

# Metheringham, Sots Hole and Tanvats Parish Council

## **Community Engagement - Statement of Intent**

### **Introduction**

Metheringham Parish Council believes the residents of the community should be actively involved in decision making at this level and have input in the future of the parish. This Statement of Intent formally endorses the Councils intention to engage with the Community.

### **Aims and Objectives**

Metheringham Parish Council is totally committed to high standards of engagement with its community. The aim of the Community Engagement Statement of Intent is to improve the way in which the Council engages and consults being the first tier of local government and directly accountable to the electorate of the parish. The Council will consider the Sustainable Community Strategies compiled by North Kesteven District Council, Lincolnshire County Council and Lincolnshire Assembly to promote long term economic, social and environmental well being.

### **Defining the Community**

Metheringham Parish Council believes our community is everyone within the parish boundary, including residents, businesses, village organizations and visitors irrespective of physical ability, age, sex, religion or ethnic origin. In addition the Council also endeavours to engage with the various committees, neighbouring parish councils, principal authorities, the local police, fire and rescue service, health authorities, school, churches, community groups and any other not for profit organizations.

### **Provision of Information to the Community**

The Council ensures information is available to the community on its work and decision making, through Agendas, Minutes, Annual Reports and other publications.

The Annual Report contains a report from the Chairman on the achievements of the Council, reports from the various working groups and a summary of the financial position. This is delivered to every household in the parish. The Annual Village Meeting held between 1<sup>st</sup> March and 1<sup>st</sup> June is organized by the Parish Council for all local voluntary groups and residents of the village.

Information can also be obtained by a variety of means.

- Annual Village Meeting
- Regular Council, Planning and Finance Committee meetings open to the public and press
- Metheringham Area Community Leisure Association (MACLA) quarterly magazine incorporating Council news and activities
- Consultative meetings called on matters that need community involvement

- The Metheringham Parish Council website  
<http://parishes.lincolnshire.gov.uk/Metheringham/>
- The Parish Council and village notice boards in the War Memorial garden, High Street and outside the Post Office, High Street
- Requesting information by e-mail or telephone to the Clerk
- The Council have adopted the Freedom of Information Publication Scheme, the public can request any council documentation (except Private and Confidential Items). Most of these items are readily available on the council website.
- Attending Parish Council, Planning and Finance Committee meetings, a public forum of 15 minutes is allocated prior to the official start of the meeting where the public can address the council or committee on current matters or items which may become future agenda items. A police report is given during this time.
- Surgeries are held monthly on a Saturday morning two Councillors are present to answer any questions or queries from parishioners

This is not an exhaustive list and will be amended as and when necessary.

### **Opportunities for Formal Representations to the Council**

The Council encourages formal and informal representations from individuals/groups/organizations for items to be discussed at Council or Committee Meetings, these must be submitted seven days prior to the meetings. Any items to be included on the agenda, that are not received before this deadline will be discussed at the next meeting. Partnership organizations e.g. Lincolnshire County Council, North Kesteven District Council and Council representatives on other outside bodies have the opportunity to report at Council Meetings.

Metheringham Parish Council has acquired 'Quality Council' status which required extensive proof that formal and informal representation to the council is available.

### **Involvement in Partnerships**

Metheringham Parish Council will work with any partnerships that want to have a positive influence on the village. The Council work closely with North Kesteven District Council, who have an information/access point in the village. A noticeboard is dedicated to Parish Council information and activities. Council, Planning and Finance Committee minutes are readily available.

The Council are actively involved in the North Kesteven District Council - Parish Partnerships initiative and County Council projects, we will continue to support these organizations and seek new opportunities for partnership working.

Metheringham Parish Council encourages and supports public meetings organized by the police, the health authority, the district and county councils and any other organizations which are working for the benefit of Metheringham.

## **Role of Council Members and Officers**

Councillors are elected to the Council, decisions are made by the whole Council which is a corporate body, working on behalf of the community, to improve the well-being of the parish. Councillors engage with the community in the following ways:-

- Informal meetings/conversations with parishioners
- Council surgeries
- Council and Committee Meetings
- Working Groups
- Representatives to Outside Bodies and Partnership groups
- Annual Village Meeting and other village events

Officers are appointed by the Council, the Clerk is responsible for the overall administration of the Councils business and provides advice to ensure that decisions made by the Council are sound and legal. The Clerk is the Proper Officer of the Council and is the first point of contact for raising matters or requesting information from the Council. Contact details for Councillors and the Clerk can be found on the Parish Council notice board, website:

<http://parishes.lincolnshire.gov.uk/Metheringham/> and the Metheringham Area Community Leisure Association (MACLA) magazine.

Metheringham Parish Council Members and Officers are proactive and aim to improve the quality of life for the residents, businesses, village organizations and visitors.

## **Specific Areas for Community Involvement**

Metheringham Area Community Leisure Association was formed in 2000 to encompass the voluntary organizations operating in the village and surrounding area. A survey was carried out and from this an action plan developed. The main successes so far have been the website and quarterly magazine. The Parish Council are actively involved with the original plans to improve the sports facilities in the village, this is still ongoing due to difficulties with Lincolnshire County Council relating to land issues. The Council hold public meetings to ascertain the views of the residents whenever necessary.

Metheringham Parish Council has more recently formed a Parish Plan Steering Group consisting of three council members and a small number of residents who have expressed an interest in the group.

The Council have also identified the need for teenagers to be actively involved in the decision making process. The formation of a Youth Council is being progressed.

## **Review**

This statement will be reviewed on an annual basis and amendments made accordingly.