



## **Communication and Community Engagement Policy**

### **REVISION DATE**

June 2024

### **REPLACES POLICY**

October 2021

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

#### **Introduction**

Goostrey Parish Council recognises the need to consider the impact of its actions on others and the surrounding environment. Whilst the Parish Council cannot force any individual or group to become involved it can, and shall, make it easier and more attractive for them to do so.

- 1.1 The Council considers that the community of Goostrey comprises
  - a. All residents of the parish
  - b. All users of Parish Council services
  - c. All those who work, or own a business within Goostrey
  - d. All young people who live/go to school in Goostrey
  - e. All voluntary organisations, clubs and societies as well as groups or organisations representing sections of the community.
- 1.2 The Council recognises that other bodies are crucial to the quality of life in Goostrey it will maintain the strong working relationships with Cheshire East Council, Manchester Airport, Jodrell Bank Observatory, the Police and local Parish and Town Councils.
- 1.3 The Council defines communication as the process of informing the community about decisions that have been made or the passing on of information.
- 1.4 The Council defines engagement as involving the community to help form opinion and review decisions.
- 1.5 The Council is always open to receiving both positive and negative feedback and has a commitment to encouraging the community to engage with the Council.
- 1.6 All communications will avoid gobbledygook, jargon and misleading public information.

#### **Communication**

- 2.1 The Parish Council website is the primary source of information on the Council for the community and will be kept up-to-date with content routinely monitored. The Council aims to actively publish a wide range of information on the council and its activities.
- 2.2 The Council will make best possible use of social media, see 3.1 - 3.3 below.
- 2.3 The Council will prepare, when appropriate, press releases to be sent to local news providers.
- 2.4 The Council will utilise the Parish Council and Village Notice Boards.
- 2.5 The Council will continue to develop its newsletter.

2.6 The Council shall routinely consider options for improving communication with the community when the policy is reviewed or earlier should this be required.

### **Social Media**

3.1 The council recognises that social media is an effective means of communication and will operate a number of social media channels as part of its communications. The official channels used by the council are:

- Twitter - Goostrey PC – <https://twitter.com/GoostreyPC>
- Facebook – Goostrey Village Hall  
<https://www.facebook.com/goostreyvillagehall2021>

3.2 Social media messages will be non-political, uncontroversial, and used to promote and highlight the village.

3.3 The council aims to use social media accounts to support communication with the community, primarily as a tool to pass information on to residents. The council's social media accounts are not monitored. The council is keen to hear residents' views but cannot take comments made on social media as official communication. Members of the public wishing to make formal comments or raise issues should email or telephone the Parish Clerk or attend one of the council's meetings.

### **Engagement**

4.1 The Council shall continue to set aside time at every Council and Committee meeting (excluding Personnel) for members of the public to address the Council.

4.2 The Council shall continue to develop the Annual Parish Meeting with an aim of increasing attendance and providing a venue for open community discussion.

4.3 The Council shall continue to provide opportunities for members of the public to discuss issues with councillors.

- All councillors may be contacted through the Clerk, whose contact details are available on the website and in the council noticeboards. They are also available in the Council's newsletter and Parish Magazine articles.
- The Parish Council Office is open from 1pm – 4pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays or at other times by appointment.

4.4 The Council shall continue to appoint members to represent the Council on community organisations as requested.

### **Consultation**

5.1 When the Parish Council is seeking views on a specific project or idea it will consult with the community.

5.2 Whilst the majority of consultations will be open to the whole community it may on occasion consult with specific stakeholders only.

5.3 When planning a consultation, the Council will identify the key stakeholders for that specific consultation exercise to ensure they are directly consulted.

5.4 Consultations will be publicised as widely as possible and will have a defined end date for submissions.

- 5.5 The Council will be clear about why it is consulting and how the consultation will be used in the Council's decision-making process.
- 5.6 The timing of consultations will be considered for example to coincide with events or to avoid clashes with holidays.
- 5.7 The Council shall consider the format of the consultation which may include:
- a. Open consultation on the Council website
  - b. Consultation documents at key venues around the village
  - c. Direct consultation (e.g. letters/leaflets/social media etc)
  - d. Focus groups
  - e. The use of consultation engagement events:
    - i. Public meetings
    - ii. Exhibitions
    - iii. Stalls in the village hall and at events etc
- 5.8 The Parish Council will publicise Cheshire East Council consultations on its website.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION**

Parish Council takes the lead in the community engagement process.

#### **MONITORING**

The policy will be monitored by the Clerk and the Council as a whole.

#### **POLICY APPROVAL**

Council Minute 06.24.11.a

#### **POLICY REVIEW DUE**

June 2025