

Community Engagement Strategy

2015

Devizes Town Council Community Engagement Strategy

This Strategy endeavours keep the community's aspirations and views on Devizes at the heart of the Town Council's decision making.

This strategy will set out how the Council will actively listen to those who live, work and visit the town so that ideas, options and opinions can be heard to help shape, improves and prioritise local services.

Meeting the needs of the community

The Council's mission statement says that

"To work together with all sectors of the community to make Devizes an even better place to live, work and visit."

Consultation and developing actions plans to reflect the needs of the community sit at the heart of the mission statement. The Council ultimately carries the responsibility for reconciling the level of service provision against the charge it needs to make to deliver such services to ensure that they are proportioned and effective. Decisions on Council policy are made through either the Council or one of its committees, however being aware of community feelings will guide and shape these policies beginning mindful of the Council's Core Objective.

What this strategy seeks to do

This strategy seeks to affirm the commitment of Devizes Town Council to:

- engage in open and honest dialogue with communities on issues that impact on them
- engage people in decision-making by giving them an opportunity to voice their opinions before decisions are taken
- understand more about customers, residents and the community and what influences their opinions
- share information amongst partners so that we all build up a better picture of the issues affecting our community.
- avoid over-consulting with our communities by co-ordinating our consultations in the most cost effective way
- publish the results of any consultation and what action will take place or has taken place as a result
- link up consultation with existing communications and seeking new ways to communicate.

How will we achieve our strategy

- **User surveys** – from time to time the Council will consult directly with users of its services and facilities to gain a better understanding about how they are accessed, if they provide the level of service the meets the majority of users reasonable expectations and how they could be improved.
- **Issue surveys** – from time to time the Council will consult with different community areas or groups with specific issues to better understand their needs and how the Council can help directly help or encoring others to help.
- **Community Surveys** – at least once a year the Council will undertake a general survey seeking opinions from residents, those who work in the town or from those who are visiting on a range on local topics. Those who are being survey will also have an opportunity to raise the own issues.

Delivering Change

To ensure that consultation undertaken by the Town Council is remains credible, it is important at the results are reported to member and published.

- **Reporting to members** – this must be undertaken with 8 weeks of the completion of the survey.
- **Publishing results** – Within 1 week of results of surveys being reported to members they also need to be published on the Town Council website. Included within survey results will be commentary on any action taken by the town council in response to the consultation.
- **Delivering outcomes** – Where it is agreed that there are actions following from the consultation, a time line for delivery needs to be published with allocated officers responsible for their delivery.

Groups to be engaged

Education

- Primary School
- Secondary Schools
- Further Education Centre
- Pre School Groups

Faith

- Churches Together in Devizes
- Devizes Quaker Meeting of Religious Society of Friends

Historical

- Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society
- Wiltshire Heritage Museum
- Trust for Devizes

Business

- Devizes Development Partnership
- Chamber of Commerce

Youth

- Devizes Youth Council
- Local Youth Network

Arts

- Wharf Theatre
- Devizes Outdoor Celebratory Arts Committee
- Devizes Festival Committee

Voluntary Sector

- Wiltshire Wildlife Trust

Statutory Organisation

- Police
- Wiltshire Council
- Roundway Parish Council
- Bishops Canning Parish Council

Community

- Residents
- Town Council Service Users
- Disabled Groups
- Parent and Toddler Groups