GISLINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Intent

Community engagement "is about giving local people a voice and involving them in the decisions that affect them and their community. It is about the development of relationships and clear communication to deliver better services and projects."

The policy is based upon the following guidelines:

- Current communication with our community and how can we improve these lines of communication.
- Regular consultation with our community.
- Feedback on how well the council is meeting the expectations of Parishioners.
- Communication with hard-to-reach groups and young people.
- Council short- medium- and long-term aims.

Current Communication with our Community and How We Can Improve these Lines of Communication

Where there is public anxiety about issues, the Council will allow comment to evolve naturally and respond. Some issues automatically create community involvement, especially if they are controversial. In recent times most reaction has been to planning issues, notably:

- ✓ The Six Bells Inn
- ✓ Housing Development on Back Street

There are several ways the Council makes contact with residents and encourages responses from them:

- Use of web site
- Facebook
- Notice boards
- An article in every issue of 'The Messenger' which is delivered monthly to every household in the Village
- Encouraging residents to attend Council meetings and the Annual Parish Meeting

- Inviting all local Groups to attend the Annual Parish Meeting to demonstrate their activities, invite new members, followed by refreshments which provides an opportunity for discussion
- Attend village activities, such as the Summer Fair and publicise our role

In addition to the above most members of the Council play an active role in village life through local Churches, local sporting organizations, clubs and societies, and the village Charity

The Council has produced policy documents which are posted on the Web Site

Regular Consultation with the Community

The Council regularly:

- Updates the website, Facebook page and notice boards
- Ensures that an article about current Council activities and concerns is included in the Messenger, which is delivered to every household in the village.
- Advertises meeting dates and sets aside a period of each meeting for the public to speak and deliver their views

Feedback from the Community

We use:

- Feedback from and collection of information from all sources of information mentioned above
- Surveys

Communication with Hard-to-Reach Groups or Young People

The Council uses both the printed word and the internet to communicate:

- The fact that the Messenger is delivered to every household in the village means that our monthly report is accessible to all groups
- Growing numbers of people of all age groups have access to the internet and can thus view the Council's comprehensive website and Facebook page

Signed: *C Tranter* **Chair**

Approved by Gislingham Parish Council on 19th January 2026

Date of next review January 2027