



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

### Statement of Intent

The Council will respond to the concerns of the community by keeping in touch through effective channels of communication. We do this through:

#### Communication and Consultation

- The town website. The Council has a website which has much information and is regularly updated. Special events and important notices will continue to be added. All agendas and minutes are published on the site.
- Information leaflets e.g. Bincombe Beeches booklet and activities for children and adults are available in the Local Information Centre in the Town Hall.
- Public sessions or 'Open Forum' at all Town Council meetings and Committees.
- Members of the Council will continue to inform Crewkerne citizens of the Council's vision, priorities and aspirations. In turn Councillors receive valuable feedback which will assist in shaping the vision and priorities.
- The Council's quarterly newsletters are delivered to every household in the town and inform residents on important issues. Newsletters are also available on the website.
- Reports and press articles in the local papers. Council Officers will aim to inform local media outlets of council activities when time permits.
- Agendas and dates of meetings are displayed two notice boards in the town centre.
- The Council Annual Report informs residents of Council work during the year. It is delivered to households, and available in the Community Office and various prime locations in the town, as well as on the website.
- Speaking directly to staff every weekday morning at the Town Hall offices or by phone or email.
- Social media.
- Obtaining views via the quarterly newsletter – asking for feedback or short online surveys.
- Offering the facility to pass comments via regular councillor surgeries and Coffee with Councillor events.
- Ensure that residents are aware of the Neighbourhood Plan and what it means to the town. To facilitate two-way communication with residents to ensure the Neighbourhood Plan reflects their needs and views and is accepted at referendum.

#### Involvement

- Working closely with the Police and community organisations to deal with antisocial behaviour.
- Participating with a large number of outside bodies i.e. Community groups such as ABCD and other organisations
- Working with local schools to promote democracy and citizenship and on local events.
- Working with the youth – collaboration to help improve play facilities.

#### Engagement

- Special events e.g. Jubilee events, Coronation event, Bincombe Beeches events etc.
- Going out to schools, youth groups and Scout/Guide groups (amongst others) to obtain views from the young.
- Working closely on issues e.g. with residents, Crewkerne in Business group, Space4Crewkerne, ABCD, and the Royal British Legion.



#### Public Exhibition

- Display of plans and photographs of new projects on display at the Local Information Centre, at the Annual Town meeting in Victoria Hall and other town locations.

#### OUR OVERALL AIM OF THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

This Community Engagement Strategy aims to support an active, strong and inclusive community, which is informed and involved in decision-making that will enable the Council to improve public services and to enhance the quality of life of our residents.

- An active community, where people are supported to improve and enhance their quality of life.
- A strong community, that can form and sustain their own organisations, to bring people together to collaborate on common interests.
- An inclusive community, where all sections of the community feel they have opportunities in decision making on public services.

#### OUR OBJECTIVES

Our objectives will be to strengthen, develop and sustain opportunities to shape and influence the future.

1. Encourage and support residents of Crewkerne to consider local needs and aspirations and to develop interest to tackle local issues.
2. Ensure that the community is clearly and regularly informed about the services that are provided by the Town Council.
3. Ensure that after a consultation exercise, the community is informed about the results.
4. Ensure that information obtained from consultation and engagement is shared with other agencies to provide a common base of evidence.
5. Try to ensure that consultation and engagement activities are conducted in partnership with other agencies wherever possible, to minimise duplication.

#### HOW WILL WE MEASURE OUR ACHIEVEMENTS?

Specific performance measures may include residents feeling that:

- they are kept well informed by the Council.
- the Council listens to their views, and acts on their concerns.
- complaints are handled well.
- the Council is trustworthy.
- the Council involves them in making decisions about future priorities.
- they have opportunities to participate with the council and can influence the decision-making process.
- they are satisfied with the way the Council runs things, and with particular reference to services provided by the Council.
- the council provides value for money.

#### STRATEGY REVIEWS

This Strategy will be reviewed regularly to ensure that the aims and objectives are being met.

Targets to be achieved by next review:



- Communication – more information on social media and use of a variety of social media platforms.
- Involvement – in community resources e.g. Crewkerne in Bloom, Creative Crewkerne etc to improve the quality of life in the town.
- Involvement – to provide a conduit for voluntary and community groups in the town to flourish to allow them to support those residents that need it.

Adopted 23<sup>rd</sup> Nov. 2009 Min No 115 (c) (iii)

Reviewed P&R Ctee 7<sup>th</sup> February 2011 Min. No 44

Reviewed P & R Ctee 5<sup>th</sup> January 2015 Min No 34 b)

Reviewed P&R Committee 10<sup>th</sup> October 2022 Min No 22/23 16b)