



Hadleigh Town Council

The Guildhall
Market Place
Hadleigh
Suffolk
IP7 5DN
(01473) 823884

Hadleigh

Tel: 01473 823884

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

1. Aims and Objectives

Hadleigh Town Council is committed to high standards of engagement with its community. We aim to make a positive difference to the quality of life of the community we serve and to be responsive to the needs of our community.

In order to do this we aim to involve the community as much as possible so that the town council makes decisions informed by the views of the public and works with residents, community organisations and local businesses for the improvement of the town. The Town Council is funded through your council tax and so it's important that the Town Council listens to the voice of council taxpayers.

2. How we engage with the community

Good community engagement is not just about residents being able to attend formal council meetings, it is far bigger than just that and this community engagement strategy highlights all the ways in which we aim to enable residents to have their say and ensure that councillors can make informed decisions. Our ultimate aim is that wherever possible council decision making is informed by evidence of what is happening in the town and the views of residents. To ensure we engage with and involve as many people as possible we use a range of community engagement approaches as follow:

a) Provision of Information to the Community

This Council ensures that its main documents which reflect its decisions are published and readily available for the public to view. These documents include the agendas, minutes and annual reports of the Council which are:

- Published on the Council's web site: <https://hadleigh.suffolk.cloud/>
- Published in the Hadleigh Community News every month
- Available to view, by request and prior arrangement, in the 30 minutes before Council meetings

The Council also summarises its activities and reports them in the Hadleigh Community News on a regular basis.

You can view the Councils Freedom of Information Publication Scheme on the Councils web site: <https://hadleigh.suffolk.cloud/>

b) Opportunities for representations to the Council



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Agendas for Committees and Full Council Meetings contain an invitation to the public and press to attend. Agendas give you an indication of the business to be transacted so that you can decide whether you want to attend or make your views known by some other means prior to the meeting.

Meetings are the forum for business and decision-making and it is important that this business can be conducted with ample time for due consideration of issues before Councillors. However, at Committee and Council meetings there is also an opportunity for the public to make representations in person prior to decisions being made. We welcome representations but inevitably have to apply a time limit and if you are concerned that there may be insufficient time to make your points known, you might wish to make representations in writing prior to the meeting.

The Town Council is also the sole trustee of the Market Feoffment Charity which manages the Guildhall. In the interests of openness and transparency, the council also makes charity meetings open to the public in the same way as regular council and committee meetings.

We give representatives from the Police and other tiers of local government an opportunity to make reports to Full Council Meetings. This provides the public and Councillors with more information and an opportunity to ask questions on matters of interest to them.

The Council will also call an Annual Meeting of the Town on a day falling between 1 March and 1 June inclusive. This is your meeting and you will have an opportunity to hear from many community organisations and ask them questions. It is also possible to raise matters of concern to the community.

c) Opportunities for involvement with the Council

The current council is keen to open up more avenues for the public to get involvement with the Council and inform decision making. We do this in a number of ways.

Firstly, we have introduced working groups. Working groups are typically time limited groups focused on a specific issue. They are more informal meetings and members of the public can be members of the group. Working groups look into issues, do background research on solutions, and advise the council on potential options. They are not able to make decisions, but their findings help enable councillors to make informed decisions that take into account evidence and the views of local people.

Current working groups are as follows:

- Cemetery Extension Working Group



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- Climate Change Working Group
- Layham Road Sports Ground Working Group

Secondly, we regularly carry out consultation exercises. This might be with the general public for larger issues affecting the whole town (e.g. Hadleigh Vision, Neighbourhood Plan) or might be with certain groups or organisations on more specific issues. Consultations might take place in different ways such as through open events, online surveys or other methods appropriate to the circumstances.

d) Involvement in Partnerships and other local bodies

The Council has representation on many local forums, groups and charities. This enables councillors to understand local issues and support the positive work of such organisations. Information obtained from these meetings is reported to Full Council Meetings.

The Council currently has representatives on the following bodies:

Organisation	Council Representative
SALC	Steve Allman
Hadleigh Twinning	Steve Allman
Wattisham Liason	Frank Minns
Footpath Warden	Emily Wright
Hadleigh Steering Group	Carolyn Cammack
Hadleigh Elderly People Welfare Committee	Carol Schleip
Hadleigh Traffic Management Working Group	James Bayliss
Tree Warden	Gordon McLeod
Woollen Towns Association	Helen Allan
Anne Beaumont Charity	Angela Gregg
Hadleigh Grand Feoffment Trustee	Gavin Talbot
Franey, Rand and Pesthouse Charities	Frank Minns

Where relevant, we will look to work in partnership with local groups where we have shared aims, this might be on one-off projects or issues or might even be longer standing relationships.

3. Role of Councillors

Councillors are the decision-makers of the Council. The contact details for all Councillors are available from the Town Council Manager and you may also contact them through the web site <https://hadleigh.suffolk.cloud/> or by letter. Councillors also hold the Town Council Manager and other Officers of the Council to account. Councillors welcome contact with



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members of the public, endeavour to be available immediately prior to Council Meetings and Committees for anybody who wishes to speak with them and they will listen to the representations you make to them at Council and Committee Meetings whether you attend in person, ask another person to raise matters for you or provide your comments in writing.

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor carry out a large number of public engagements each year which enables them to engage with residents, local community groups and organisations and local businesses. You can keep up with the mayoral engagements on the Mayor's Facebook page (@MayorOfHadleigh)

Councillors live locally and regularly speak to residents to find out the views of the public. If something is concerning you or you have an idea that would improve the town, they will be more than happy to speak with you.

The contact details for the Town Council Manager are published on agendas, the Town Council notice boards and in the Hadleigh Community News. The Town Council Manager 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.

Please feel free to contact the Town Council Manager for more information on anything in this Statement.

4. Continual Improvement

We are always looking for ways to improve how we take into account the views of the public and the following points are future improvements that the town council has agreed to work towards implementing.

- The Town Council has agreed to look at how the town council can improve engagement with young people, so their views and needs are better represented.
- The Town Council has agreed to develop a quarterly newsletter to inform residents on the work of the town council
- The Market Feoffment Committee is currently working on a long-term plan to transform the fortunes of the Guildhall complex. As part of this we have agreed that a public consultation will be a part of our turnaround strategy as well as looking at putting in place options to improve how the community can get involved with the Guildhall.



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- We are looking at how we can improve how residents can contact councillors such as through putting councillors' emails on the website and possibly through putting on councillor surgeries.
- We are continually improving and increasing the information available on our website
- Finally, we are always keen to hear from residents on how we can make further improvements so if you have any ideas please let us know.

Signed at the Town Matters Meeting on 25th June 2020

Town Matters Chair

Town Council Manager