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Hemswell Cliff Parish Council

Hemswell Cliff Parish Council Community Engagement Strategy

No changes

1. Aims and Objectives

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

Aims:

- i. Work more closely with residents, businesses, visitors, neighbouring parishes and community groups;
- ii. engage with as many people as possible who want to participate in decision-making, monitoring services and planning for the future;
- iii. work to enhance local democracy and engagement;
- iv. 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;
- v. make every effort to contact and engage with 'hard to reach' members of the community, and;
- vi. ensure that residents have the opportunities to be heard at every stage, and the capacity to be effective citizens.

Objectives:

- i. This strategy forms 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:

- i. Improved communication through the establishment of new channels of engagement;
- ii. more residents understanding the role of Councillors and getting the best effect;
- iii. 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, and;
- iv. improved satisfaction with services provided by the Council.

2. Defining the Community of Hemswell Cliff Parish Council

Hemswell Cliff Parish Council is located at the heart of Lincolnshire in the district of West Lindsey. The Parish is placed almost equidistantly between Market Rasen and Gainsborough at the junction of the A631 and A15 (Ermine Street) 12 miles north of Lincoln.

Hemswell Cliff village is situated on either side of the A631 at the site of the former RAF base, now a thriving business park. The Parish also contains the Hamlet of Spital in the Street (west of the A15) and farm land to the north. The principle authorities are Lincolnshire County Council and West Lindsey District Council. At the time of the 2011 Census the Parish had approximately 677 people living in it.

The community may be defined as consisting of residents of the parish; and:

- Hemswell Cliff Primary School – teachers, governors, parents and pupils
- Children's Centre – service users and staff

- Hemswell Cliff Pre-School
- Estate Management Companies and Residents Groups
- Hemswell Cliff Partnership Board – contains representatives from community groups, the Parish Council and the District Council
- Lincolnshire Police and PCSOs
- Retail and businesses located in the Parish Council area
- Farming community
- Groups of people defined by a common factor such as age, disability, faith, and other groups
- Volunteer organisations - litter pick group
- Interest groups – Veterans Association, clubs and societies
- Councillors and public service representatives including Council Staff

3. Role of the Council, Elected Members and Officers

Hemswell Cliff Parish Council makes every effort to encourage residents and businesses to attend meetings and in particular when items are being discussed which specifically relate to them, for instance, a planning application for a particular street. The Council is also committed to engaging and consulting with the community about issues which affect it, for instance, the Local Plan, the Neighbourhood Plan, the Master Plan, planning applications and the development of new Parish Council facilities.

The Council is currently not party-political with six Councillors. Councillors are identified and engage with the community via: newsletters, the website, email, over the phone, notice boards, Facebook and other media. Councillors also attend partnership meetings and meetings with other organisations.

The Council employs one part-time officer which is the Clerk who works from home. The Clerk (and the Council's) contact details are made available on every document. The Clerk engages with the community in a similar way to councillors. It should be noted that the Clerk also fulfils various statutory duties relating to communication and engagement, for example, notices placed in conspicuous places at the time of the Annual Audit.

4. Provision of Information to the Community

The Council communicates with residents, partner organisations, businesses and visitors in the following ways:

- i. Messages can be left 24/7 either by telephone or email;
- ii. The names, addresses and phone numbers of councillors are published on the website in other publications;
- iii. The Parish Council website address is widely published and the site contains all the information an individual might wish to know about the work of the Parish Council;
- iv. The Council also maintains a Facebook account which is updated regularly.
- v. The Council prints a newsletter on a quarterly basis and this is delivered to every household and business within the parish;
- vi. Information, such as agendas of meetings and notices, is published on the three notice boards around the parish and on the web site;

- vii. The local PCSO, District Councillors, Lincolnshire County Councillor and members of the press are invited to attend Council meetings, and;
- viii. An Annual Action Plan is prepared and printed in the newsletter and on the web site.

5. Opportunities for Community Involvement

The Council recognises 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.

The Council therefore provides the following opportunities for involvement:

- i. Parish Council meetings are open to the public and there is a public forum during meetings;
- ii. An Annual Parish Meeting is held in either April or May, giving the public and local organisations an opportunity to participate in the full meeting;
- iii. The council undertakes consultations by questionnaire and public meetings as appropriate, for specific issues;
- iv. The Council is always considering practical ways of engaging with people and community groups, and;
- v. The Council will continue to arrange, support and participate in community events.

6. Involvement with Partnerships

The Council has a representative on the following:

- Ball Park Committee
- Neighbourhood Plan Committee
- Allotments Committee

7. Specific areas for community engagement

Where there is a specific issue, or new project that the Parish Council wishes to consider, it will seek the views of the community who will be most affected. For example, widespread engagement has taken place during the development of the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Parish Council will follow good practice and recognises that community engagement takes many forms and is best described by the Ladder of Engagement and Participation ¹ which describes the different levels of involvement.



STEP	MEASURE ²	What will we do?
5	Empowering: placing decision-making in the hands of the community.	Bring together residents and partners to help find solutions to local problems. Encourage the local community to hold cohesion events without relying on the Parish Council.
4	Collaborating: working in partnership with communities in each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternative and the identification of the preferred solution.	Support to local organisations/ groups and assist them in meeting their own objectives.
3	Involving: working directly with communities to ensure that concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered. For example, partnership boards and reference groups.	Working with Lincolnshire County Council, West Lindsey District Council and the Police to strengthen existing partnership working. Work more closely with hard to reach groups.
2	Consulting: obtaining community feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions. For example, questionnaires and focus groups.	Consult on important issues. This will include the Neighbourhood Plan and Play Parks.
1	Informing/Notify: providing communities with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding problems, alternatives, opportunities, solutions. For example, website information and letters.	Newsletter, website, facebook page, door to door letters, media and the Cliff Villages Gazette.

8. Review and Assessing the effectiveness of the Strategy

This Strategy will be reviewed and updated annually; its effectiveness will be assessed by the Parish Council and improvements made if required.

This document is available free online at: <http://www.hemswellcliffparishcouncil.org.uk/>

In accordance with the Parish Council's Publication Scheme this document can be purchased for 5p per page, plus postage and packaging. To get a quote for a copy of this document please contact the Clerk to the Parish Council.

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¹ Model of participation developed by Sherry Arnstein (1969).

² Before deciding on the level of participation the Parish Council will follow good practice about what do we know, what do we need to know, is it informing or collaboration before deciding on the best method.