

# Stottesdon and Sidbury Parish Council

## Community Engagement Statement

Engagement with the community is at the heart of everything which the Parish Council does.

### Aims and Examples of how we try to fulfil them:

1. To ensure that the Parish Council is fully representative of its community.

- Residents are encouraged to stand for election or co-option by notices on the notice boards and the web site, in the quarterly newsletter and by word of mouth.
- When co-opting Councillors an important consideration is that being a large Parish the Parish Council should represent as much as the geographical area of the parish as possible.
- When planning applications are under consideration neighbours are normally notified by the Local Authority, notices are erected by the local Authority and the site is visited by members of the Parish Council. The Parish Council ensures that Members have access to all comments made by the local residents.
- Questionnaires are distributed and consultation meetings are held whenever appropriate,

2. To ensure that members of the community know how they can contact councillors and that they feel comfortable in doing so.

- Contact details of Councillors and Clerk are available on newsletters and website.
- Clerk and Councillors are well known in the Parish and always willing to discuss resident's concerns personally, by phone or email, as appropriate.
- In the event that the Parish Council has a concern regarding a resident or local business it will be agreed by full council and minuted how this should be approached, i.e. personally rather than in writing in the first instance.

3. To ensure that members of the community know what the Parish Council is doing on their behalf.

- Minutes of all meetings (except confidential items) will be published on the Parish Council website as soon as possible after being approved at full council meeting.
- Regular information provided via quarterly newsletters, website and notice boards.
- Chairman's Annual report given verbally at Annual Parish Meeting and also in writing in the Spring newsletter.
- Copies of the Parish Plan and Village Design Statement (when adopted) will be available on the website.

4. To ensure that members of the community know how they can influence the decisions of the Parish Council in a democratic manner.

- Notices of all Parish Council meetings include an invitation to the public session.
- Residents attending the public session are welcomed by the Chairman and invited to contribute.
- Procedures always explained to members of the public who attend meetings.
- Information as appropriate is put in the newsletter and on the web site.
- Public sessions are allowed at the beginning of each Parish Council meeting.

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Community Engagement Statement adopted by Stottesdon and Sidbury Parish Council at their meeting dated 23rd November 2009

Signed:

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5. To ensure that, when appropriate, the wishes of the community are passed on to other authorities and agencies.

- Clerk in regular contact Shropshire Council, Shropshire Association of Local Councils (SALC).
- Clerk acts on decisions of the Parish Council meetings within one week of the meeting taking place.
- Parish Council represented on other outside bodies i.e. Local Joint Committee (LJC), SALC.

#### B. How are we going?

Healthy signs are:

- There are enough candidates to fill the seats at election time.
- There is always more than one person interested when it is necessary to co-opt a councillor following a mid-term resignation.
- Attendance of Councillors at meetings is very good.
- Attendance of members of the public at meetings is good.
- All Councillors and Clerk get frequent phone calls and emails from residents and deal with them promptly.
- Someone always stands at Annual Parish Meeting and thanks councillors for their efforts.
- A welcome pack produced for all new residents of the Parish and is delivered to them personally.

Not so good:

- Despite wide publicity attendance at Annual Parish Meetings are low.
- There is scope on the website for more Parish information.

#### C. How can we do better?

- Ways need to be found to increase attendance at Annual Parish Meetings – choose innovative venues and speakers.
- The web site will be developed further.
- Start to collect email addresses of as many residents as possible to make communication more efficient.