OLD CATTON PARISH COUNCIL
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

1. Introduction

Old Catton Parish Council is committed to effective communication, consultation and engagement with the local community. This strategy outlines how the Council will inform, involve and work collaboratively with residents, businesses and stakeholders to enhance community participation and trust.

2. Objectives

- Foster two-way communication channel between the Council and residents.
- Improve transparency and accountability in decision-making.
- Increase public participation in Council initiatives and projects.
- Ensure representation of diverse community voices, including hard-to-reach groups.
- Strengthen partnership with local organisations and businesses.

3.0 Evaluation

3.1 Why communication is important

Effective communication builds trust, enhances the Council's reputation and ensures informed decision-making. By maintaining clear, accurate and accessible information the Council can better serve the needs of its residents.

3.2 What should be communicated

- Council services, projects and initiatives.
- Opportunities for public involvement.
- Updates on local issues and developments.
- Consultation outcomes and actions taken.
- Emergency information and public safety alerts.

3.3 Target audience

The Council's audiences are wide and varied but will typically include:

- Residents
- Parish Council staff
- Community groups and volunteers
- Young people and hard-to-reach groups
- Local media
- Public sector partners (police, health services, education institutions).

3.4 Communication Methods

To ensure inclusivity, the Council will utilise a mix of traditional and digital communication methods:

- Digital Platforms: Parish Council website, social media, email,
- Print and Face-to-Face: Newsletter, local publications, noticeboards, public meetings and consultation events.

- Media Engagement: Press releases and engagement with local newspapers and radio stations.
- Community Networking: Attendance at local group meetings and collaborative projects.

4.0 Consultation and Public Engagement
4.1 Methods of Engagement
- Surveys and Questionnaires: Collect public opinion on specific issues.
- Public Meetings and Forums: Provide opportunities for direct discussion and feedback.
- Workshops and Focus Groups: Engage specific demographics on targeted issues.
- Online Polls and Feedback Forms: Allow digital engagement for wider participation.

4.2 Ensuring Representation
- Develop targeted outreach for underrepresented groups.
- Provide accessible formats for information (eg large print, translated materials).
- Use social media to engage younger demographics.

5.0 Managing Media Relations
- Ensure accurate and timely responses to media inquiries.
- Issue press releases for major Council initiatives and events.
- Avoid speculation and ensure statements reflect official Council positions.

6.0 Monitoring and Evaluation
To measure the success of this strategy, the Parish Council will:
- Track website traffic and social media engagement.
- Monitor public participation in surveys and meetings.
- Conduct annual resident satisfaction surveys.
- Assess media coverage and public sentiment.

7.0 Review Process
This strategy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains effective and responsive to community needs. Adjustments will be made based on feedback and engagement outcomes.

8.0 Strategy Approval and Adoption
This policy was approved and adopted by the Parish Council on 10th February 2025.