

Monk Hesleden Parish Council

Community Engagement Policy

Approved and adopted: 18/2/19
Reviewed and updated 21/7/25

1. Introduction

Community Engagement “is about giving local people a voice and involving them in the decisions that affect them and their community. It is about the development of relationships and clear communication to deliver better services and projects”

2. Aims

To ensure Monk Hesleden Parish Council: -

- Communicates on a regular basis with its residents and visitors
- Employs up to date methods of communication
- Has a commitment to listening to the views of its residents and visitors
- Consults on a regular basis with its residents and visitors
- Ensure the parish council’s long term aims and plans are made in consultation with its local community

3. Consulting the local community

Monk Hesleden Parish Council will continue its regular practices of: -

- Parish Council meetings: every parish council meeting has a public participation item on the agenda where a member of the public can ask questions about items on the agenda or raise issues for future consideration.
- Annual Parish meeting: The Parish Annual Meeting brings the community together and allows residents to question and review how the elected members help shape the community. The main objective of the annual meeting is to provide and encourage two-way communication between the community and Councillors.
- Constant updating of the web site, social media and noticeboards
- Publication Scheme: Monk Hesleden Parish Council is committed to transparency in its decision making and to this end, a publication scheme has been adopted which allows public access to policies, financial records and other documents. The Council has registered with the Information Commissioner’s Office and has adopted a Freedom of Information policy. Many documents are freely available on the website, others by contacting the Clerk.
- Notice boards: All agenda and other useful information will be posted on the Council’s
- Website: The Parish Council will continue to pay for, and maintain, a village website.
- Information about the Parish Council, its business and policies, together with local news, events and general information will be published.
- Social media: Monk Hesleden Parish Council has a Facebook page and is developing its use of social media, whilst ensuring that it can resource the regular updating of such applications and that the standard of communications meets the requirements of the social media policy.

4. Reaching the hard-to-reach groups

The Council uses both the printed word and the internet to communicate:

- All information is available on the website
- Use of social media
- Members of the Council have a long history of living in the Parish and have been involved in social activities where they speak to parishioners on an informal basis.
- Various competitions and events aimed at the younger members of the community are well attended

5. Role of councillors

Councillors are the decision-makers of the Council. The contact details for all councillors are available from the Clerk and are also published on the council's website. Councillors also hold the Clerk to account. Councillors welcome contact with members of the public, endeavour to be available immediately prior to council meeting for anybody who wishes to speak with them, and they will listen to the representations you make to them at council meetings whether you attend in person, ask another person to raise matters for you or provide your comments in writing

6. Role of the Clerk

The contact details for the Clerk to the council are published on the council's website and social media accounts. The Clerk is the Proper Officer of the council and is the appropriate contact in most cases for raising matters with or requesting information from the council.