

**LAVERSTOCK & FORD PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Report for Agenda Item 25.040**

**Subject: Communications & Community Engagement Working Group**  
**Date: Weds Feb 02, 2025**  
**Author: C&CE Officer**

**Meeting Held at Hampton Park Pavilion, 7 pm**

**Present: Cllr Jones, Cllr Barker, Cllr Lynn, C&CE Officer**

Those present began looking at the challenges of public engagement. With just over two weeks notice, a session had been organised on Saturday 01 Feb at Hampton Park Pavilion for people to meet councillors and either find out more about becoming a councillor, or air their concerns about where they live. Five Councillors were present but no member of the public turned up.

The avenues to reach residents for such events were also discussed: social media, local press, or posters and flyers and word of mouth. Despite advertising via our website, social media and a mention on community radio, the response was disappointing, perhaps because this event would have been better suited to a personal invitation to anyone who had expressed an interest in being a councillor, or who might have welcomed the chance to discuss a particular issue face-to-face (similar to an MP's Surgery). However, it also highlighted the positive outcome of Councillors being able to meet informally.

The C&CE Officer has been ramping up a PR campaign in preparation for the elections, aiming to raise the profile of the council and show the diverse ways a councillor works to improve their parish. Along with several press releases in local print media about various activities the Council has supported and actively engaged with, Cllr Barker had just recorded a That'sTV article on thanking the local Neighbourhood Police Team and highlighting the need to report crime.

The power of video or v-logging was discussed and ideas for a campaign similar to the one created for International Womens Day – looking at what a councillor does and how they work for residents and neighbourhoods. We will need to purchase some wireless Lavalier Mics, to ensure good sound quality. These could also be used for other occasions.

The meeting was joined by the Parish Clerk, who briefly updated them on the Community Venues Officer role that was soon to go live on job sites.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm

The Next Meeting will be held at Hampton Park Pavilion on Weds May 28 at 7 pm