



Public Participation Policy	Doc. Ref. CPC-P-001
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Public Participation Policy

1. Purpose

Chacewater Parish Council is committed to involving the community in its work and recognises that informed public participation can improve the quality, legitimacy, and effectiveness of local decision-making.

This policy sets out the Council's overarching approach to public participation. It explains the forms that participation may take, the principles that apply, and how public involvement sits alongside the Council's statutory responsibilities and decision-making role.

2. Principles

Public participation in functions undertaken by Chacewater Parish Council is guided by the following principles:

- **Openness and transparency**
Participation opportunities will be clear and accessible.
- **Fairness and consistency**
Participation arrangements will be applied even-handedly.
- **Proportionality**
Arrangements will reflect the nature and scale of the matter concerned.
- **Impartiality and objectivity**
Participation should inform Council decisions, not predetermine them.
- **Accountability**
The Council remains accountable for all decisions it takes.
- **Respect**
All participants are expected to engage constructively and respectfully.

3. Forms of public participation

Public participation may take a number of forms, including but not limited to:

- General engagement**
Consultation exercises, surveys, public meetings, workshops, and other engagement activities used to gather views and information. These do not confer any formal role in Council decision-making.
- Working parties and advisory groups**
Time-limited or project-specific groups established by the Council to provide advice and technical input. Working parties are advisory only and have no delegated authority. They report to the Council in accordance with the agreed Terms of Reference.



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c) **Committees**

Formal bodies established under the Council's Standing Orders. Committees are councillor-led and operate in accordance with statutory requirements.

Non-councillor membership is permitted only in limited circumstances and subject to legal constraints.

4. Appointment to working parties and committees

Where the Council invites members of the public to participate in working parties or committees:

- expressions of interest may be sought;
- eligibility criteria may apply (for example, parish residency or relevant skills);
- appointments are made by resolution of the Council and are discretionary; and
- participation does not create any employment, agency, or representative relationship.

5. Conduct, impartiality, and conflicts of interest

Participants are expected to act in a manner consistent with the Council's values and to contribute constructively and objectively.

Participation in advisory roles is not compatible with predetermination or active advocacy on the same matters. Conflicts of interest, whether actual or perceived, must be declared and managed in accordance with the Council's adopted arrangements.

Non-councillor participants must comply with the **Working Party Participation Code**.

6. Confidentiality and information

Some information shared as part of Council business may be confidential, sensitive, or commercially restricted. Access to such information may be conditional on the signing of a confidentiality or non-disclosure agreement.

Confidentiality arrangements exist to protect the Council and the public interest and do not limit lawful transparency or accountability.

7. Transparency and publication

The Council is committed to transparency in its governance. As a general approach:

- the existence, purpose, and Terms of Reference of committees and working parties will be published;
- reports from working parties to Council will be published where appropriate;
- membership of committees will normally be published;
- membership of working parties will not normally be published, reflecting their advisory and informal nature.



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8. Review and flexibility

This policy will be kept under review and updated as necessary. The Council may depart from this policy where it considers there is good reason to do so. Any such departure will be proportionate and recorded by the Council.

This policy should be read alongside the Council's Standing Orders, Members' Code of Conduct, Working Party Participation Code, and relevant Terms of Reference.