



Ramsgate Town Council

Community Engagement Policy

Adopted	14th June 2023
Due to review	As required

Community engagement is an essential part of effective governance. A policy that promotes two-way communication between the council and the community is critical for ensuring that the community's needs and priorities are reflected in the council's decision-making processes.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a framework for meaningful and effective communication between Ramsgate Town Council and the community.

Definition

Community engagement refers to the process of involving members of the community in decision-making processes that affect them. Two-way communication involves the exchange of information and ideas between Ramsgate Town Council and the community.

Principles

Ramsgate Town Council is committed to the following principles in its engagement with the community:

- a. Transparency:** The council will be open and transparent about its decision-making processes, providing information about how decisions are made and the factors considered in making them.
- b. Accessibility:** The council will provide opportunities for community members to engage in meaningful and constructive dialogue, including through various communication channels.
- c. Inclusivity:** The council will strive to engage all members of the community, including those who are traditionally underrepresented or marginalized.
- d. Timeliness:** The council will ensure that engagement processes are timely, allowing community members to provide input at a meaningful stage of decision-making.

- e. **Accountability:** The council will be accountable to the community for the decisions it makes, taking into consideration the input received through engagement processes.

Two-way Communication

The council will use a range of communication methods to engage with the community, including but not limited to:

- a. **Public meetings:** The council will hold public meetings to inform the community about important issues and to provide opportunities for community members to ask questions and provide feedback.
- b. **Surveys and questionnaires:** The council will use surveys and questionnaires to gather feedback from the community on specific issues.
- c. **Social media:** The council will use social media to provide updates and engage with the community on issues of importance. The official channels used by the council are detailed in an annex to this policy.
- d. **Community forums:** The council will host community forums to discuss specific issues and provide opportunities for community members to provide input.
- e. **Public consultations:** The council will hold public consultations to gather input from the community on specific issues.
- f. **Community Groups:** The council will foster and encourage the excellent volunteering community within Ramsgate. A close community that is relied upon for communication on a ground level.

Roles and Responsibilities

- a. **Council:** The council is responsible for initiating and leading community engagement processes. Council members and staff should engage with the community in a respectful and constructive manner.
- b. **Community:** The community is responsible for engaging with the council in a respectful and constructive manner. Community members should provide feedback that is informed, constructive, and relevant to the issues at hand.
- c. **Council Staff:** Council staff are responsible for facilitating engagement processes and providing accurate and timely information to the community. Staff should ensure that engagement processes are accessible, inclusive, and respectful.
- d. **Councillors:** Councillors use their own social media platforms to communicate with the local community, this should be clear and concise when undertaking community engagement.

Confidentiality and Privacy

The council will protect the privacy of individuals who provide feedback through engagement processes. The council will not disclose personal information without the consent of the individual concerned, except where required by law.

Accessibility

The council will ensure that engagement processes are accessible to all members of the community, including those with disabilities or language barriers. The council will provide alternative formats and language translations where necessary.

The council will ensure that all communication is clear, and the language used is simplified. The council will avoid using jargon and all communication will be in plain English. The community needs to be able to understand the main issues being expressed by the council.

Adoption and Implementation

This policy will be adopted by the council and implemented by council staff. The policy will be communicated to the community through various channels, including the council website, social media, and public meetings.

Reporting and Feedback

The council will report back to the community on the input received through engagement processes and how that input has been considered in decision-making. The council will also provide opportunities for community members to provide feedback on the effectiveness of engagement processes.

Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

The council will evaluate the effectiveness of its engagement processes and continuously improve them based on feedback from the community. The council will use a variety of indicators to evaluate the effectiveness of engagement processes, such as the number of participants, the quality of feedback, and the level of satisfaction of participants.

Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure that it remains relevant and effective in promoting two-way communication between the council and the community.

Annex: Official Town Council Social Media Channels

The following social media channels are in active use by the Town Council.

Facebook

Ramsgate Town Council – www.facebook.com/RamsgateTown
Mayor of Ramsgate – www.facebook.com/MayorofRamsgate
Visit Ramsgate – www.facebook.com/VisitRamsgate
Radford House – www.facebook.com/RadfordHouseRTC

Twitter

Ramsgate Town Council – www.twitter.com/RamsgateTown
Mayor of Ramsgate – www.twitter.com/MayorRamsgate
Visit Ramsgate – www.twitter.com/VisitRamsgateUK

Instagram

Ramsgate Town Council – www.instagram.com/RamsgateTown
Mayor of Ramsgate – www.instagram.com/MayorofRamsgate
Visit Ramsgate – www.instagram.com/VisitRamsgate
Radford House – www.instagram.com/RadfordHouseRTC

LinkedIn

Ramsgate Town Council – www.linkedin.com/company/ramsgate-town-council

Youtube

Ramsgate Town Council – www.youtube.com/RamsgateTown
Active Ramsgate – www.youtube.com/@ActiveRamsgate