



Community Engagement Policy

1. Aims and Objectives

St Mewan Parish Council's aims and objectives for seeking community engagement and the outcomes it hopes to achieve are:

Aims: –

- Work more closely with residents, businesses and community groups who express an interest.
- Engage with as many people as possible who want to participate in decision-making, monitoring services and planning for the future.
- Ensure that, by getting closer to the community and being accessible to all groups, local democracy is enhanced.
- Ensure that through the use of a wide range of approaches to public involvement and community engagement, St Mewan Parish Council actively encourages the involvement of residents, to capture their views and learn their concerns and effectively use those views as an integral part of any decision-making process.
- Ensure that residents have the opportunity to be heard at every stage and the capacity to be effective citizens.

Objectives:

This policy is part of St Mewan Parish Council's commitment to creating and maintaining effective working relationships with all sectors of the community, based on trust, openness, and constructive challenge.

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, clerk and councillors and getting the best effect.
- Improved engagement with the local community, with more people feeling that they are involved in decision-making and a higher percentage of people involved in volunteering.

- Improved satisfaction with services provided by the council.

2. Defining the Community of St Mewan Parish

St Mewan (Sen Mewen) is a civil parish and village in South Cornwall.

The village is approximately one mile (1.6 km) west of St Austell. It is a small settlement, comprising of the parish church, a school and nearby farms. St Mewan parish includes the villages of Sticker with Hewas Water, most of Polgooth with Trelowth and Trewoon.

St Mewan Parish Council is responsible for an electorate of approximately 3000 people with 13 Councillors who serve as the local authority that makes decisions on behalf of the people in the parish.

It is the first tier of local government closest to the community and the people. For this reason, they are a vital part of any community.

The community is defined as the electorate of the parish plus:

- Village Hall Trustees and its users
- Teachers and Governors St Mewan School
- Young people who live and/or are educated in the parish
- Retail and other businesses in the community
- Interest groups – clubs and societies.
- Voluntary organisations
- Church groups
- Farming community
- Groups of people defined by a common factor such as age, disability, faith, and other groups.
- Councillors and public service representatives including council staff.

3. Role of Council Members and Officers

- St Mewan Parish Council is non-political with 13 voluntary councillors identified in the community, via the newsletter and website. It employs one officer, the Clerk to the Council/Responsible Financial Officer who implements decisions made by council and provides independent, objective and professional advice, information, and administrative support.
- The Clerk to the Council attends meetings and can be contacted via email, telephone, or letter.

4. Provision of Information to the Community

- Messages can be left either by telephone to the council mobile or to the council's official email address. If the clerk is on annual leave or unable to respond a voicemail or out-of-office auto-response will indicate that fact. The Deputy Clerk will be forwarded emails in the Parish Clerk's absence.
- The names addresses and phone numbers of all councillors, clerk and deputy clerk are published on the website.
- The parish council website address is widely published, and the site contains information an individual might wish to know about the work of the parish council – including agendas, draft and signed minutes, financial documents, annual report, all necessary contact details, and electronic copies of the St Mewan Parish Council Newsletter. Minutes are a valuable tool for residents of the Parish who wish to keep up with the work of the Parish Council.
- Social media is an informal use of communication. St Mewan Parish Council has a Facebook page and is used for updating the residents on a regular basis. There is also a facility of sending a message via Facebook.
- Messaging to the clerk's personal messenger will be ignored.
- The parish council currently produces the St Mewan Parish Council Newsletter twice a year and this is delivered to every household and business within the parish.
- Information, including all meeting agendas is published on the four notice boards around the parish as well as on the parish council website.
- An Annual Report is prepared and printed in the St Mewan Parish Council newsletter and on the website.

5. Opportunities for Community Involvement

- It is recognised that members of the community may wish to engage with the parish council at different levels – ranging from the odd email/letter to regular attendance at meetings.
- All Parish council meetings are open to the public and there is an opportunity to speak under Public Participation at each meeting.
- An Annual Parish Assembly (to be held between 1st March and 1st June annually – please refer to the website for further information) gives the public and local organisations an opportunity to participate in the full assembly. This meeting is advertised widely and is used by the parish council to report on work carried out during the previous year. It is also an opportunity for the parish council to obtain views of residents on any matter which affects the community.
- St Mewan Parish Council undertakes consultations by inviting comments or questionnaires.
- Provide feedback and demonstrate the changes that are made as a result of engagement.

- The parish council is always considering practical ways of engaging with people and community groups.
- The parish council will continue to support and participate in community events.

6. Involvement with Partnerships

The parish council has a representative(s) on the following:

- Sticker Village Association
- Trewoon Village Hall
- Polgooth Village Hall
- St Austell and Mevagissey Community Network

7. Contact the Parish Council

The clerk to the council may be contacted as follows: –

Email: parishoffice@stmewanparishcouncil.gov.uk or via the Contact Form at www.stmewanparishcouncil.gov.uk

Telephone: 07464 350837 or 07749246925

Parish council members may be contacted via the website at www.stmewanparishcouncil.gov.uk

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