**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: STATEMENT OF INTENT**

# **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

# Capel Parish Council aims to ensure that through the use of a wide range of approaches to public

# consultation and community engagement it actively encourages residents to inform its decision-making

# process and make an input into decisions which affect their day to day lives in the parish.

# Capel Parish Council is committed to creating and maintaining effective working relationships

# with all sectors of the community. The Council recognises that there are different levels of engagement

# and will endeavour to involve the community in the following ways:

# Inform people about its work and the services it provides.

# Consult with and seek out the views of the community.

# Encourage community participation in local government.

# Collaborate with individuals, community groups and organisations where appropriate, to

# achieve agreed aims for the benefit of the Parish.

# Build up effective working relationships within the community and encourage a sense of

# ownership of assets, infrastructure and new projects.

# **THE COMMUNITY**

# Capel Parish Council seeks to engage with all sections of the community regardless of age,

# ability, gender, ethnicity, faith or sexual orientation and particularly hard to reach groups

# such as the young, disenfranchised, disaffected and the elderly. Capel Parish Council also seeks

# to engage with the local business community, the many clubs, organisations and societies which are

# active in the parish, its partners such as Tunbridge Well Borough Council, and the neighbourhood

# policing team, the local Churches and our elected ward member for Tunbridge Wells Borough

# Council. The Parish Council is also committed to engaging with any persons who appear to it to have

# an interest in matters relating to the economic, social and environmental well-being of its area.

# **PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO THE COMMUNITY AND OPPORTUNITIES**

# Capel Parish Council recognises that members of the community may wish to engage with it at

# different levels and in a variety of ways, from the occasional email or letter with a suggestion on how a

# service could be improved, completing an online enquiry form on our website to attendance at

# meetings etc.

# Capel Parish Council will therefore use many ways to actively seek the views of its parishioners

# and involve them in its work:

# a) *Publications:* The Parish Council will communicate with parishioners through regular articles in the

# monthly parish magazine.

# We will produce an annual report which will contain up to date information about payments and

# receipts and monies held by the council on parishioners’ behalf.

# b) *Website*: The Parish Council website http://www.capel-pc.org.uk is a community resource which

# publishes information about the Parish, its Council, and the many organisations which flourish in

# Capel. Parish Council agendas, minutes, accounts and other documents will be regularly posted on

# this website for parishioners’ information. Parishioners are invited to contact the Parish Council via

# the website, or email at clerk@capel-pc.org.uk.

# Capel Parish Council is committed to developing and improving the website and will actively

# encourage parishioners to use it to exchange information.

# c) *Direct Access*: The Parish Council will use the noticeboard to directly advertise important events e.g.

# notices relating to the annual audit of accounts; casual vacancies, elections and forthcoming meetings

# etc. Details of the Parish Council’s publication scheme and the address of the Tunbridge Wells Borough

# Council Monitoring Officer will also be displayed on the website for parishioners’ information.

# d) *Social Media*: Capel Parish Council is committed to engaging with all parishioners.

# Information is regularly posted on Facebook and other forms of social media when appropriate.

# e) *Co-option*: Capel Parish Council encourages the involvement of the community in the work

# of the Council through co-option. Any working party of the council is empowered to co-opt interested

# members of the community onto any standing committee or working party.

# f*) Meetings*: Notice of all Council meetings is given on the parish notice boards and on the website.

# Parishioners are encouraged to attend Full Council Meetings and time is set aside at all meetings for

# public participation. Parishioners are also actively encouraged to attend the Annual Parish Meeting,

# which is advertised as above.

# g) *Surveys*: Capel Parish Council will undertake surveys and other related forms of information

# gathering from time to time to ascertain the community’s view on a particular issue.

# h) *Specific Projects*: From time to time Capel Parish Council will undertake specific projects for

# the benefit of the community. The normal method for undertaking these is via working parties.

# Co-option (see above) is used to ensure that the community is fully represented and involved in these

# projects.

# **OPPORTUNITIES FOR FORMAL REPRESENTATIONS TO THE COUNCIL**

# Representations to Capel Parish Council will normally be considered at the next Full Council

# meeting. If, however, they require the provision of information only, then the clerk will provide it in

# accordance with the council’s publication scheme. The Parish Council has a Code of Practice for

# handling complaints, which is available from the clerk, published on the website and reviewed

# annually. The publication of agendas on the Parish Council’s notice boards and website gives

# parishioners the opportunity to make representation to the council before agenda items are

# discussed. All formal representations received are responded to in writing.

# **INVOLVEMENT IN PARTNERSHIPS**

# Capel Parish Council is committed to partnership working where it is clear that it will be of

# benefit to the Parish or to fulfil its statutory requirements.

# **ROLE OF COUNCIL MEMBERS AND OFFICERS IN CONSULTATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

# Elected members are powerful advocates for their community and their leadership role enables them

# to have a major input into the consultation and engagement process.

# Capel Parish Councillors are very accessible:

# Their contact details are published on the website and in the annual report to parishioners and

# also in the Parish News.

# They are available to talk to parishioners during the public session at each Full Council meeting and

# at the Annual Parish Meeting

# In a private capacity, they belong to many other local clubs, societies and organisations, where

# they may, if they so wish promote the work of the Parish Council and be available to parishioners.