



Rushmere St. Andrew Parish Council

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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Community engagement and communications refers to the process of actively involving members of the community in the planning, decision making and implementation of initiatives or programmes that affect them. It is a way of involving parishioners in the development of their own community and empowering them to have a say in the decisions that affect their lives.
- 1.2 Effective community engagement and communications involves building trust and relationships, listening to the needs and concerns of community members, and working collaboratively to find solutions. It is an ongoing process that requires ongoing communication and dialogue with the community.
- 1.3 Rushmere St Andrew Parish Council is clear in its determination to communicate, consult and engage more effectively throughout the parish. The purpose of these-terms of reference is to set out how the parish council intends to achieve this and how it plans to develop and improve communications.
- 1.4 The parish council recognises it is crucial that communication is a two-way process; to give people the information to accurately understand the work we do, whilst enabling the council to make decisions guided by information received from residents and partners.
- 1.5 The Community Engagement and Communication Committee (CEC Committee) will cover all aspects of council communications and engagement with those who make contact with the council, both direct and indirectly. The committee will adopt an open and inclusive approach.
- 1.6 Rushmere St Andrew Parish Council works alongside East Suffolk District Council and Suffolk County Council. The parish council recognises the significance of those partner agencies and the importance of effective communication of the work they do, particularly in terms of the part they play in the day-to-day lives of parishioners.

2. Governance

- 2.1 The CEC Committee is appointed by, and solely accountable to, Rushmere St Andrew Parish Council. The committee's duties and functions as set out in



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these terms of reference are defined and agreed by Full Council and that any proposed variation of the terms of reference shall be voted on at Full Council.

3. Meeting Arrangements

- the committee will meet four times a year within the working calendar of the parish council
- meetings will be held in either the Village Hall, Tower Hall or some other suitable venue within the parish which the Clerk or Assistant Clerk will arrange.
- Minutes of the meeting will be taken by the Clerk or Assistant Clerk.

4. Delegated Authority

- 4.1 The Community Engagement and Communications Committee has delegated authority to approve spending for the responsibilities of the CEC committee in accordance with the CEC budget set by the parish council at its Annual Budget Setting meeting.

5. Sub-groups and Working Panels

- 5.1 The CEC Committee has authority to appoint sub-committees and / or working panels. These will normally be formed in order to deal with a specific task, such as an event. Persons who are not parish councillors may be asked to serve committees and working panels where such persons are able to offer guidance and expertise.
- 5.2 A sub-committee or working panel shall have a minimum of three councillors and up to three non-councillor members. A chairman will be elected and meetings will be held on a similar basis to full committee meetings.
- 5.3 Minutes of proceedings will be recorded. Any and all decisions taken by sub-committees and working panels must be reported, either at the next meeting of the CEC committee or by a meeting of the full council.

6. Purpose

- 6.1 Community engagement and communication is concerned with giving local people a voice and involving them in decisions which affect the community. This will include individuals, voluntary and community organisations and local public sector bodies.
- 6.2 It provides opportunity for local people to talk to the council about their aspirations and / or needs in their community and neighbourhood. It allows



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the council to consult with, support, inform and work together in the community.

7. Aims

- 7.1 Rushmere St Andrew Parish Council aims to represent and promote the interests of the whole parish community.
- 7.2 The parish council will ensure that it communicates in a timely and effective manner to inform and consult them about matters that might affect them and to publicise services offered by the council. It will endeavour to ensure communication is clear and appropriate for the message and the audience.
- 7.3 The aim is to determine the manner in which the council engages and consults by:
 - informing, consulting and involving
 - being inclusive and engaging with all residents and partners
 - ensuring views are listened to and use to develop, enhance, and improve community engagement and communications

8. Responsibilities

8.1 The Community Engagement and Communications Committee will be responsible for:

- the identification and implementation of events and activities to meet the needs of parishioners, particularly those who are socially isolated.
- delivering solutions through the establishment of support mechanisms by working with local partner agencies.
- developing a calendar of events to include the Annual Parish meeting, Armistice Day and a Christmas Event.
- organising speaker(s) and organisations for the Annual Parish Meeting
- promoting council events within the community and, where appropriate, to a wider audience.
- being a contact point and liaising with local organisations within the parish and, where appropriate include their activities and events in the annual calendar.
- signposting the presence of other services and providers within the community
- developing and managing the digital presence of the parish council.
- regular publishing of articles in local news and community publications.
- encouraging and promoting further community engagement by publishing positive outcomes of activities and events.



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9. Delivery

- 9.1 The CEC Committee will advise on the appointment of representatives to liaise with authorities and organisations dealing with community engagement and communications issues. Any such representatives will report to the committee and, as required, to the full parish council.
- 9.2 The council aims to employ a range of delivery mechanisms with the aim of including all residents. The following list is not exhaustive and may be updated as technology and events unfold.
- noticeboards
 - parish website
 - social media
 - press releases / local press such as InTouch magazine
 - leaflets and flyers
 - articles in publications circulating in the parish (eg parish church newsletter)
 - events and activities
 - meeting residents in the street
 - word of mouth and networking
 - public consultation meetings
 - meetings of the parish council and its committees
- 9.3 An important facet of the delivery of the council's ethos will be contact with the council in various forms such as:
- enquiries at the parish office
 - telephone enquiries
 - written enquiries and emails
 - parishioners contacts with councillors and officers

In all other aspects the Parish Council's standing orders will regulate the procedures of the Committee.