

# **BRADFIELD PARISH COUNCIL**



## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 2011-2012**

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## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

*Bradfield Parish Council has developed a Community Engagement Strategy with the aim of constructing a standard for engagement with its residents and partners.*

*Bradfield Parish Council strongly believes that its residents should be involved in decisions affecting them and their neighbourhood and in shaping the future of their parish. It recognises that the services it provides must reflect the needs of its parishioners and the locality.*

*It is committed to engaging residents by encouraging them to become actively involved in decisions that affect them and the community, to delivering better services and to improving the quality of life of residents by creating a more active and informed 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*

- 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 parish according to local needs and priorities.*
- *To use a variety of methods to make information available.*
- *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 parish.*
- *To enhance the social, economic and environmental well being of its residents.*
- *To be a stronger, more active and cohesive parish.*

### **4. HOW THIS WILL BE ACHIEVED**

*Community engagement will be achieved by Bradfield Parish Council by communicating, consulting, supporting and working together with its residents.*

#### **Communication**

*Communicating with members of the parish will be achieved in many ways to ensure all sections of the community are reached and will be developed as a medium for consultation and include articles on topical issues.*

*The parish website has a wealth of local information and is updated on a regular basis. Special events and important notices will continue to be added regularly. All agendas are advertised as required under the Local Government Act 1972, including on the website, and minutes of meetings are included on the website within a calendar month of the meeting.*

*Information leaflets are available from the parish office and can also be downloaded from the website. New leaflets will be added as necessary.*

*Meetings of the Council and its Committees are open to the public and include an opportunity for members of the parish to engage with councillors.*

#### **Consultation**

*Consulting parishioners on important issues will be key to the strategy. It will ensure those most affected are able to put forward an opinion and given an opportunity to make a difference.*

*Ensuring consultations include members of the parish by identifying the hard to reach groups such as youths, the elderly, the housebound, the disabled, ethnic minorities etc. This may require establishing different engagement channels for them.*

#### **Support**

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

*Supporting local projects and participating in local events will raise the awareness of the Council and its aims and objectives.*

*Supporting members of the parish in shaping the future of their parish will bring about a more cohesive community.*

### **Acting Together**

*Acting together with residents and partners in finding solutions to local problems will ensure they will be accepted and fit for purpose.*

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

*Acting together in decision making will ensure they have a voice and can make a difference.*

## **5. MEASURING SUCCESS**

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

## **6. STRATEGY REVIEWS**

*Annual reviews and results will be used as a continual improvement process for changes or amendments to the strategy.*

## **7. ACTION PLAN FOR 2011**

| <b>Action Plan</b>   |  |  |
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| <b>Activity</b>  | <b>Action</b>  | <b>Statement</b>   |
| <i>Raise awareness of consultation processes.</i>                    | <i>Promote it through newsletters, the website and local media.</i>  | <i>Promoting the strategy will be an on-going priority.</i>  |
| <i>Investigate setting a website consultation or forum facility.</i> | <i>Investigate the possibility, usefulness and disadvantages of such a facility.</i>   | <i>Access levels to the website could be a serious security issue and must be thoroughly researched.</i>   |
| <i>Continue to work with Police and Partner Authorities.</i>         | <i>Strengthen existing partnerships and develop new ones.</i>  | <i>Working with partners is already a priority and will be developed further.</i>  |
| <i>Identify minority/hard to reach groups.</i>                       | <i>Identify these groups and identify channels of contact and consultation.</i>  | <i>These groups are often the forgotten few. Identifying them will ensure they are included in consultation processes.</i>   |
| <i>Identify consultation/focus groups.</i>                           | <i>Identify members of the parish with specific skills who can be consulted on specialist subjects and members of the parish willing to be included in vox- pop surveys.</i> | <i>This will enable smaller consultations to be initiated where specialist advice is required to inform decision making.</i><br><br><i>Vox-pop surveys are a useful tool to judge general opinions without the need for a full consultation process.</i> |

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|--|---|--|
| <i>Identify consultation needs, priorities and importance.</i>                     | <i>Establish need, priorities and importance of consultation.</i>   | <i>This will ensure there is no overkill, overlap or misuse of the consultation process.</i>   |
| <i>Identify benefits of consultation.</i>  | <i>Identify whether there is a real opportunity for people to influence decisions.</i>  | <i>No consultation should be undertaken unless the outcome can be influenced. Unless this is possible a consultation will be meaningless and residents will become disinterested in the process.</i> |
| <i>Feedback on consultations.</i>  | <i>Agree methods of feedback to residents and partners and ensure this is adhered to and includes details of the use of information gained.</i> | <i>This will keep all parties involved in the process and updated with the situation.</i>  |
| <i>Ensure outcomes of consultations are used to inform decisions and policies.</i> | <i>Use the outcome of consultations to inform decision making and shape policies.</i>   | <i>All consultations will be undertaken to judge the best possible outcome for parishioners, locality and the environment.</i>   |
| <i>Review outcome of key consultations</i>   | <i>Review consultation outcomes annually to highlight any failings in the processes.</i>  | <i>This will enable identification of any changes and amendments required to the strategy .</i>  |
| <i>Introduce a new Citizens Award.</i>   | <i>Identify whether there is an opportunity to engage with local groups and to establish involvement in the decision making process.</i>        | <i>This will recognise individuals and groups within the parish that work to promote the social well being of residents.</i>   |

*Copies of this Strategy are available at the Parish Office at:*

*Bradfield Parish Council  
Mill Lee Road  
Low Bradfield  
Sheffield  
S6 6LB*

*Tel: 0114 285 1375  
Fax: 0114 285 1008*

*E-mail: [admin@bradfield-yorks-pc.gov.uk](mailto:admin@bradfield-yorks-pc.gov.uk)*

*The Parish Council offices are at Mill Lee Road, Low Bradfield and are open to the public Monday to Friday 9:00am to 3:00pm.*