

Report – St. Albans Parish Council.

Subject – Agenda Item 501 – Community Engagement and Consultation.

19th February 2024

Author – David White Chair St. Albans Parish Council.

Aim.

Proposal for the St. Albans Parish Council meeting on 27th February 2024. Councillors are asked to consider an undertaking to fund a ***Community Engagement and Consultation***.

Objective

To undertake a community consultation inclusive of all residents, community groups and interested parties in matters that they feel affect them and the area that they live in. Engaging with an outside consultancy company can also provide guidance and support into the governance of St. Albans Parish Council.

This will ensure that all views research and consultation will be undertaken in an inclusive and transparent way, vital to the credibility and acceptance of any outcomes and recommendations.

Background

A Community governance review was undertaken in 2017 which was triggered by a valid community petition being submitted to Gedling Borough Council.

‘In April 2016 Gedling Borough Council received a valid community petition from residents of the Village Parish Ward of Bestwood St. Albans Parish asking the Borough Council to consider the establishment of a separate parish council for the area. At the meeting of Council in September 2016 a decision was taken to carry out a Community Governance Review (CGR) which covered the entirety of the Parish.’

[Gedling Borough Council, Service Manager, Elections and Members’ services, 6 March 2017]

Purpose:

Engaging the residents of the St, Albans Parish Council area in a ***community and engagement consultation*** will inform as to their needs and aspirations. This will assist in identifying medium and long-term priorities for the Parish Council. It can also inform on issues around perceived boundaries and or lack of services in particular areas or groups. Consideration can also be given to establishing whether there is an appetite for residents to petition Gedling Borough Council for a full **Community Governance Review**. Importantly the consultation will look at the identities and interests in our community, community cohesion and whether the size, population and boundaries are a good fit.

Undertaking a community and engagement consultation now will allow residents to submit their views and ambition for the future delivery strategy of St. Albans Parish Council.

Recommendations:

- 1. Engage and appoint *Rural Community Action Group* [RCAN] to undertake the provisions of a community engagement and consultation process.**
- 2. Apply for membership of RCAN at a cost of £19.45 + VAT**
- 3. Present final proposal and costs at the ordinary meeting of the Parish Council March 26th 2024.**