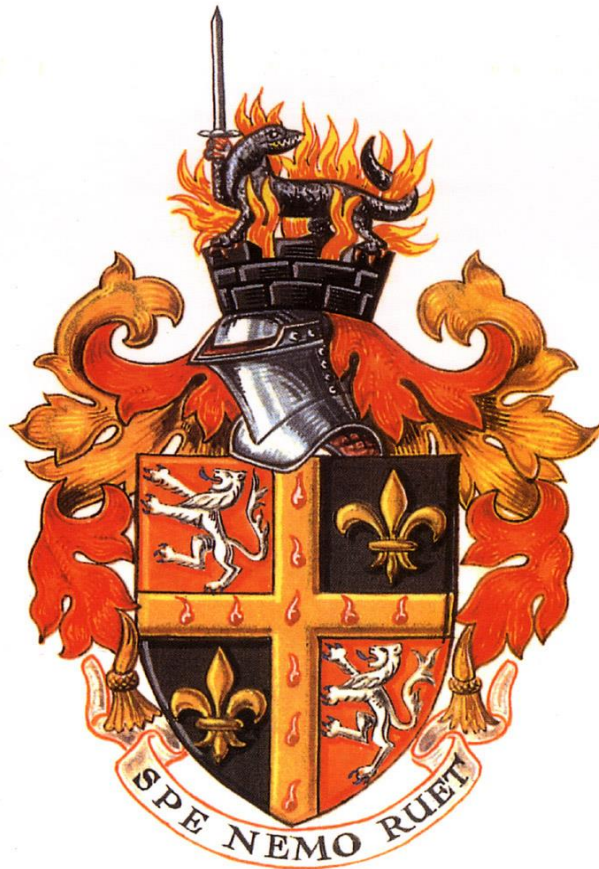


SPENNYMOOR TOWN COUNCIL



STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Author of Policy:	Town Clerk
Date Effective From:	22 September 2020
Policy Review: When & By Whom	19 March 2020 Constitution Working Group
Next Review:	September 2021
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In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this document will be posted on the Council's Website www.spennymoor-tc.gov.uk and copies of this document will be available for inspection on deposit in the Council Offices, Town Hall, Spennymoor. Costs are as per the model publication scheme.

1. Introduction

Spennymoor Town Council is committed to improving our engagement with all sections of the local community: residents, voluntary groups, young and elderly, businesses and local groups and organisations. The overall aim is to increase the involvement of people in the life of their communities and in the Council's decision making processes. In doing this the Council will become more responsive to the needs of the Community and be able to better reflect its views and aspirations.

2. Engagement

Spennymoor Town Council intends to actively engage with the following sections of the community:

- Residents of the parish
- Local youth groups
- Groups representing the elderly
- Resident's Associations
- Voluntary Organisations
- Community Associations
- Schools
- Businesses within the Parish
- Church Groups
- Councillors – public service representatives and staff

Effective engagement can only be achieved through providing information to these sectors and seeking resident's views. The Council already employs a number of methods to do this:

- Contact details of the Council Offices, Officers and individual Councillors are available on the Council's website;
- Notices of meetings are posted on the Council's notice boards throughout the parish on a monthly basis as well as on the Council's website;
- Standing Orders indicate that the Council provides the public with an opportunity to participate in meetings;

- The Council's website provides details of its services and activities and provides access to Council meeting dates, minutes and number of documents;
- The Council publishes an Annual Report which is made available at public places throughout the Town;
- Representatives of the Council attend local voluntary organisations and some Councillors are members of these voluntary organisations in their own right; and,
- The Council will hold Community Consultation Events and Public Participation Meetings.

3. Aims and Objectives

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

- To enable an involved and active community through consultation with residents on local issues, reaching all sectors of the community including hard to reach groups, and seeking the views of young people
- To communicate information clearly and factually through the management of the Council's website
- To improve communication with partner organisations
- To actively be involved in local organisations such as resident's organisations, youth groups and community groups
- To raise the profile and reputation of the Council through inviting residents to take part in council meetings through public participation
- Publicising the Annual Town meeting throughout the Parish area
- Informing the press of the activities of the Council, when appropriate
- Encouraging the Mayor to fulfil their civic role by accepting invitations to community events
- To enable each Councillor to effectively perform their role as elected representatives of the community through the issue, and continuous updating, of Member's induction pack to include a Member's Handbook (containing all policies and procedures) – available for reference in hard copy from the Town Hall, or online to view.

- Encouraging Councillors to attend meetings of community organisations or take up places on community groups and organisations
- To ensure Town Council staff represent the interests of the Council at community events
- To encourage staff to have an effective input into the Council's decision making process

Action Plan for Effective Community Engagement

Minutes	Ensure copies of minutes are available in hard copy and on the website and that copies are sent to the relevant Councillors	Staff	Ongoing
Notice of Meetings	Ensure notices are posted on Council noticeboards throughout the parish and on the Council's website	Staff	Ongoing
Annual Report	Ensure report is available in hard copy and on the website. Copies to be distributed to public places throughout the town and to Councillors	Staff	Annually
Office Opening Hours	Publicise on noticeboards, the Council's website and outside the building	Staff	Ongoing
Annual Parish Meeting	Publicise throughout the Town	Staff	Annually
Public Participation and Community Consultations	Publicise Council's Public Participation and Community Consultation events on the website and in the media	Staff	Ongoing
Website	Maintain website with information on Council events and activities	Staff	Ongoing
Youth Groups	Maintain contact with local schools and youth groups	Staff and Members	Ongoing
Local Groups and Organisations	Maintain contact through local representatives and attendance at meetings or events. Work together with local partnerships	Staff and Members	Ongoing
Press	Inform press of Council's activities and meetings	Staff	Ongoing
County Council	Maintain contact with local County Councillors and County Council staff to ensure sharing of information	Staff and Members	Ongoing