



# Community Engagement Strategy

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Weedon Bec Parish Council has developed a Community Engagement Strategy with the aim of forming a basis for communicating with its residents, voluntary/community groups, business community and partners. It recognises that the services it provides must reflect the needs of its community and the environment.

Weedon Bec Parish Council strongly believe that its residents should be involved in decisions affecting them and their community and in shaping the future of their community.

## 2. AIMS

The aim of the strategy is to improve the way in which the Council engages and consults its residents and partners on important issues by:

- high quality, transparent, consistent and effective communication and engagement
- informing, consulting and involving
- being inclusive and engaging with all of its residents and partners
- ensuring views are listened to and used to develop, enhance and improve services, the environment and the quality of life for residents.

## 3. OBJECTIVES

- To improve, plan and shape the future of the community according to local needs.
- To improve the quality and delivery of services
- To use engagement to inform decision making, ensuring decisions are fit for purpose and meet the needs of the community
- To enhance the well being of the community.
- To be a stronger, more active and cohesive community

## 4. HOW THIS WILL BE ACHIEVED

Community engagement will be achieved by Weedon Bec Parish Council through communicating, consulting, supporting and working together with its residents, businesses and partners. The results will then be fed back to the community by the most appropriate channels.

- **Communication**

Communicating with members of the parish will be achieved in various ways to ensure as many sections as possible are reached.

### **Methods of Communication**

**Weedon News** which is delivered to every house and business in Weedon Bec six times a year. It informs residents on important village matters and includes articles from members of the community on topical issues and as a medium for consultations.

**The Parish Council website** has a wealth of local information and is updated regularly. All minutes of meetings are posted on the website shortly after they have been signed off. It may be possible to develop the website to include a forum or weblog, however, the potential for breach of security must first be explored.

### **Facebook**

Facebook an extremely popular media to provide a modern alternative means to communicate with residents and businesses in the village (see separate social media policy)

**Parish Council notice boards** are placed around the community in prominent positions. They are used to inform of Parish Council activities, information, initiatives and activities of community groups.



**Information leaflets** periodically produced and left in the Post Office and other retail outlets. They can also be downloaded from the website.

**Meetings** of the Council and its Committees are open to the public and include an opportunity for members of the community to engage with councillors. All Parish Council meetings include a section for public participation.

- **Consultation**

Consulting the community on important issues is key to the strategy. It will ensure those most affected are able to put forward an opinion and be given an opportunity to be involved in making a difference.

Ensuring consultations include all members of the community by identifying the hard to reach groups such as youths, the elderly, the housebound, the disabled, ethnic minorities and others which may require establishing alternative methods of communication.

- **Support**

Supporting local organisations will assist them in meeting their own aims and objectives.

Supporting local projects and participating in local events will raise the awareness of the Parish Council, their aims and objectives.

Supporting residents in shaping the future of their community will bring about a more cohesive community.

- **Acting Together**

Acting together with residents in finding solutions to local problems will ensure those solutions will be accepted.

Acting together to carry out agreed action plans will engage the community in working with the Parish Council to enhance the environment and the quality of their lives.

Acting together in decision making and policy drafting will ensure the community has a voice and can make a difference.

**5. MEASURING SUCCESS**

Success will be measured by predefined targets, including annual reviews of consultation outcomes, monitoring residents' participation in consultation processes and their involvement in local projects and events.

**6. STRATEGY REVIEWS**

Reviews of the consultation processes and results will be used as a continual improvement process for changes or amendments to the strategy.

Adopted: May 2011

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Chairman

*Amended July 2015 – Facebook para*