

SUTTON PARISH COUNCIL



Statement of Intent For Community Engagement

Adopted: 14th September 2010

Next Review: July 2028

Sutton Parish Council

The Glebe

4 High Street

Sutton

Cambs

01353 777189

1.0 Introduction

The 'power of well-being' is the informal name given to the statutory power enabling a local authority to do anything which it considers likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of their areas.

The Local Government Act 2000 (s2) was amended by the Local Government Involvement in Health Act 2007 (s77) to give the power to eligible councils. If a council meet the criteria then it can use the power rather than the current Local Government Act 1972 (s137)

The Statement of Intent for Community Engagement has been prepared in accordance with the 'Power of Wellbeing'.

2.0 Policy Statement

Ensure that through the use of a wide range of approaches to public consultation and community engagement residents are actively encouraged to input into decisions that affect their day to day lives in the parish.

3.0 Defining the Community

The parish of Sutton is situated 6 miles west of the Cathedral City of Ely, in the Cambridgeshire fens. It comprises of Sutton and the hamlet of Sutton Gault with just over 4100 residents (June 2023).

The principal authorities serving Sutton are:-

- Cambridgeshire County Council.
- East Cambridgeshire District Council

The community may be defined as consisting of:

- Residents of the Village,
- Users of Parish Council Services,
 - Head Teacher staff and Governors of Sutton Primary School,
 - Young people who live and/or go to school in the Village,
 - Retail and other Businesses in the community, including employees,
 - Interest groups – clubs and societies e.g. Brownies, Scouts etc
 - Voluntary organisations,
 - Religious Groups,
 - Farming Community,
 - Groups of people defined by a common factor such as age, disability,
 - and other groups,
 - Councillors and public service representatives and Council Staff.

4.0 Role of Council Members and Officers

The Parish Council consists of 15 Councillors elected by the community or co-opted by the Parish Council. Councillors work on behalf of the Community in a voluntary capacity, and are encouraged to attend training to enhance their role. Councillors have the opportunity sit on a number of committees of the Parish Council

- Planning
- Highways and Conservation
- Community Services
- Finance
- Administration
- Burial Ground and Allotment
- Newsletter and PR

5.0 Provision of Information to the Community and Opportunities for Community Involvement

1. The Parish Council Office and Information Centre are open to the public Mondays to Thursdays from 10am to 12. Other times by appointment with the Parish Clerk.
2. The list of Councillors contact details is available on the notice board, website and in the Annual Report.
3. The Parish Council website (www.sutton-cambs-pc.gov.uk) contains information regarding the work of the Council, including meeting agendas and minutes, policy documents, financial statements, annual report and contact details.
4. The Parish Council produces a newsletter on an annual basis. This is delivered free to every household in the parish. The PC also provide monthly updates in The Pepperpot and help with contributions to its running costs.
5. Information is published on the 3 notice boards in the parish, and in the Information Centre, at The Glebe.
6. The council undertakes consultations by questionnaire or public meetings as appropriate, for specific issues.

6.0 Involvement with Partnerships

The council has representation on the following:-

- Cambridge and Peterborough Association of Local Councils
- Sutton Pools' Land Charity

The council subscribes to the following bodies to enable it to meet current legislation, new services, health and safety requirements, and for support on a day-to-day basis:-

- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils
- Society of Local Council Clerks
- Cambridgeshire ACRE
- Institute of cemeteries and crematoria
- Local Council Advisory Service

7.0 Objectives

- To work more closely with residents, businesses and community groups and to respond to their needs.
- To engage with as many people as possible who want to participate in the decision making process.
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- To monitor services and planning for the future;
- To ensure, that, through the use of a wide range of approaches to public involvement and community engagement, we actively encourage the involvement of residents, to capture their views and learn their concerns and effectively use those views as an integral part of the decision-making process.
- To ensure that residents have opportunities to be heard at appropriate stages of Parish Council decision making, and the capacity to be effective citizens.

