

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

1. Background and Principles

- 1.1. Keynsham Town Council (KTC) recognises the need to consider the impact of its actions on others and the surrounding environment.
- 1.2. A key component in KTC's approach will be resident involvement; We will encourage you to get involved. Participation and engagement are central to the thinking of the Council.
- 1.3. The Localism Act (2011) places considerable onus on increased involvement and therefore, initial guiding principles are required.
- 1.4. Accessibility – Make it easy for all sections of the community to get involved, regardless of age, background, or digital access. Inclusive – We will actively reach out to under-represented voices.

2. Involvement Principles

- 2.1 Keynsham Town Council cannot force any individual or group to become involved, but it can, and will, make it as easy as possible.
- 2.2 It will always be clear, before the start of any participation or consultation activity, to what extent the result will inform a decision.
- 2.3 If the outcome of a participation or consultation activity is intended to inform a decision and a different decision is taken, the reasoning behind that decision will be explained where necessary.
- 2.4 Not every decision requires community involvement.

3. Engagement principles

- 3.1 Keynsham Town Council will be clear at the start of the event what output is expected, e.g. a recommendation, strategy suggestion etc.
- 3.2 Engagement events are not intended as an opportunity for individuals with an interest to lobby decision makers.
- 3.3 While individual Councillors may well have links with groups that have a vested interest, they should not represent those groups in informing the process.
- 3.4 The process should encourage people to take the wider view, and to ensure that those not able to be at an event have their views expressed by others.

- 6.3 Enable the aspirations/comments/suggestions etc. obtained from community engagement to have an impact on decision making and the way in which services are being delivered.
- 6.4 Identify the principles behind how KTC can enhance its profile by improving engagement with the wider community (with specific reference to hard-to-reach groups).

7. Keynsham Town Council and Community Engagement

- 7.1 The Council currently facilitates Community Engagement in the following ways:
- 7.2 Allocation of public participation at the beginning of each Council meeting. This provides an opportunity for residents to talk to the Council or ask questions relating to items on the agenda.
- 7.3 Engagement is also encouraged throughout Council meetings (in periods when Standing Orders are dropped and when agreed by full Council)
- 7.4. The publishing of agendas, minutes and supporting documents for all Council meetings on the website, in the office window and on various notice boards around the town.
- 7.5 Active involvement in the Annual Town Meeting with its public question time
- 7.6 The annual External Audit provides the opportunity for questions to be asked about the latest Statement of Accounts and Balance Sheet. A synopsis of the financial accounts is published within the Annual Report.
- 7.7 The Annual Return and Statement of Accounts made available as printed copies and on the website.
- 7.8 Making the Councillors' contact details available on the website and on various noticeboards around town.
- 7.9 News and events are publicised through the Keynsham Town Council's website, Facebook and community email distribution channels.
- 7.10 Consultation exercises (e.g. on Market Place), surveys and questionnaires are undertaken with residents, young people and local user groups and organisations for specific projects and tasks.
- 7.11 Inviting members of the public to Open Forums, Working Groups and Panels.

Amendment History