each property in the Parish.

Website

The Parish Council website Headbourne Worthy Parish Council, Headbourne Worthy, Winchester is a community resource which publishes information about the whole Parish, its Council, and the organisations which are in Headbourne Worthy and Kings Barton. The Parish Council agendas, minutes, accounts and other documents will be regularly posted on this website for parishioners' information. Parishioners are invited to contact the Parish Council via the website, or email at clerk@headbourneworthy.org.uk. HWPC is committed to developing and improving the website and would like to encourage parish groups to use it to publicise their events. Notices from local charities and Winchester Groups as well as notices of public consultations from outside bodies including HCC, WCC will also be posted.

Direct Access

The Parish Council will display a list of all Parish Councillors on the website. The protocol for the email address for all Councillors is firstname@Headbourneworthy.org.uk. The Clerk will also forward on any emails to Councillors. The website will be used to advertise other important events e.g. notices relating to the annual audit of accounts; casual vacancies, elections and forthcoming meetings etc.

Co-option

HWPC encourages the involvement of the community in the work of the Council's Committees (Kings Barton and Headbourne Worthy), and Working Groups (Down Farm Lane, Resilience and others). Committees and Working Groups of the council are empowered to co-opt interested members of the community.

Meetings

Notice of all Council meetings and Committees is given on the notice boards and on the website. Parishioners are encouraged to attend Full Council and Committee Meetings and time is set aside at all meetings for public participation. There may also be a "Meet the Councillor event" or a Parish Meeting. These will be advertised on the website and noticeboards.

Surveys

HWPC will sometimes undertake surveys and other related forms of information gathering to ascertain the community's views on a particular issue.

Specific Projects

HWPC will undertake specific projects for the benefit of the community. The normal method for undertaking these is via Working Groups set up by the Council. 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 HWPC will normally be considered at the next meeting of the Council or committee. However, if they require the provision of information only, the clerk will be able to provide this if it has been published. The Parish Council has a policy for handling complaints, which is available from the clerk, published on the website and reviewed regularly. The publication of agendas on the Parish 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

HWPC is committed to working in partnerships where it is clear that 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

HWPC Councillors recognise that elected members are powerful advocates for their community and this enables them to have a significant input into the consultation and engagement process. HWPC makes every effort to provide input into the consultations sought by outside agencies on matters that will affect the community or the infrastructure of the Parish.