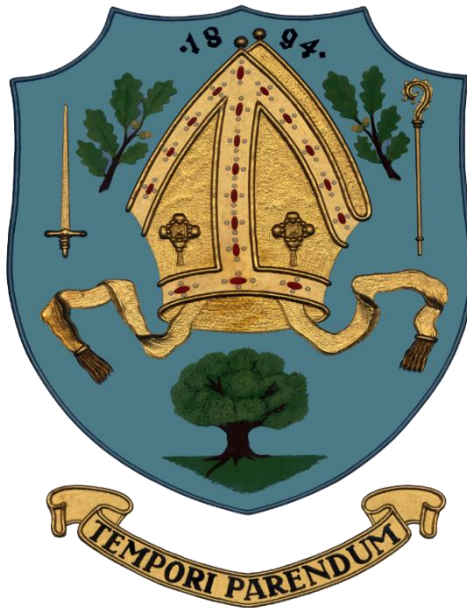


BISHOP AUCKLAND TOWN COUNCIL



Community Engagement Policy

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Review Panel Full Council

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this document is available on the Council's Website www.bishopauckland-tc.gov.uk and copies of this document will be available for inspection on deposit in the Town Council Office, 54 Kingsway, Bishop Auckland, DL14 7JF.

Costs are as per the publication scheme.

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2 Introduction

This policy sets out a framework of how we will work with residents and partners from the public, private and voluntary sectors to influence service provided by the Town Council.

It sets out:

- Our aims for community engagement and how these will be achieved
- Our guiding principles for consultation and community engagement
- Our approach to community engagement and consultation will be tested by measuring outcome

3 Aims

We have set out objectives for what we wish to achieve from engaging and consulting with our communities:

- Strengthen, develop and sustain opportunities for local people and groups to influence what happens in their communities
- Provide opportunities for communities to shape and influence the development and delivery of quality services and policies that reflect local needs and priorities
- Manage and co-ordinate community engagement activities to ensure consistency, quality and partner participation and avoid duplication
- Ensure that community engagement activities provide opportunities for participation for all sections of the community, particularly people and groups that are often missed out of community engagement activities
- Listen to communities and ensure feedback to participants about the outcomes of the community consultation and engagement
- Listen and learn from our own and others' experience and share community engagement skills and knowledge of putting the citizen at the heart of decision making

4 Guiding Principles

We will follow a consistent approach to planning for community engagement and consultations:

- We will actively seek to consult with the voluntary and community sectors
- Elected councillors will lead involvement
- We will listen and give feedback:
- We will be recording and share information with relevant stakeholders as appropriate

We recognise that the Council alone cannot achieve the ambitions set out in this policy. Everyone has a part to play in community engagement and consultation particularly:

- Residents of Bishop Auckland
- Elected representatives
 - Council staff
 - Community and voluntary sector organisations

- Partners & other authorities and agencies

5 Measuring Outcomes

We will use a variety of methods to measure and evaluate the success of community engagement, including: -

- Perceptions of residents about their involvement in decision making
- Evidence of information from consultation and engagement that influences Council services