8.0 Policy and Procedures

- a. Sutton Parish Council may, at its sole discretion, choose in which circumstances a parish consultation will take place.
- b. Sutton Parish Council may, at its sole discretion, decide who is to be consulted, provided that any consultation be limited to people residing within the Parish.
- c. Unless circumstances require otherwise, those responding will be able to do so anonymously but can be asked to provide a postcode to verify residence within the Parish.
- d. Sutton Parish Council will decide how any consultation is to be conducted but will generally try to use a range of communication methods and media to reach the widest possible audience. Consultation methods that might be used may include, but not be limited to:

- Face to face informal surveys
- Formal written questionnaires
- Electronic Surveys
- Telephone surveys

- Interviews
 - e. Different survey methods may be used for the same consultation where necessary to ensure equality of opportunity in responding. For example, an interview might be used in conjunction with a written questionnaire where a resident might not be able to complete a written questionnaire.
 - f. Wherever possible, surveys and questionnaires will include the following:
 - A brief explanation of the nature of the project/activity
 - A clear indication that the consultation is being undertaken by Sutton Parish Council
 - A statement indicating that the results of the survey/questionnaire will be used to inform Parish Councillors who will remain responsible for making a decision on the matter.
 - An opportunity for members of the public to add comments about the project/ activity.
 - A clear indication of when the questionnaire is to be returned and to which address.
 - A statement that those who do not respond will be deemed to have no objections to the project/activity proposed.
 - g. Wherever possible and/or appropriate, questionnaires or paper-based surveys will be hand delivered to ensure that they reach all those selected to respond.
 - h. The Parish Council may choose whether to consult households or individuals depending upon the nature of the consultation but in the absence of any resolution to the contrary, a consultation relating to impact on a property will be deemed to be a household consultation and one response per household will be accepted.
 - i. Where a Parish Councillor has a declared prejudicial interest in a matter which is subject to a parish consultation, that Councillor should not be involved in any face-to-face, telephone or interview surveys. Simple delivery of paper-based surveys/questionnaires is permitted.
 - j. Parish Council decisions can only be made by Parish Councillors in a duly convened meeting. The results of a parish consultation are not a substitute for proper discussion and resolutions of the parish council and must be used solely for the purpose of informing parish councillors of the general wishes of those consulted. Specifically, Parish Councillors are required to take the needs of the Parish as a whole into account when making decisions and not just reflect the wishes of a minority which may conflict with the needs of the parish as a whole. Thus, the results of a parish consultation may not

necessarily be reflected in the final decision of the Parish Council.

- k. Feedback on the results of a survey will be made available to members of the public where appropriate through the Minutes of meetings at which the results are discussed. A separate notification of the results may be given to those surveyed if the Parish Council so chooses, either through a separate written notification or a notice on the website or noticeboard.

9.0 Action Plan

Sutton Parish Council will:-

1. Deliver its services to the highest quality in terms of efficiency effectiveness, in terms of value for money.
2. Conduct its business openly and democratically, and will consult with local people and adopt majority views at every practical opportunity.
3. Consider good practice from other similar sized Parish Councils.
4. Examine and challenge through periodic reviews how a service is delivered.
5. Maintain its use of open and fair competition, where practical, when considering tenders and the provision of services.
6. Comply with the National Code of Local Government Conduct regarding standards in public life.
7. Act in the best interests of local people in making appropriate representations to:
 - a) Central Government
 - b) Cambridgeshire County Council
 - c) East Cambridgeshire District Council
 - d) Other appropriate private, voluntary and public sector groups.

The council recognises that there are different levels of engagement and that involvement can be in one of the following five ways:

1. **Inform** We tell people about our services
2. **Consult** We ask people for their views via surveys and other methods and seek to adopt those supported by a clear majority.
3. **Involve** We discuss what the issues and priorities are
4. **Collaborate** We work together to improve and design new services
5. **Empower** We maintain an equal and effective working relationship

9.0 Outcomes we hope to achieve

Outcomes of the strategy will include:

- Improved communication through the establishment of new channels of engagement.
- More residents understanding the role of the Parish Council and being able to influence its activities.
- Improved engagement with local communities, with more people empowered to be involved in decision-making and a higher percentage of people involved in volunteering.
- Improved satisfaction with local public services.

Date	By	Outcome
14/10/10	Full Council	Adopted V1
22 nd July 2025	Full Council to consider and approved Policy	V2 Adopted Min Ref: 067/25(c)
Next Review July 2028		