

TILSTON PARISH COUNCIL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Tilston Parish Council has developed this document as a means of exploring how it can improve its engagement with residents and the community. It is intended to provide a framework of best practice and is aimed at developing a closer working relationship with the community it represents.

Tilston is a rural parish council. It benefits from a primary school, a church, a village hall, a village store, a public house, a café just on its border with Stretton, a well-equipped playing field and playground, a community orchard, a wildlife area with ponds, wild flowers and walks under development and a B&B.

The Council area has limited internet access and poor mobile signal which can be improved through the use of “wifi calling” if available.

This document is not intended to be seen as a finished product but one which will evolve over time reflecting the changes in the community of Tilston Parish Council. It is therefore essential that our Community Engagement Strategy is subject to regular review and change.

AIMS – Inform, Consult, Involve

The aim of Tilston Parish Council’s Engagement Strategy is to continuously improve the way in which the Parish Council engages and consults with the community and key partners.

To this end we want all residents to be:-

- Informed of the Council’s activities and projects
- Consulted on the Council’s activities and projects
- Have the opportunity to be involved in then Council’s activities and projects.

Resulting in the views and opinions of the community becoming an integral part of Tilston Parish Council’s decision making process, improving any services provided by the Council and ensuring the Council better reflects the community it represents.

OBJECTIVE

The objective is to use consultation to improve the activities the Council undertakes to ensure these activities best reflect the community’s needs and aspirations.

STRATEGY – Communication & Consultation

Tilston Parish Council will achieve its objectives through the following ways:-

Communication

The Parish Council recognises the need to use different methods of communication to reach all sections of the community.

The Reporter (Local Paper) – The Parish Council is committed to submitting articles to The Reporter each month. These articles will include information about activities of the Parish Council as well as contact details.

Posters and Fliers – The Parish Council will circulate fliers and posters to every home when required.

Annual Report – The Parish Council will produce an Annual Report to be approved at its May Meeting each year. This will include a Chairman's Report, summaries of the budget and accounts, planning applications, meetings' attendance figures and highlights of other matters of interest and events that have occurred during the course of the year.

Website – www.tilstonparishcouncil.co.uk The website will be used to provide information about the activities of the Parish Council including meeting agendas and minutes and planning applications received. It will also provide information as required by the Transparency Code including the accounts.

Facebook – The Parish Council established a Facebook page to provide it with a forum to disseminate information as quickly as possible. It also provides a forum for public comment and debate. This is a more informal avenue for communication with residents of the parish of Tilston.

Meetings – The Parish Council's meetings are advertised on the two noticeboards in the village, on the website and on Facebook. Meetings are open to the public and include an opportunity for the public to raise issues of concern and comment on matters discussed at the meeting.

Suggestion Box – The Parish Council has provided a Suggestion Box located in the village shop for residents and visitors to inform, comment and make suggestions to improve the village and surrounding area.

Councillors – The councillors strive to be well known, upstanding members of the community and are easily accessible to those residents who wish to contact them.

Consultation

Tilston Parish Council will consult residents both formally and informally at every opportunity when making important decisions.

The Parish Council will also seek to consult with all sections of the Community including the traditionally hard to reach sections of the community.

Partnership Working - To achieve the Council's objective it is essential for the Parish Council/Councillors to support other groups, organisations and individuals within the community to achieve their aspirations.

It is also important that the Parish Council works with other authorities providing services within the area including the principle authority, Cheshire West and Chester Council and the Police.

Managing Expectation – Increased communications with residents can result in an increased workload and it is therefore important to manage the increased workload and residents' expectations.

Parish Council Response Times – The Parish Council will respond to all communications whether by telephone, email, suggestion box notification or postal letter within 10 working days of receipt of the communication by providing the information requested or information regarding the appropriate actions being undertaken.

Measuring the Success of the Strategy – The success of our community engagement strategy will be monitored through annual analysis of

- Response to Council consultation
- Residents' contact and interaction with the Clerk and Parish Councillors
- Residents' attendance at Parish Council Meetings.

October 2023