



COLEHILL PARISH COUNCIL

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY – Adopted 8th October 2024

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Colehill Parish Council aims to be responsive to the needs of the local community and to involve its parishioners in the Council's decision-making about the issues which affect them including planning, delivery of services and decisions which impact the area.
- 1.2 This policy explains how we:
 - make information available to the community,
 - consult with the community,
 - engage with others within the community.

2. Making Information Available

- 2.1 The Parish Clerk can be contacted for information on any of our services or activities, to seek advice on any matter we deal with or raise any local concerns or issues. Contact details are displayed prominently on our website and on our parish noticeboards.
- 2.2 Our community website www.colehill.gov.uk provides information on all aspects of our services and the improvement initiatives we have underway, together with a wealth of information about our local community.
- 2.3 Our website includes details of recent planning applications, with links to Dorset Council's site so residents can raise comments or objections.
- 2.4 Our Facebook page "Colehill Parish Council" provides regular updates on our events and initiatives.
- 2.5 Where appropriate we provide information on events and activities to local newspapers and magazines.
- 2.6 We maintain 7 noticeboards around the parish, with details of events and activities.
- 2.7 Dates of Council & Committee meetings are displayed on all our noticeboards, with agendas for upcoming meetings being displayed on our main board outside the Co-op.
- 2.8 Contact details for our Councillors are published on our website. They can be contacted for information, help or assistance on any matter within our scope.

3. Consulting with the Community

- 3.1 Our regular Council and Committee meetings are open to the public to attend, with time set aside at the start of each meeting for residents to make comments or raise any matters they wish.

- 3.2 Additional public meetings are called when required to address important issues affecting the community.
- 3.3 When appropriate we will invite residents to form part of the working groups established to look at specific projects/tasks.
- 3.4 The Annual Parish Meeting, typically held in April each year, is a meeting of residents which Colehill Parish Council historically arrange in the absence of any residents calling one independently. It provides opportunity for residents to raise and discuss any matters amongst themselves. The Councillors attend and the Council Chair has the right to chair the meeting if in attendance, which until now has always been the position. Because the Councillors routinely attend, it gives Councillors an opportunity to report back to residents on Council activities over the previous year and plans for the year ahead.
- 3.5 Where specific initiatives or proposals are likely to impact the community, we will seek views and input from residents using the most appropriate method, including surveys, polls, questionnaires, focus groups, public meetings and the feedback form on our website.

4. Engaging with Others in the Community

- 4.1 We work with Dorset Council on many matters that fall within their remit, and invite our local Dorset Councillors to attend our Council meetings to provide regular updates.
- 4.2 We work with neighbouring Town and Parish Councils on matters of common interest.
- 4.3 We liaise with the local neighbourhood policing team on matters such as anti-social behaviour.
- 4.4 Our Councillors represent the Council on various outside bodies, as detailed on our website. Regular reports of meetings are made to the Council.
- 4.5 We work with many local voluntary and community groups to improve the quality of life for residents, including Colehill Village Hall and the Reef Community Centre.
- 4.6 We operate a Grant Aid scheme, to provide financial support to many local community groups and organisations.
- 4.7 The Council provides support for many local projects and events.

Version History

Date	Summary of Changes
8/10/24	New policy

This Policy will be reviewed annually, next review due October 2025.