

Summary of the Community Strategy Meeting held on Thursday the 15th of August 2024 via Teams

Attached is the ppt., that Peter Barker used to explain the processes of engagement S.C.C., had used to enable them to collate all the information. This then provided them with the data to move forward with creating the Community Strategy for Staffordshire. The final slides offered their Draft proposal, which was going to be submitted to the SCC cabinet in September. The cabinet will then consider the strategy before it is implemented.

After the presentation of the slides, councillors and clerks attending the meeting were asked for their opinions on: –

- 1) *What were their thoughts on their engagement findings. Plus, was there anything particularly relevant for you and your parish.*
- 2) *What opportunities are there for SCC to work together with Parish Councils to help deliver the strategy?*

The bullet points summarise the current issues/difficulties the clerks and councillors at the meeting experience when dealing with the Council.

SCC and Parish councils

- Many voiced their concern that there appears to be a disconnect between County Council to Borough/District and Parish Council. For anything to be successful it requires 3-way communication.
- Phone numbers of the various people in charge of departments at the County Council would help PCs better negotiate their way around. A lot of time is wasted because you do not always know who to contact.
- A suggestion of sharing of phone contacts to all PC's would be helpful!
- Centralised information i.e. a one stop shop would give a better customer experience!

Highways

- There is no human touch as everything must be logged via their platform.

- It is also difficult, in a lot of instances, to obtain any answers quickly from the Highways Department.
- A lot of PCs find the system difficult to manage.

Planning Portal

- This is not user friendly and is alien to many, so if residents of the PC's want to object, or support a planning application, many do not bother because it is so cumbersome.

Transport

- SCC need to work on transport as it is proving difficult for many residents within the various parishes, as there are no evening buses, or buses on Sundays, in some places.
- Some people are finding it difficult to find work because of lack of transport.

Rights of Way

- A specific contact for the Rights of Way Officer would be helpful.
- Footpaths should be numbered and a system of QR codes could be used.

Other Concerns Raised

Need suggestions on how to get more residents to volunteer/engage with the PC's Many PCs found it was always the same people!

Need to define grey belt areas.

The bereavement support needs to link into communities.

The Members Community Fund – needs the help of SCC to be able to navigate your way through the process. This needs to be simplified.

FINALLY – it was agreed by all attendees that communication is key and needs be improved. A suggestion to have a Community Portal for residents to register issues was thought to be a good idea.

