



CONSULTATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Introduction

Camborne Town Council is working to improve how it consults and engages with communities in the parish. We believe engagement is vital to providing accessible, cost effective services that meet community needs. The Council is committed to improving how it consults and involves residents and stakeholders to ensure their views are used when making decisions to provide, develop and improve services. The challenges resulting from Cornwall Council's transfer of assets and devolution of services to Town and Parish Councils means that it is more important than ever that the community is consulted and involved in the decisions that are made.

The Consultation and Community Engagement Strategy will be the basis for all Camborne Town Council consultations. We will use it to build better relationships that provide information to help us make good decisions which allow us to target and tailor our resources to provide value for money.

The Camborne Parish

Camborne is geographically the largest parish in Cornwall and is comprised of both dense urban areas and sparsely populated rural areas of outstanding natural beauty. Unlike many other places, Camborne suffers from some of the highest levels of deprivation in the country (MSOA level data 2010):

- Income deprivation at 21.5% is significantly worse than the average for Cornwall or England;
- Child Poverty at 28.9% is significantly worse than the average for Cornwall or England;
- 24.4% older people living in deprivation is significantly worse than the average for Cornwall or England;
- 23.8% people have a life limiting illness or disability which is also significantly worse than the average for Cornwall or England;

- The Camborne parish also has a high proportion of young people living in it with 29.9% of the population being 24 years old or younger, while life expectancy at birth is lower than the rest of the country.

The population of Camborne is growing as housing development progresses and more is planned. 525 units are in the process of being built in the vicinity of Boilerworks Road in the Roskear ward; 390 units have been built at Dolcoath in the Trelowarren ward and there is outline planning consent for 296 units in Tuckingmill. Areas to the west of the town in the Treswithian and Pendarves wards have also been identified for housing development in the Town Framework and Cornwall Local Plan. As there is a high percentage of affordable housing, no Community Infrastructure Levy will be charged to developers in the Camborne parish. The town will, therefore, have a significantly increased population without any additional investment for amenities or services. It is vital that conditions are created to encourage economic growth in order to ensure that the growing community is sustainable and has the opportunity to thrive in the future. As the population changes and Cornwall Council reduces services, the Town Council will face both challenges and opportunities. The needs of service users are likely to change and the Council intends to involve everyone to help it 'ensure Camborne is a desirable and thriving place in which to live and work by working in constructive partnership with community partners, facilitating and providing quality, sustainable and affordable services which accord with the community's needs and aspirations'¹

What is the Consultation and Community Engagement Strategy?

Consultation is defined as 'the dynamic process of dialogue between individuals or groups, based on a genuine exchange of views, with the objective of influencing decisions, policies or programmes of action'². Consultation and community engagement are about giving local people the opportunity to play an active role in influencing decisions and shaping the future. It aims to support strong, active, inclusive communities and to enable the Council to improve public services to enhance the quality of life for everyone in the Camborne parish.

Levels of engagement

Different individuals or communities will want to be involved in different ways. Community engagement is not a single process but a range of activities to facilitate involvement.

Information

Provision of clear, accurate, easy to understand information helps people make informed decisions.

Consultation

Consultation is a two way process which provides a number of options to allow individuals or groups to voice their opinion. The results will influence the decision that is taken.

¹ Camborne Town Council Corporate Plan 2015-2018

² A Murrell (2010), The Consultation Charter, Bedfordshire: The Consultation Institute, p.2

Involvement

A joined up approach between the Council and individuals or groups to identify and discuss issues, make decisions and deliver actions together.

Empowerment

The Council helps to build capacity in communities and gradually eases away over time so that community groups are able to manage a responsibility for themselves.

Current consultation and engagement activities

Camborne Town Council currently facilitates community engagement in the following ways:

- Public participation in Council meetings.
- The Council's website
- Camborne Town Council Facebook page
- Regular newsletters
- Press releases
- Leaflets
- Noticeboards in prominent locations throughout the parish
- Visiting sites and consulting neighbours on planning applications
- Provision of the Town square and its electricity supply for markets and community events.
- Lease agreement for management of allotments
- Councillors are representatives on 22 external bodies which range from the Chamber of Commerce to The Spinney Doorstep Green.
- The Council offices are located in the town centre and open Monday to Friday.
- On-line consultation through the website
- Surveys delivered to all households in the parish.
- Event days/workshops
- Joint working with community groups and individuals on specific projects e.g. the Christmas Lantern Parade, the Community Toilet Scheme.

Aims and Objectives

- To improve the quality of consultation and community engagement so that residents and stakeholders can effectively influence decisions;
- To use what people say to provide, develop and improve services that meet the needs of communities in the Camborne parish;
- To provide a co-ordinated approach to consultation and community engagement;
- To achieve value for money in our consultation and engagement activities.
- To use different ways of consulting, ranging from traditional methods to new and imaginative approaches to reach all sections of the community, including those who are often 'hard to reach'.
- To be honest and realistic with people about our limitations. We will not always be able to do as people wish as we have only a limited amount of money to spend each year and also need to fulfil statutory requirements.
- To listen to what people say and ensure feedback to participants about the outcomes of consultation and engagement.

Our values

All our consultation and community engagement activities will respect the following values:

Clarity of Purpose

We will be open and honest about what we can and cannot change and we will only consult when there is an opportunity for people to influence a decision and /or service.

Accessibility

We will try to ensure that community engagement lets everyone have the chance to have their say. This means offering times, venues and formats to suit a variety of needs (people who work, people with disabilities etc.)

Confidentiality

We will disclose whether or not responses are to be kept confidential and respect privacy in accordance with the Data Protection Act and Freedom of Information Act.

Partnership

We will plan community engagement activities to identify opportunities for working in partnership where possible.

Length of time

We will have a minimum consultation period of 6 weeks for large scale policies and strategies. For engagement with small and specialist groups, a shorter timeframe may be justified and appropriate.

Willingness to learn

We will be willing to learn about people's views and be prepared to be influenced accordingly.

Integrity

All activities will be voluntary and we will consider the method, information and questions to make sure they are appropriate.

Cost effective

The consultation and community engagement methods will be proportionate to the significance/impact of the issue both to the Council and to local people.

Feedback

We will provide feedback to participants showing both the results and how the results have influenced the decision making process.

How will we achieve our objectives?

The Council will continue its current activities and use the Camborne Town Council Corporate Plan and Forward Plan to detail, deliver and achieve our objectives. The Forward Plan will be constantly monitored and reviewed to ensure it is a flexible and evolving plan that responds to the changing needs of our community.

Review

This strategy will be reviewed every two years and a summary of progress and achievements will be published as part of the Council's report on the implementation of Corporate Plan.