**Community Engagement Strategy**

Oakley Parish Council aims to work with local residents and organisations to encourage public participation in decision making and the local democratic process in order to create a strong, active, informed and inclusive community and to secure better services and facilities for that community.

The community comprises residents; businesses; service providers in the Parish; interest and pressure groups; tenant and residents’ groups; users and potential users of Parish Council services; hard to reach groups; voluntary and not-for-profit organisations; educational providers; Church and faith groups and temporary members of the community.

The Council aims to communicate information to the community clearly, factually and appropriately; to listen to the community, providing comprehensive opportunities for community members to communicate with the Council; to represent the views of the whole Oakley community; to enable each Councillor to maximise his/her role as an elected member and a community leader; to enable all members of the community to become actively involved with the Council’s activities and the local democratic process and to improve our communication with our partners and stakeholders.

The Strategy considers how the Council carries out these aims and how satisfied the community is with the Council.

**How Council Communicates**

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| **Item** | **Method** | **Action** | **Timescale** |
| Council Meeting Agendas | Notice board and website | Clerk | Ongoing |
| Council Minutes | Notice board and website | Clerk | Ongoing |
| Annual Report/ Annual Accounts | Newsletter and website | Clerk/Chair to ensure included in June Newsletter | Annually in May |
| Annual Parish  Meeting | Publicise widely and well in advance to ensure groups and individuals have the opportunity to raise matters of concern | Clerk & Councillors | Annually in March/April |
| Consultations | Newsletter and website | Clerk/Chair | Ongoing |
| Public Open Forum at Council Meetings | Encourage residents to raise any matters of interest or concern | Clerk & Councillors | Ongoing |
| Appointment of Councillors to local organisations | Item at Council Annual General Meeting | Clerk & Councillors | Annually in May |
| Meetings | Attend, facilitate, provide venue | Clerk & Councillors | Ongoing |
| Parish/Borough events | Attendance/involvement by Parish Council | Chair, Clerk & Councillors | Ongoing |

**With Whom Council Communicates**

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| **Item** | **Method** | **Action** | **Timescale** |
| Residents | Notice board, Newsletter and website. Involvement in local organisations. Public Open Forum at Council Meetings. Annual Parish Meeting. | Clerk & Councillors | Ongoing |
| Local Organisations | Newsletter and website.  Discussion at Council Meetings and informally | Clerk & Councillors | Ongoing |
| Businesses | Newsletter, Directory and website. Discussion at Council Meetings and informally | Clerk & Councillors | Ongoing |
| Police | Item at Council meetings. Formal & informal meetings.  Contact with PCSO | Clerk & Councillors | Ongoing |
| Bedford BC | Work closely with Borough Councillor and Bedford BC officers. Bedford BC attendance at Council Meetings | Borough Councillor, Clerk & Councillors | Ongoing |

**Consultation Issues**

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| **Item** | **Method** | **Action** | **Timescale** |
| Planning | New plans discussed at every Council meeting. Open Forum for residents’ comments.  Neighbourhood Plan | Clerk to list on Council agendas.  Neighbourhood Plan Group | 10 meetings p.a. |
| Housing | Plans discussed at Council Meetings.  Housing Needs Surveys delivered to every house. | Clerk & Councillors, Bedford BC,  BRCC | Ongoing  As required |
| Village Issues e.g. Traffic  Streetlighting  Sport/Leisure | Neighbourhood Plan surveys delivered to every house. Requests for comments/ suggestions/opinions via Newsletter and website. Annual Parish Meeting. Neighbourhood Plan | Clerk & Councillors,  Neighbourhood Plan Group, Bedford BC | As required |
| Local Issues | Noticeboard, newsletter and website. Bedford BC/local service providers’ attendance at Council Meetings. Annual Parish Meeting. Neighbourhood Plan | Clerk & Councillors,  Neighbourhood Plan Group,  Bedford BC officers, local service providers | As required |
| Local Democracy | Encourage residents to stand as Parish Councillors via noticeboard, website and in person | Clerk & Councillors | Ongoing, particularly in election years. |
| Hard to reach groups | Council representative on Youth Group Committee. Meetings with young people/Bedford BC Youth Service | Youth Group representative, Borough Councillor, Clerk & Councillors | Ongoing |

**Community Satisfaction**

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| **Item** | **Method** | **Action** | **Timescale** |
| Feedback at Council Meetings/Annual Parish Meeting | Public Open Forum and Correspondence Item at Council Meetings. Q & A Item at Annual Parish Meeting. | Clerk & Councillors.  Neighbourhood Plan Group | Ongoing |
| Response to consultations | Monitor response rate and format. | Clerk & Councillors  Neighbourhood Plan Group | Ongoing |