



Public Engagement Policy

Approved at the Annual Parish Council meeting 4 May 2021

1. What we are trying to achieve through public engagement

Eynsham Parish Council recognises that local people should be involved in decisions about public services and proposals that affect their lives. We aim to:

- (a) Keep an open mind and run consultations in an open and honest way.
- (b) Be clear about what we are consulting on and what we will do with the findings.
- (c) Give all relevant parties the chance to have their say.
- (d) Provide sufficient time and information to enable people to engage.
- (e) Take views expressed in consultations into account when we make decisions.
- (f) Provide effective and timely consultation feedback.

2. Through public engagement we look for the following benefits

- (a) Early warning of potential consequences of a decision.
- (b) The wisdom of a wide range of people, including stakeholders.
- (c) New ideas and solutions.
- (d) An understanding of the range and strength of opinions.
- (e) Opportunities for people who are affected by a proposal to express their views.
- (f) Improved decision-making processes and better decisions.
- (g) Better public understanding of an issue.
- (h) Increased participation in local democratic processes.

3. Public Engagement Matrix

Professional standards around public participation have been defined by the [International Association of Public Participation \(IAP2\)](#). It is important to determine the extent of public participation when planning public engagement. This will depend on the extent to which the Council is prepared or able to involve the public, and the context and proportionate basis for a particular decision. We propose to use the Public Engagement Matrix which has been adapted and progressed from the IAP2's spectrum, for the Council's purposes.

4. Process

When considering a new public engagement proposal, the level of impact vs the number of electorate will be determined. This will provide a basis for consultation; its goal and its promise to the public. Members will then need to consider the corresponding appropriate ways to engage and length of engagement. If a proposal falls between two levels of impact or number of electorate effected, it is recommended to use the lower level of consultation but extend the period of engagement beyond the minimum length of time.

Number of people effected by proposal

100% / 4075 50% / 2037 5% / 204

Level of impact

High impact

Medium impact

Low impact

Level of consultation

Example

Collaborate / Empower	Neighbourhood Plan
Involve	Public art installation, Pavilion re-build project
Consult	Revised grass cutting arrangements
Inform	Xmas Light Switch-on event re. residents parking

Level of consultation	Public Engagement Goal	Promise to the public	How we will engage (options as appropriate)	Period of Engagement
Collaborate / Empower	a) To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution. Where at all reasonable and practicable, to place the final decision in the hands of the public. b) To place final decision making in the hands of the public where at all feasible and practical.	a) We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible. b) We will implement what you decide where at all feasible and practical.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold public events/ workshops 	3 - 6 months
Involve	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	We will work with the public to ensure that concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold meetings with community groups. • Publish information via social media/website. • Undertake surveys (as below). 	3 months
Consult	To obtain public feedback on proposals, analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish information via social media/website. • Undertake surveys using online platforms and/or 'open day events.' 	6 weeks
Inform	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the proposal, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	We will keep you informed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send written communications directly to those effected. 	n/a