

Adopted 11th May 2015

Statement of Intent as to Community Engagement

1. Aims and Objectives

Dursley Town Council aims to build on the way it engages and consults on important issues by ensuring that it:

- Represents and promote the interests of Dursley and all its people
- Works more closely with residents, businesses and community groups, to understand their concerns and effectively use those views as an integral part of the decision-making process
- Engages with as many people as possible who want to participate in decision-making, monitoring services and planning for the future
- Ensures that residents have the opportunities to be heard
- Promotes equality of opportunity and opposes discrimination
- Is open and accountable in all it does (total transparency)
- Supports development which is environmentally, socially and economically sustainable.
- Services and facilities that are more responsive to community needs

This strategy is part of the council's commitment to creating and maintaining effective working relationships with all sectors of the community, based on trust, openness and constructive challenge. The outcomes the Council hopes to achieve include:

- Improved communication with the local community
- A better understanding within the community of the role of the Town Council and of its Councillors
- Local people feeling that they are involved in decision making
- Improved satisfaction with local public services/ and the inclusive discussion as to what additional services the council should look to implement.

2. Defining the Community

The Council considers the community of Dursley to consist of:

- All residents of the town, including residents of care or residential homes
- All users of the Town Council's services
- All those who work within the town
- All those who own businesses within the town
- All young people who live and/or go to school within the town
- All local voluntary organisations, clubs and societies
- Any group or organisation that represents some, or any, of the above cross sections of the community.

Additionally, the Council recognises that there are certain bodies that are crucial to the quality of life in Dursley and aims to maintain excellent working relationships with these bodies, including: the

Police, the NHS and various voluntary care organisations, other tiers of local government, and neighbouring town and parish councils.

3. Provision of information to the community and opportunities for community involvement

Information provided by the Town Council complies with The Transparency Code and Data Protection legislation.

Information is provided by the Town Council to the community in a number of ways, including via: The Town Council offices; Jacobs House, Castle Street, Dursley, GL11 4BS, open to the public on Monday to Friday between 10am and 3pm, providing a wide range of information both on Council services and other Dursley activities and issues.

- The Town Council's website www.dursleytowncouncil.co.uk which provides comprehensive information both on the work of the Town Council and on other services, local events, local groups and organisations.
- The Town Council's social media page on Facebook "Dursley Town Council"
- Various notice boards around the town which are used to display agendas for Council meetings and contact details for local councillors as well as other information of interest to the local community. (Additionally, the Council has provided a town centre community notice board which can be used by local events organisers or groups).
- The Town Council's Newsletter, "Dursley Matters" published quarterly and available from the Town Council offices, local library, local shops and online.
- The Annual Report, produced in April each year and available at the Annual Town meeting or the website.
- Meetings of the Town Council and its committees and sub-committees which are open to the public and a period of up to 15 minutes is set aside each meeting for public questions/public engagement.
- Public meetings, called to gauge public opinion concerning important issues affecting the town such as major planning applications.
- The local community is welcome to attend council meetings and public participation is provided for on the agendas

4. Opportunities for Formal Representations to the Council

Formal representations to the Council may be made at any time in writing to the Town Clerk or at a Town Council/Committee Meeting.

5. Involvement in Partnerships

The Town Council often works in partnership with other organisations such as Stroud District Council, Gloucestershire County Council, the Police, the Environmental Agency, the NHS, The Tabernacle URC (The Vibe Youth Club), the local schools and many voluntary and charitable sectors.

The Town Council is also actively involved with the following local organisations:

- Breakheart Community Project
- British Royal Legion (Dursley Branch)
- Cam & Dursley Transportation Group
- Cam, Dursley & Uley Joint Woodlands Committee
- Chantry Centre
- Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold District
- Community Association
- Dursley Business Inclusive
- Dursley Festival Committee
- Dursley in Bloom
- Dursley Lions
- Dursley Round Table
- Dursley Town Trust
- Dursley Welcomes Walkers
- GAPTC
- GL11
- Gloucestershire Chartered Parish Group
- Gloucestershire Homeseekers
- Gloucestershire Rural Community Council
- Heritage Centre
- Historic Market Towns
- Kingshill House
- Lower Kingshill Management Committee
- Road Safety Liaison Committee
- Sainsbury's
- SLCC
- Stroud Foodbank
- and other groups as necessary.

6. Role of Council Members and Officers

Council Members (Councillors) are the elected decision makers of the Town Council.

Their contact details are available from the Town Council offices and on the Town Council website.

Members of the public are welcome to contact Councillors to raise any issues.

The Council's Officers are employed by the Council to carry out the day to day functions of the Council, making sure the council effectively and efficiently service the local community.

The Town Clerk is the Proper Officer of the Council and is responsible for ensuring procedural/financial protocol is correct and has overall responsibility for managing the council's affairs on a daily basis and its employees.