



# North Horsham Parish Council

## **STATEMENT OF INTENT AS TO COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 The Council aims to provide services of high quality and to represent the interests of its residents throughout its area. This statement outlines the Council's intentions regarding community engagement.

### **2. The community**

2.1 The Council is directly responsible to the people of its area, who collectively form the community. Within the community, there are a variety of different bodies, and the Council must therefore relate closely to those bodies as well as the community as a whole.

2.2 The different bodies making up the community are likely to include:

- Everyone who lives in the Parish.
- Those who use the services provided by the Council, whether residents or not.
- Those who work or own a business in the Parish.
- All young people who go to school or other educational establishments in the Parish.
- Voluntary groups, clubs and societies including church and youth organisations which operate in the Parish.
- Any group or organisation that represents some or any members of the above sections of the community.
- Visitors or those using the Parish facilities and shops.
- Statutory bodies providing services within the Parish.
- Any group or other body that are pivotal to the quality of life of North Horsham Parish e.g. health providers, Horsham Town Community Partnership, neighbouring Parish Councils.

### **3. Aims and objectives**

3.1 The Council aims to represent and promote the interests of the whole Parish community.

- 3.2 The Council aims to ensure that residents and the bodies making up the community are appropriately involved in the decision-making process, particularly in relation to the provision of services and facilities. Whenever possible and practical, the Council will encourage the involvement of community members in order to identify their needs and concerns.
- 3.3 To this end, the Council will maintain and develop effective working relationships with all sectors of the community in the expectation that this will lead to:
- Improved satisfaction with public services in the area.
  - A greater sense within the community that people are involved in decisions which affect them.
  - Greater awareness within the community of the role and responsibilities of the Council.

#### **4. Opportunities for community involvement**

- 4.1 The Council will engage with the community by providing:
- An accessible Parish Council office at the heart of the community usually open Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm.
  - A website ([www.northhorsham-pc.gov.uk](http://www.northhorsham-pc.gov.uk)) which includes a wide range of information about the services provided by the Parish Council and how the community can contact the Council or Councillors.
  - Social media (Facebook).
  - An article in Horsham Pages (North) six times a year.
  - An Annual Report summarising the Council's activities for the year and providing details of the Council's financial position.
  - A timetable of Council and committee meetings and encouraging public attendance.
  - Details of agendas for all Council and committee meetings on noticeboards throughout the Parish, as well as on the Council website.
  - A period of time at the start of Council and committee meetings for questions from members of the public.
  - Minutes of all Council and committee meetings on the Council website.
  - Nominated Councillors as representatives to outside bodies with interests affecting the area.
  - The organisation for the Annual Parish Assembly, which is open to all residents.
  - An opportunity for the community to feedback their views, comments and concerns and effectively using that information as an integral part of the decision-making process.

## **5. Opportunities for formal representation to the Council**

- 5.1 The Council may appoint advisors on specific areas of activity where their expertise would assist the Council in its decision making, but equally welcomes public participation at Council and committee meetings.
- 5.2 On a day-to-day basis, the Clerk (or other nominated officer) is generally available to meet those who may wish to attend the Council office in order to discuss matters of interest or concern. Representation can also be made in writing by letter or e-mail.
- 5.3 From time-to-time particular topics arise which are of sufficient community wide interest to justify the organisation of a public meeting, and the Council will make arrangements for such meetings to be held in a suitable location should such a situation arise.

## **6. Policy Adoption and Review**

- 6.1 The Statement of Intent as to Community Engagement was first approved by Council in March 2012. It has undergone two yearly reviews and was last reviewed and adopted in January 2022.
- 6.2 The policy will be next reviewed by January 2024.

13<sup>th</sup> January 2022