

FRANSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Approved: 15th March 2022
Review Schedule: Three years

1. SCOPE AND PURPOSE

It is the policy of this council to give the community a voice in local affairs, to demonstrate the council's commitment to hearing what people in the community think and to communicating its own actions and decisions.

2. PRINCIPALS

Use will be made of the council's website, notice boards, parish magazine together with council and parish meetings to promote two-way communications.

3. PROCEDURE/IMPLEMENTATION

Actions and decisions will be communicated via the minutes published on the council website. A summary of the minutes will appear in the parish magazine.

Residents will be invited to attend and contribute to the parish assembly and all council meetings via the website and the agendas posted on the four parish council notice boards. An 'open session' will be included on each agenda where residents can raise matters with the council. Resident can also contribute by writing to the council or asking for specific items to be included on forthcoming agendas. An invitation will also be posted inviting residents to lodge any suggestions or concern with the Parish Clerk at any reasonable time between meetings. These will be forwarded to the chairman and councillors for consideration at the next meeting. Any urgent matters, such as highway issues, will be dealt with by forwarding to the appropriate body and requesting a response. Those raising the issue will then be advised of the response. Follow-up action will be taken where appropriate to ensure resolutions.

Planning and development are considered particularly important by the council in protecting the character of the village and all applications received from Breckland will be carefully looked at against established material planning considerations, local knowledge and any comments from residents. A considered response will be given in all cases.

The local district and county councillors will be invited to attend all meetings to report and take feedback. In addition, the council will liaise directly with the district and county councils on highway maintenance in the parish.

In addition to working with the neighbourhood watch, crime figures will be monitored and presented at council meetings as a regular agenda item. Where necessary incidents will be taken up with the local police community officer.

The council supports the village hall as a community facility and a committee member will be invited to attend and contribute at council meetings.

The council will grant fund the maintenance of the two churchyards.

Given the small size of the parish, donations to local charities/organisations are of necessity limited but will be considered annually against requests and appropriate amounts awarded within the current limits of S137, unless the General Power of Competence is appropriate.

The council will prepare a report for the annual parish meeting, which the council will facilitate, with copies posted as for the agendas and minutes. Reports will also be invited in person or in writing from the PCC, local school, WI, Police and village hall committee. Where appropriate, use of grant funding will be reported on. Minutes will be taken and posted as for council meetings.

In addition to the annual Parish meeting, the council will periodically seek the views of the local community by various means, which may include posting a questionnaire on the website, running a community workshop, putting questionnaires through selected doors etc.

All residents are encouraged to contact the council if they have issues, ideas or requests. All such correspondence will be processed by the clerk and responded to within 3 working days. Correspondence will be an agenda item for all meetings where items will be listed, any relevant issues will be discussed and any necessary action decided.
