

Statement of Intent as to Community Engagement

Milton Parish Council

1. Aims and Objectives

The Council's aims and objectives for seeking community engagement and the outcomes it hopes to achieve are:

A. Aims to:

- ☑ work more closely with residents, businesses and community groups;
- ☑ engage with as many people as possible who want to participate in decision making, monitoring services and planning for the future;
- ☑ ensure, that through the use of a wide range of approaches to public involvement and community engagement, we actively encourage the involvement of residents, to capture their views and learn their concerns and effectively use those views as an integral part of the decision-making process;
- ☑ ensure that residents have the opportunities to be heard at every stage, and the capacity to be effective citizens.

B. Objectives:

This strategy is part of the Council's commitment to creating and maintaining effective working relationships with all sectors of the community, based on trust, openness and constructive challenge.

Outcomes of the strategy will include:

- ☑ Improved communication through the establishment of new channels of engagement;
- ☑ More residents understanding the role of Councillors and getting the best effect;
- ☑ Improved engagement with local communities, with more people feeling that they are involved in decision-making and a higher percentage of people involved in volunteering;
- ☑ Improved satisfaction with local public services.

2. Defining the Community

Milton is a rural parish situated just north of Cambridge. The principal authorities are South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council. Milton Detached is in Chesterton Fen and is accessed by road through Chesterton. Geographically it is nearer Cambridge than Milton.

There are approximately 1800 residential properties accommodating approximately 4200 people of all ages (as at 2001).

The community may be defined as consisting of:

- ☑ Residents of the Village
- ☑ Users of Parish Council Services
- ☑ Community Centre and Recreation Grounds Trustees & their users
- ☑ Head Teacher and Governors of Milton Primary School
- ☑ Young people who live and/or go to school in the Village
- ☑ Retail and other and Businesses in the community
- ☑ Interest groups – clubs and societies e.g. Brownies, Scouts etc
- ☑ Voluntary organisations
- ☑ Church Groups
- ☑ Farming Community
- ☑ Groups of people defined by a common factor such as age, disability, faith, and other groups
- ☑ Councillors and public service representatives including Council Staff.

3. Role of Council Members and Officers

The Parish is non-political with 15 Councillors who have various roles and responsibilities which are published in the Council's annual report. They can be contacted via the Parish Council office, the website or directly. Council members communicate with the public via their attendance at meetings as part of their work with relevant committees. Councillors each have a number of different roles that embrace a range of activities from the following: Allotments management; Cemetery management; Finance; Footpaths; Highways; Liaison with other Parish Councils; Planning Development; Risk Assessment; Tree Wardens, acting as representatives on various bodies (see paragraph 5).

These roles inevitably bring opportunity to discuss the work of the Council with residents and peers and encourages participation and feedback.

There are two officers of the Council, who cover the entire spectrum of the Council work, and are based in the Parish Council office in Coles Road which is open four mornings a week from 10 to 12 for people to turn up without an appointment. Outside these times appointments can be made to visit the office and the staff are frequently dealing with meetings or in contact via email, telephone and letters etc.

The Parish Council employs grounds and verge maintenance contractors and staff who litter pick and check play equipment on a weekly basis. They frequently have direct contact with members of the public and naturally have to field questions and enquiries. Their ability to do this effectively and courteously is as important as any other element of the Council's work in the community and can give good feedback on the views of people on the services offered by the Council. In addition the Council employs Cambridge City Council to carry out extensive quarterly checks of play equipment.

4. Provision of Information to the Community and Opportunities for Community Involvement

1. The Parish Office is open to the public four mornings a week from 10am to 12 and messages can be left 24/7 either by telephone or email.

2. The telephone numbers and addresses of all the Councillors are published on notice boards, website, in the Village View and in the Annual Report. It is recognised that members of the community may wish to engage with the Council at different levels - from the odd email or letter with a suggestion on how a service could be improved, to regular attendance at a Council meeting.

3. The Parish Council website address is also widely published and the site contains all the information an individual might wish to know about the work of the Parish Council and its individuals, including meeting minutes, policy documents, financial statements, annual report and how to contact anyone associated with the Council.

4. The Council submits articles to the Village View' (community magazine) on a bi-monthly basis. This is delivered to every household in the parish.

5. Information is published on the 3 notice boards around the parish.

6. There is a public participation 'slot' at each council meeting.

7. An Annual Report is prepared and sent out to every household in the parish. A copy is included in the 'Welcome Packs.'

8. Welcome Packs are given to new residents in the village. This contains information on the community and the Parish Council.

9. The Council has supported the production of the Parish Plan.

10. The Council undertakes consultations by questionnaire, public meetings as appropriate, for specific issues. Active feedback is sought at all times and Councillors attend such events to “spread the word” on the role of the Council and encourage people to participate in local affairs with specific local issues being explored from time to time using the full range of communication techniques available. The Council is always considering practical ways of engaging with people and community groups.

5. Involvement with Partnerships.

The Council has representatives on the following:-

- AWA [sewage works]
- Cambridge Sport Lakes Trust
- Day Centre
- Joint Action Group (Northstowe)
- Landfill Liaison
- Milton Community Centre and Recreation Grounds Management Committee
- Milton Charities
- Northern Fringe
- Parish Plan
- Police Liaison Panel
- Tomkins Mead Management
- Trolley Bus (Dial-a-Ride shopping for the elderly)
- Village View

In addition non-Councillors act on behalf of the Council as:

- Archaeological Warden
- Child Protection Officer
- Allotment representatives

This Statement of Intent for Community Engagement was approved for issue at the Parish Council meeting held on

Signed

Jim Daniels Clerk to Milton Parish Council.