



**Date:** 26<sup>th</sup> February 2018

**Title:** Community Engagement Strategy

**Purpose of the Report:** To seek Committee views on a proposed revised Community Engagement Strategy.

**Contact Officer:** Sarah Sandiford, Head of Democratic & Central Services

<b>Corporate Objective/s</b>	To consolidate processes and procedures, ensuring operational efficiency and a structure which will underpin future service delivery by the Town Council.	
<b>Implications:</b>		
<b>Financial</b>	X	
<b>Human Resources</b>	X	
<b>Operational/Service delivery</b>	√	To ensure that an up to date and fit for purpose policy is in place in respect of community engagement.
<b>Procedural/Legal</b>	√	To consider a period of consultation on the draft revised document.
<b>Risk/Health &amp; Safety</b>	X	

## 1. RECOMMENDATIONS

**Should the Policy and Finance Committee be minded:-**

**1.1 To note the report.**

**1.2 To endorse that a period of public consultation be commenced in respect of the draft revised Community Engagement Strategy.**

## 2 BACKGROUND

2.1 The current Town Council Community Engagement Strategy (appendix A) was adopted by Council in 2012.

2.2 While many of the guiding principles remain relevant today, there are elements of the document which are out of date. In particular, the references to Big Plan/Big Plan II are now outmoded and the document fails to reflect the significant growth in digital communications in recent years.

2.3 As part of the ongoing review of guiding policies and procedures, it has therefore been identified that the Community Engagement Strategy requires revision.

### **3. UPDATE**

- 3.1 In reviewing the document, a selection of Consultation and Community Engagement strategies have been reviewed, including those of other parish councils and those of local authorities. The overarching themes have been incorporated into the new draft strategy in order to reflect best practice elsewhere within the public sector.
- 3.2 The draft revised strategy sets out a range of ways in which the Town Council will communicate with the public and a range of guiding principles to be followed.
- 3.3 As stated in the strategy, it is not possible to formulate a prescriptive process or timescale for engagement, as each project/service will differ. The Town Council will consider timescales, costs and resources for each individual project or service in determining how best to engage with residents and stakeholders.
- 3.4 The Town Council has previously endorsed the principles of the Bedfordshire and Luton Compact, which sets out the ways in which the public sector and the voluntary and community sector will work together. These principles are included within the draft strategy.

### **4. NEXT STEPS**

- 4.1 Should Committee be minded, it is proposed that the next step would be to undertake a period of public consultation on the proposed new Community Engagement Strategy, after which a further report will be brought back to Committee for consideration.

End.