

# Bradford on Avon Town Council



## Community Engagement Statement of Intent

# Version Control

<b>Action:</b>	<b>Who:</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Comments:</b>
Draft to Resources Committee	Town Clerk	17.12.19	As a 94-page agenda sent out, members were given more time to consider these policies and discuss them at the next Resources Committee on the 19 <sup>th</sup> February 2020. This meeting was subsequently cancelled.
Draft to Full Council	Town Clerk	04.02.20	Ask members for their comments by 9 <sup>th</sup> April 2020 then take to Full Council on the 5 <sup>th</sup> May 2020 for adoption
Draft to Full Council	Town Clerk	27.07.20	Adopted by Virtual Extraordinary Full Council



## **Aims and Objectives**

Bradford on Avon Council aims to ensure that through the use of a wide range of approaches to public consultation and community engagement it actively encourages residents to inform its decision-making process and make an input into decisions which affect their day to day lives in the parish.

Bradford on Avon Council is committed to creating and maintaining effective working relationships with all sectors of the community. The Council recognises that there are different levels of engagement and will endeavour to involve the community in the following ways:

- Inform people about its work and the services it provides
- Consult with and seek out the views of the community
- Encourage community participation in local government
- Collaborate with individuals, community groups and organisations where appropriate, to achieve agreed aims for the benefit of the Parish
- Build up effective working relationships within the community and encourage a sense of ownership of assets, infrastructure and new projects.

## **The Community**

Bradford on Avon Town Council seeks to engage with all sections of the community regardless of age, ability, gender, ethnicity, faith or sexual orientation i.e. parishioners (particularly hard to reach groups such as the young, disenfranchised, disaffected and the elderly), the local business community, the many clubs, organisations and societies which are active in the parish, its partners such as Wiltshire Council and the neighbourhood policing team and our elected divisional member for Wiltshire Council. The Town Council is also committed to engaging with any persons who appear to it to have an interest in matters relating to the economic, social and environmental well-being of its area.

## **Provision of information to the community and opportunities for community involvement**

Bradford on Avon Town Council recognises that members of the community may wish to engage with it at different levels and in a variety of ways, from the occasional email or letter with a suggestion on how a service could be improved, to attendance at meetings etc.

Bradford on Avon Town Council will therefore use many ways to actively seek the views of its parishioners and involve them in its work:

- **Publications:** The Town Council will communicate with parishioners through regular newsletters, as well as the mayor's annual report which will contain up to date information. The Town Council will communicate with the local press when appropriate.

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- **Website:** The Town Council website [www.bradfordonavontowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.bradfordonavontowncouncil.gov.uk) a community resource which publishes information about the Town, its Council, and the many organisations which flourish in Bradford on Avon agendas, minutes, accounts and other documents will be regularly posted on this website for residents' information. Residents are invited to contact the Town Council via the website, or email at [office@bradfordonavontowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:office@bradfordonavontowncouncil.gov.uk) Bradford on Avon Town Council is committed to develop and improve the website and will actively encourage residents to use it to exchange information through the Newsletters and Notice Boards as a means of improving communication.
- **Direct Access:** The Town Council will display a list of all Town Councillors together with points of contact on its website and noticeboards. This medium will also be used to directly advertise other important events e.g. notices relating to the annual audit of accounts; casual vacancies, elections and forthcoming meetings etc. Details of the Town Council's publication scheme and the address of the Wiltshire Council Monitoring Officer will also be displayed on the website for residents' information.
- **Co-option:** With the exception of the Full Council, Bradford on Avon Town Council encourages the involvement of the community in the work of the Council through co-option. Any standing committee of the council is empowered to co-opt interested members of the community onto any standing committee.
- **Meetings:** Notice of all Council meetings is given on the parish notice boards and on the website. Residents are encouraged to attend Full Council and Committee meetings and time is set aside at all meetings for public participation at all these meetings. Residents are also actively encouraged to attend the Annual Town Meeting, which is advertised as above.
- **Surveys:** Bradford on Avon Town Council will undertake surveys and other related forms of information gathering from time to time to ascertain the community's views on a particular issue.
- **Specific Projects:** From time to time Bradford on Avon Town Council will undertake specific projects for the benefit of the community. The normal method for undertaking these is via an advisory group set up under a standing committee. Co-option (see above) is used to ensure that the community is fully represented and involved in these projects.



## **Opportunities for formal representations to the council**

Representations to Bradford on Avon Town Council will normally be considered at the next meeting of the relevant standing committee. If, however, they require the provision of information only, then the clerk will provide it in accordance with the council's publication scheme. The Town Council has a Code of Practice for handling complaints, which is available from the clerk, published on the website and reviewed annually. The publication of agendas on the Town Council's notice boards and website gives residents the opportunity to make representation to the council before agenda items are discussed. All formal representations received are responded to in writing.

## **Involvement in partnerships**

Bradford on Avon Town Council is committed to partnership working where it is clear that it will be of benefit to the Town or to fulfil its statutory requirements.

## **Role of council members and officers in consultation and community engagement**

Elected members are powerful advocates for their community and their leadership role enables them to have a major input into the consultation and engagement process. Councillors are very accessible:

- Their contact details are published on the notice boards, on the website in the annual report to residents and in newsletters.
- They are available to talk to residents during the public session prior to each Full Council and committee meetings.
- In a private capacity, they belong to many other local clubs, societies and organisations, where they may, if they so wish promote the work of the Town Council and be available to residents.



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### Related Documents

- Standing Orders
- Financial Regulations
- Business Continuity Plan
- Corporate Governance Policy
- Code of Conduct for members
- Code of Conduct for volunteers