



# Loddon Town Council

The Old School | Church Plain | Loddon | NR14 6EX

[www.loddontowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.loddontowncouncil.gov.uk) | 01508 522 020

## Community Engagement and Communication Policy

### Introduction

This policy is to ensure that Loddon Town Council's communication and community engagement with parishioners, businesses and local community groups is effective.

### Community Engagement and Communication Aims

Loddon Town Council aims to:

- Reply to parishioners' emails and phone calls within three working days.
- Improve community engagement by considering existing and new communication channels and their relevance to the Town Council audience.
- Consider the importance of community engagement when defining the role and responsibilities for each Council employee.
- Ensure that communication with residents, business and community groups is effective by maintaining effective working relationships.
- Engage community consultation when monitoring services and planning for the future.
- Engage in community consultation when considering contentious matters.
- Ensure that residents are encouraged to engage with the Council, and give them opportunities to share their views, ideas and concerns with the Council.

### Community Engagement and Communication Objectives

The Council's objectives include:

- To ensure that the residents understand the role of the Council and the Councillors.
- To ensure that the Council engages with local communities and organisations.
- To improving satisfaction with the Councils service, community open space and facilities.
- To impart relevant and timely information through relevant communication channels.

### Effective Communication and Community Engagement

Loddon Town Council will facilitate community engagement in the following ways:

- Informing parishioners on what decisions are being considered. Agendas will be displayed three clear days before a Town meeting on the Town Council website and the Church Plain Notice Board.
- All meetings of the Town Council are open to the community and press and there is a period of time set aside on the agenda to give residents the opportunity to speak. Facilities also exist where residents can, where appropriate or necessary, make written reports, present petitions, or have a case presented on their behalf to the Council.
- By ensuring that the Town clerk is qualified, competent and impartial to ensure that residents are receiving unbiased information and support.
- Contact details for the Council and Clerk will be displayed on the Church Plain Notice Board, the Council website and the Chet Contact Town magazine.

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- The Town Council will publish a list of the planned Town Council meetings; to include date, times of the meetings and the deadline for Agenda items.
  - The Town Council will adhere to the Local Government Transparency Code 2015 and publish all required information.
  - The Town Council will ensure that the electors are informed of The Notice of Electors Rights to Inspect the Annual Accounts<sup>1</sup>.
  - Consultations and surveys will be considered when necessary, and results will be made available.
  - Identifying and embracing opportunities to work with other local community groups when the need arises.
  - Publicising positive results that have been achieved from working relationships between the Council and other community groups; to encourage new relationships / partnerships to form.
  - Promoting the importance of the democratic process and the value of being a Councillor.
  - Promoting the value of Town volunteer work by publicly thanking volunteers.
  - Inviting parishioners to nominate a local person to receive the annual Freedom of Loddon award for notable contribution to the local community.

### **Information will be provided to the community in the following ways;**

- The Council's website will contain; Town Agendas and Minutes, relevant news, Councillor and staff contact details, Policies, the annual accounts, information regarding Town facilities and office opening hours.
- Church Plain Notice Board will display the next meeting date and Agenda.
- The Town Council Facebook page will give professional and relevant updates, linking back to the Town Council website.
- A monthly contribution to Chet Contact, the local Town magazine.
- Signs on Town facilities.

### **Provision of Information to the Community**

Loddon Town Council will make available to the community information relating to;

- The Council's role, duties and powers
- The services that the Council offer
- The cost of staff, services and facilities
- The annual budget
- The annual internal and external audit report
- Community representatives and Council committee membership
- Vacancies on the Council
- Council policies
- Minutes and agendas of Town meetings.



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## Outcomes

The success of this policy will be measured by;

- Improved communication through the existing and new channels of engagement.
- A better understanding by the community of the role of the Town Council and its roles, powers and duties.
- A better understanding by the community of the role of the Town Councillors
- Offers from Parishioners wishing to volunteer in the community.
- Improved engagement with the local community, with more parishioners feeling that they are involved in decision-making.
- Improved satisfaction with the service provided by the Council.

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The Town Council will review its community Engagement Strategy every three years to ensure that it remains relevant.

This policy was adopted by Loddon Parish Council at its meeting held on 28 July 2021.

Signed:

Dated:

Date for next review: **July 2024** (reviewed every three years)