



# **LLANNON COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY**

**ADOPTED: 10<sup>th</sup> August 2022**

**REVIEW DATE: May 2023**

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**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY**

**1. SCOPE**

This policy sets out:

- The role of community engagement and its importance
- How the Council engages with the wider community and identifies the needs and aspirations of the community
- How the Council can improve community engagement

Community engagement is concerned with giving local people a voice and involving them in decisions which affect them and their community. This may include individuals, voluntary and community organisations as well as other public-sector bodies.

Community engagement is supported by the Freedom of Information Act, regulations and codes that require the Council to be transparent about its activities.

Community engagement provides the opportunity for local people to talk to the Council about their aspirations and / or needs in their community and neighbourhood.

Community engagement allows the Council to consult with and inform people about what services it provides, how it prioritises, how policies are determined and how well it is performing.

**2. OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the policy are to:

- Encourage effective local community engagement
- Ensure that embedded throughout the Council, there is a clear understanding of the need to engage with communities about decisions that affect them.
- Enable aspirations, comments and suggestions obtained from community engagement to have an impact on decision making and the way services are being delivered.
- Identify how the Council can enhance its profile by improving engagement with the wider community (with specific reference to hard-to-reach groups).
- Encourage feedback whether positive or negative.

In order that:

- The problems and needs of local people are clearly identified so that appropriate new or improved facilities / services can be provided
- Those participating feel empowered by being involved in decision making in their local community
- There may be enhanced leadership and greater interest in elections and standing for the Council

### **3. GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

The key aspects of community engagement include:

- Development of a network of relationships between the Council, individuals, voluntary and community groups
- Clear, honest and open communication to ensure that information is made accessible to all groups
- Listening and understanding from a range of people to identify aspirations, needs and problems of local people and groups
- Providing accurate and unbiased information that sets out the significance of the issues and makes it clear what can be influenced by parishioners and when parishioners input is particularly required.
- Providing opportunities for community groups to be supported with financial assistance to support them in their work

### **4. LLANNON COMMUNITY COUNCIL & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Llannon Community Council will facilitate community engagement in the following ways:

- By publishing an Annual Report.
- By holding quarterly surgeries to allow residents to question and review how the elected members help shape the community. The main objective of the surgeries must be to provide and encourage two-way communication between the community and Councillors. The dates and details of Councillors attending these surgeries can be found on the website and Council noticeboards.
- Providing opportunities for the electorate to have their say about decisions, services and plans. All meetings of the Council and its Committees are open to the public and press (unless otherwise specified). Residents can access agendas for meetings via the Council website and noticeboards. A hard copy can also be collected from the

Council's office, by appointment or posted on request. A fee will be charged for a hard copy in line with the Council's publication scheme.

- The Llannon Community Council website and Standing Orders explain the procedure for residents wishing to speak at meetings. A hard copy of the Standing Orders can also be collected from the Council's office, by appointment or posted on request. A fee will be charged for a hard copy in line with the Council's publication scheme.
- Making relevant information available on what decisions are being considered and how residents can influence or contribute to the discussions in good time.
- Methods used to ensure engagement will be through:
  - Llannon Community Council website
  - Noticeboards
  - Llannon Community Council Facebook Page
  - Community newsletter sent to all households
  - Development of Youth Council in collaboration with local schools
  - Information stands at events
  - Press releases
  - Community consultations/surveys
  - Such other methods as the Council considers appropriate
- Planning applications are considered at meetings of the Planning Committee. The opportunities for people to speak applies equally to these agenda items:
  - Applications / Supporters
  - Objectors and local community groups

The Clerk is required to play a neutral role so that residents can be fully involved and be confident that they are receiving unbiased information and support.

Details of how to contact the Clerk are at the end of this document.

- The Council will produce and publish on its website a list of annual Council and Committee dates to include the start times of the meetings and the agenda for each meeting.
- The Council will be open and accountable in its dealings with residents and the community. It will publish its Policies and Procedures on its website. A hard copy of the Council's Policies and Procedures can be collected from the Council's office, by appointment or posted on

request. A fee will be charged for a hard copy in line with the Council's publication scheme.

- The Council will publish on its website information on how it spends money and its annual return. A hard copy can also be collected from the Council's office, by appointment or posted on request. A fee will be charged for a hard copy in line with the Council's publication scheme.
- The Council will ensure it complies with its Welsh Language Scheme and details of this are published on its website. A hard copy can also be collected from the Council's office, by appointment or posted on request. A fee will be charged for a hard copy in line with the Council's publication scheme.
- The Council can offer financial assistance to community groups up to the sum of £500. The Grant Awarding Policy is published on the website. A hard copy can also be collected from the Council's office, by appointment or posted on request. A fee will be charged for a hard copy in line with the Council's publication scheme.
- The Council advertises the work of the Council and promotes the democratic process on its website. It will provide information of the Election Process and Notices of Vacancies on its website. A hard copy of the Election Process can also be collected from the Council's office, by appointment or posted on request. A fee will be charged for a hard copy in line with the Council's publication scheme.
- The Council will be receptive to requests from residents and will attempt to be flexible in order to ensure their opinions are known not only to the Council but also to other organisations.
- Councillors and officers (where necessary) will continue to represent the Council on various outside bodies to ensure that they are kept informed of the communities' needs.

## **5. COMMUNICATION**

The Council is committed to improving community engagement by:

- Continuing all the above activities and services into the future and improving relationships with community groups, including developing measures to harness the views and opinions of people and groups who are often missed out of community engagement activities.
- Will be proactive and will be willing to consider any reasonable opportunities that support its purpose of getting information available and increasing contributions from the community, especially those difficult to reach.
- When dealing with controversial issues that affect a particular community, consideration will be given to holding a public meeting or some other suitable form of public consultation.
- Consultations and surveys are to be considered when necessary and appropriate and results will be made available.
- Continuing to work with others to produce and review community led policies.
- Identifying and embracing opportunities to work with other local community groups when the need arises.
- Publicising the results that have been achieved from working relationships between the Council and other community groups in order to encourage new relationships/partnerships to be formed and to raise community spirit.
- Promoting elections and the importance of the democratic process and the value of being a Councillor.
- Promoting the value of volunteering.

**Contact Details:**

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