



Aldenhams Parish Council

Community Engagement Policy

Version 1	Adopted June 2015
Version 2	October 2024

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.0 Community engagement is concerned with giving local people a voice and involving them in decisions which affect them and their community. This may include individuals, voluntary and community organisations as well as other public sector bodies.

It provides opportunity for local people to talk to the council about their aspirations and or needs in their community and neighbourhood. It allows the council to consult with and inform people about what services it provides, how it prioritises, how policies are determined and how well it's performing.

1.1 To achieve our ambitions for Aldenham, Aldenham Parish Council (APC) wants to work closely with the public- residents, communities, businesses, partners and voluntary organisations. Our aim is to engage with its residents and encourage their participation in decision making, securing better services, being engaged with local democratic process and creating a more active and informed community.

2.0 AIMS

The council strives to undertake the following:

To enable an involved, empowered and active citizenship through:

- (i) The involvement of residents in the devolution of Neighbourhood Plan for the parish
- (ii) Offering support to hard to reach groups via Access for All WP
- (iii) Seeking the views of young people via Youth Council

To communicate information to our community clearly, factually and appropriately through:

- (i) The website detailing all council services activities as the primary source of information on the Council for the community and it is kept up to date with content and routinely monitored.
- (ii) The preparation of a newsletter sent out to every household twice a year
- (iii) Monthly Chair's blog
- (iv) Advertising Council's activities via social media
- (v) Noticeboards around the parish (7)
- (vi) Leaflets about Council's and community activities displayed by its offices
- (v) The use of plain English and no local government jargon
- (viii) The adherence to a corporate design/logo to raise awareness of the Council's activities

The Council will take measures, where practical, to reach those in the community who are not online and distribute selected Council publications to households.

To improve our communication with our partners and stakeholders and co-ordinate our community engagement efforts through:

- (i) Supporting the role and functioning of all strategic partners.

(ii) Actively being involved in various networking organisations

To raise the image and reputation of the Council through:

- (i) Inviting residents to be actively involved in our meetings via the public forum
- (ii) Publicising widely the Annual Parish Meeting
- (iii) Encouraging usage of the Council website
- (iv) Inviting residents/community groups to provide information for the Council Newsletter
- (v) Issuing press releases covering activities of the Council
- (vi) Encouraging the Chairman and Vice- Chairman to actively represent the community
- (vi) When the Parish Council is seeking views on a specific project or idea it will consult with the community. Consultations will be publicised as widely as possible and will have a defined end date for submissions.

To enable every Councillor to maximise their role as elected representatives and Community Leaders through:

- (i) The preparation of a comprehensive New Members Pack
- (ii) Uploading of agendas & minutes on the council website
- (iii) Encouraging Councillors to attend meetings of community organisations and residents' associations in their respective wards
- (iv) Encouraging councillors to take up places on community groups and organisations
- (v) Training

To ensure every member of staff understands the council's priorities through:

- (i) having regular 1-1s and annual staff appraisals
- (ii) Encouraging staff to provide input into the decision making process
- (iii) Encouraging staff actively represent the interest of the Parish Council at community events

This policy was adopted by Aldenham Parish Council at its meeting of 14 October 2024 and will be reviewed when required.

THIS POLICY MUST BE COMPLIED WITH AT ALL TIMES.