



## **NEWTON POPPLEFORD AND HARPFORD PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Statement of Intent as to Community Engagement**

#### **Aims and Objectives**

Newton Poppleford and Harpford Parish Council is an open and transparent smaller authority Council which values the opinions of the community it serves. Now, and in the future, the Parish Council will listen to the needs and concerns of that community and will do everything within its power and financial constraints to make Newton Poppleford and Harpford Parish a better place to live and work.

#### **Defining the Community**

Newton Poppleford and Harpford Parish Council is keen to reach all groups and individuals who work or live in the Parish. It has historical links with the local Church, Newton Poppleford Primary School, all of the community buildings in the parish and the many varied voluntary organisations and community groups working for the good of the Parish, to ensure that as wide a cross section as possible of the community can have access to the Parish Council, its members, and staff.

#### **Provision of Information to the Community**

Newton Poppleford and Harpford Parish Council has many avenues through which it communicates with its community. These include:

- Contact details of all the Councillors and the Clerk are published on parish noticeboards, the website and in the Annual Report.
- Contact details of the Clerk to the Council are published in the Parish Magazine.
- A website contains information about the work of the Parish Council including meeting minutes, policy documents, financial statements, annual report and how to contact anyone associated with the Council. It also includes links to other organisations including the principal authority.
- The council submits articles to the monthly 'Parish Magazine'.
- Publishing of agendas and other information, on official and community notice boards throughout the Parish, for all Council and committee meetings.
- Publishing of minutes, on the Council website, for all Council and committee meetings.
- The Parish Council's involvement in the Annual Parish Meeting.
- The annual External Audit offers the opportunity for questions to be asked about the latest Statement of Accounts via the publication scheme.
- A synopsis of the financial accounts is published on the website each month.
- The Council supported the production of the Neighbourhood Plan which has the overwhelming support of the community. The Neighbourhood Plan informs Council's response to all planning applications.

#### **Opportunities for Community Involvement**

Newton Poppleford and Harpford Parish Council will make every opportunity available to the electorate to ensure excellent community involvement. These will include the following methods:

- A public forum session at every Council meeting, where the electorate can raise issues in relation to the business on the agenda or request matters to be discussed at a subsequent meeting.
- An agenda item to review correspondence received at every Council meeting

### **Opportunities for Formal Representations to the Council**

This “Statement of Intent” has elsewhere listed the many opportunities that exist for the public to make formal representations to the Parish Council. Issues received in writing, providing they are received before the deadline for closure of the agenda, will be considered for inclusion as a stated item on the next agenda, subject to the agreement of the Chairman and Clerk.

It is a target that correspondence received from a member of the public is at least acknowledged, wherever possible, within five working days.

The Council has an adopted Complaints Policy, a copy of which is available on demand and is also posted on the Council website as part of our commitment to community engagement.

### **Involvement in Partnerships**

The Parish Council encourages and supports public meetings organised by the police, the health authorities, East Devon District Council, Devon County Council and other organisations where they feel information should be made available to the residents of the Parish. Members also attend meetings of adjoining parish councils when practical to maintain effective and mutually beneficial cross-parish relationships.

### **Role of Council Members and the Clerk**

As an open and transparent Parish Council, both members and the Clerk seek to offer a high quality service to all whom they serve. Members and the Clerk are keen to maintain relevant Codes of Conduct in the business that they undertake. Both members and the Clerk endeavour to attend relevant training courses as appropriate to ensure that their knowledge and skillsets are kept up-to-date.

### **Specific Areas for Community Involvement**

Where there is a specific issue or a new project that the Parish Council wish to consider it is of value to the Parish Council to seek the views of the community who will be most affected. The residents of the Parish can have confidence that their “voice” will be heard and that the Council will work with the community to reach a common goal.

*This Statement of Intent was formally adopted by Newton Poppleford and Harford Parish Council and approved for publication in August 2017. It was revised by the Policy & Personnel Committee in September 2022 and adopted by Council at a meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2022 (minute entry 22/058d)*