



# HALEWOOD TOWN COUNCIL STATEMENT OF INTENT AS TO COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## (WITH REFERENCE TO THE POWER OF WELL-BEING)

This document is designed to support the Town Council in their application of the “Power of Well Being”. The original document was created and subsequently approved by full Town Council on 10 September 2009. As the Town Council now have to re-accredit to be able to use the Power, the Statement has been updated for the meeting of the Town Council on 16 June 2011.

To commence with, the Town Council’s “Mission Statement”, reproduced from the Best Practice Performance Statement is reproduced below.

### MISSION STATEMENT

*That Halewood Town Council will:*

1. *Deliver its services to the highest quality in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, and economy in terms of value for money.*
2. *Conduct its business openly and democratically, and will consult with the local people.*
3. *Consider good practice from other similar sized Town Councils.*
4. *Examine and challenge through periodic reviews how a service is delivered.*
5. *Maintain its use of open and fair competition, where practicable, when considering tenders and the provision of services.*
6. *Comply with the National Code of Local Government Conduct regarding standards in public life.*
7. *Act in the best interests of local people in making appropriate representations to:*
  - a). *Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council*

- b). *Central Government*
- c). *Other appropriate private and public sector groups.*

## **MAIN STATEMENT OF INTENT**

### **Aims and Objectives**

Halewood Town Council is an open and transparent Quality Status Council, which values the opinions of the community which it serves. It has in the past, and will continue to do so in the future, listen to the needs and concerns of that community, and will do everything within its power and financial constraints, to make Halewood a better place to live, and work.

### **Defining the Community**

Halewood Town Council is keen to reach all groups and individuals who work, or live in the Township. It has historical links with local Church Groups, Residents Associations, and the many voluntary groups working for the good of Halewood, to ensure that as wide a cross section as possible of the community can have access to the Council, its Members, and its staff.

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

Halewood Town Council has many avenues in which to communicate with its community. These include:-

- A web-site that goes beyond the work of the Town Council, and provides links to many other useful services, including the principal authority.
- An award winning Annual Report, which is delivered annually to every home in the Township. This booklet is not just an information guide to council services, but also highlights contributions from the many organisations working within Halewood.
- The bi-monthly contribution of at least a two page Town Council Newsletter in the local free newspaper, “The Halewood Focus”.
- The publishing of agenda, both on-line, and in various notice boards around the Township, for Council meetings.
- The Town Council’s involvement in the Annual Parish Meeting, with its public question time.
- The annual External Audit offers the opportunity for questions to be asked about the latest Statement of Accounts, and Balance Sheet. A synopsis of the financial accounts is published within the Annual Report, and also in an edition of the Halewood Community News.
- The ability to provide Town Council information, when requested, to those with a need for Braille documents.

### **Opportunities for Community Involvement**

Halewood Town Council will make every opportunity available to the electorate to ensure excellent community involvement. These will include the following methods:-

- Town Councillors hold regular evening surgeries, which are publicised, for the electorate to have a private forum to raise issues.
- The Town Council have a public forum session at every Council meeting, where the electorate can raise issues “Appertaining to the Township”. Electors can pre-register to speak before the Council with the Town Manager, or if the Chairman decrees that time allows, permit a member of the public to raise an issue
- The Town Council also has a track record in gauging public opinion via consultation exercises such as the Elwyn Gardens issue, and more recently the Torrington Playground issue.
- The Annual Best Practice Performance Statement, (BPPS), also incorporates the results of public consultation exercises on a series of general questions, as well as the responses of hirers of the two council community centres.
- The community can also register their views via the Town Council website, which incorporates polls, which can be completed on-line.

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

It has already been stated elsewhere in this “Statement of Intent” of the many opportunities that exist for the public to make formal representations to the Town Council. Issues received in writing, providing they are received before the deadline for closure of the agenda, are included as a stated item on the next agenda.

It is a target that correspondence received from a member of the public is at least acknowledged within four working days.

In any public consultation exercise or survey, the Town Council publish the evaluation results.

### **Involvement in Partnerships**

Halewood Town Council has representation on the Borough Council’s Area Partnership Board at elected member level, and also the Town Manager represents the Town Council on the local Halewood Pride Team meetings. In total, there are elected member representations on sixteen outside bodies at present. There are significant strong links between partner organisations and the Town Council as a result.

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

As an open and transparent Town Council, both Members and officers seek to offer a high quality professional service to all whom they serve. Members regularly interact with their community in a number of roles, (including that of elected Member for the principal authority as well were appropriate), some of which have already been mentioned. Both Members and officers are keen to maintain relevant Codes of Conduct in their business, and see the community as “customers” rather than an electorate.

### **Specific Area for Community Involvement**

Where there is a specific issue, or a new project, that the Town Council wish to consider, it is of value to the Town Council to seek the views of the community who will be most affected. The residents of the Township can have confidence in that their “voice” will be heard, and will work with the community to reach a common goal.