
Briefing Note

Engagement & Media Policy Refresh

1.0 Background

1.1 The Council's Engagement & Media Policy was agreed at the public meeting of the Council in September 2019 following on from comments that had been received during its consultation on a proposed change of boundary with Liskeard.

1.2 An action plan to carry out recommendations from the policy was also agreed: Appendix 1 is an updated plan that shows which items have been completed and which are outstanding.

2.0 The agreement

2.1 Councillors will be asked to discuss the outstanding actions and agree to a timetable for completion of the plan. You will be asked to:

- Commit to the outstanding items (which can be amended)
- Agree to new actions if required
- Agree as a basic principle that all Councillors should follow a plan of personal engagement to enable the Parish Council to deliver this policy.

2.2 Personal engagement: extracted from the earlier plan, councillors would commit to active engagement and involvement that would include:

- Taking on casework with individual residents
- Working with clubs, associations, faith groups, schools and other volunteering bodies.
- Promoting council work at various events, regular and one off occasions.
- Engaging with other parishes to share best practice and benefit from joint working,

2.3 Examples of current engagement are:

- Menheniot Green: working with a range of volunteers and groups who share a common aim.
- Council stand at the annual Cherry Fayre and weekly coffee mornings
- Canvassing work carried out during the consultation on the boundary change (2019) and neighbourhood plan (2022)

2.4 The benefits are:

- Early warning of issues that affect groups of people, but which may not be reported to the council (for example, Lower Clicker; dog mess)
- Shared and joint working raises our profile and extends our knowledge to get things right.
- Media attention generates support for the work of the community and the parish council
- Longer term preparation for the proposed development at Ten creek.

3.0 The proposal

3.1 That a working group is set up to create a practical work plan to carry out the proposals in Items 2.1 and 2.2

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Actions Plan from Engagement & Media Policy 2019-20 Updated May 2022

Item	Objective	Action	Progress
2.1	Raising awareness of council services	Report it! Poster and guide	Published on website Copy on every parish notice board
2.2	Proactive work	Encourage councillors to take on casework Training	No action
		Poster for identifying parish councillors and contact details	Listing of councillors on every parish notice board (contact details only for Chair and Clerk)
2.3	Monitoring media and hearsay	Councillors informally feedback to Clerk and Chair.	Actioned
		Parish council can challenge untruths or misunderstandings	Occasionally.
3.1	Encouraging attendance at meetings	Continue planning invitations and others	Actioned
		Promote grants and donations scheme	Actioned
		Encourage councillors to work with interested resident groups (where they have a special interest eg farming, environment)	Co-opted councillors asked this at interview. Elected councillors asked at induction
3.2	Promoting councils work	Rota for parish magazine articles (400 words maximum)	No action. Previous articles all written by Clerk.
		Identify opportunities for representation at public events (Farmers market? Coffee morning?)	No action on regular basis but occasionally used for specific topics. (eg NDP)
3.3	Joint working	Identify opportunities	Menheniot Green is identifying work for joint projects.
		New vision for parish? (NDP)	No action.
3.4	Engage with other parishes	Invitation to Menheniot events	Two attempts to engage with bordering parishes on climate change (no replies) and operation of emergency plan (3 out of 7 adjacent parishes replied)

5.4	GDPR	Crib sheet for councillor's do's and don'ts	Included in Induction pack
5.7	Social media	Encourage councillors to set up social media accounts for their own benefit and to comment on MPC postings	No action (but emergency coordinators now members of Menheniot Community Hub)
6.0	Media attendance	Proactively send out information to local press on important matters	Recent news releases on Climate Change not published. NDP referendum promoted successfully.
7.1	Council's media	More parish noticeboards	5 new boards purchased and installed covering over 90% of residents (within 10 minutes walk)
		Councillor social media accounts	No action
		Signage on assets (for reporting faults as well)	No action
		Parish magazine – encourage wider distribution? Content (3.2)	We have made a donation towards their costs. Asked if magazine would print special edition at start of Covid lockdown (March 2020) that we would fund. Declined to do so.
8.1	Hard to hear	New Parish Noticeboards	See 7.1 – boards updated at least every 2 weeks and more often where there are local issues (eg Pengover Green Bus depot planning, Lower Clicker and dog reporting)
		Local contacts in these areas?	No action
		Councillor Surgery	No action but works well for police
		Rotate parish council meeting venue (to Merrymeet)	Actioned and meetings regularly move between both locations but will cease when Merrymeet church closes in October.