

BURTON BRADSTOCK PARISH COUNCIL

Improving Communications with Parishioners

Background

Parish Council meetings are public events and parishioners have the right to attend, observe and when invited contribute to Council meetings. Public participation should be encouraged so that the Council understands the views of parishioners and people can ask questions of the Council.

Attendance at Parish Council by parishioners has been generally declining for a number of years. A few individuals attend regularly and numbers can swell when there is a significant planning application on the agenda.

Since moving to online meetings attendance by parishioners has reduced even more, with one resident being the only non councillor to take part since April 2020.

It was agreed at the October meeting to consider actions that would improve communications between the Council and parishioners and hopefully result in more engagement in the business of the Council.

Proposals for Discussion

To increase the frequency of social media posting about the work of the Parish Council.

Produce a short summary of the Council's agenda for circulation via social media - A simple list of the topics to be covered at the next Council meeting. A poster, detailing the same information, should be printed and put up on noticeboards around the village.

A short resume of the Council minutes for circulation via social media - bullet points summarising what the Council agreed at the meeting. A poster, detailing the same information, should be printed and put up on noticeboards around the village.

A list of Councillors contact details* and the subject that they lead on to be posted to BB website to encourage parishioners to make contact between meetings.

Formally invite parishioner submitting planning applications that will be considered at the Council meeting to attend and make use of the public session.

Occasionally invite parishioners to present on topical issues in the public session at the beginning of the Council meeting.

Amend Standing Orders to limit individual contributions in the public session to a maximum of 3 minutes.

Hold the Parish Meeting in the Village Hall and make the main agenda item an open meeting to discuss issues nominated by parishioners

** All councillors are encouraged to adopt @burtonbradstockparishcouncil.org emails rather than personal ones for this proposal.*

Recommendation-

To approve all or a selection of the above actions to help improve communication between Burton Bradstock Parish Council and Parishioners and encourage greater public participation in Council meetings.