



Ottery St Mary Town Council Community Engagement Policy 2018

REVIEWED AND APPROVED AT THE 1st MARCH 2021 FULL COUNCIL MEETING

INTRODUCTION

Ottery St Mary Town Council (‘the Council’) recognises the need to consider the impact of its actions on others and the surrounding environment. Whilst the Council cannot force any individual or group to become involved, it can, and shall, make it easier and more attractive for them to do so.

- 1.1 The Council considers that the community of Ottery St Mary comprises:
 - a. All residents of the parish
 - b. All users of the Council’s services
 - c. All those who work, or own business within Ottery St Mary
 - d. All young people who live/go to school in Ottery St Mary
 - e. All voluntary organisations, clubs and societies as well as groups or organisations representing sections of the community.
- 1.2 The Council recognises that other bodies are crucial to the quality of life in Ottery St Mary and it will maintain the strong working relationships with East Devon District Council, Devon County Council and adjoining parish councils.
- 1.3 The Council defines communication as the process of informing the community about decisions that have been made or the passing on of information.
- 1.4 The Council defines engagement as involving the community to help form opinion and review decisions.
- 1.5 The Council is always open to receiving both positive and negative feedback and has a commitment to encouraging the community to engage with the Council.

COMMUNICATION

- 2.1 The Council website is one of the primary sources of information on the Council for the community and will be kept up-to-date with content routinely monitored. The Council aims to actively publish a wide range of information on the Council and its activities.

2.2 The Council will in due course make best possible use of Social Media in line with the Council's policy in this area.

2.3 The Council will in due course prepare regular press releases to be sent to local news providers and continue to produce a monthly newsletter for the Gazette.

2.4 The Council will utilise all the noticeboards within the Parish.

ENGAGEMENT

3.1 The Council shall continue to set aside time (3 minutes per parishioner) at every Council meeting for members of the public to address the Council.

3.2 The Council shall continue to develop the Annual Parish Meeting with an aim of increasing attendance and providing a venue for open community discussion.

3.3 The Council shall continue to provide opportunities for members of the public to discuss issues with councillors (arranging meetings with councillors in the Council Offices)

3.4 The Council shall continue to appoint members to represent the Council on community organisations as requested ('Outside Bodies').

3.5 The Council shall in due course utilise social media for receiving and responding to comments from the community (it is currently utilising its website and Facebook for this purpose).