

Appendix 2 – The Cheltenham Charter – third edition 2020

A charter between Cheltenham Borough Council and the five Cheltenham parish councils: Charlton Kings, Leckhampton with Warden Hill, Prestbury, Swindon, and Up Hatherley.

Declarations

We the undersigned declare our commitment to the Cheltenham Charter and in so doing, aim to encourage the improvement of our good working practices and embrace the spirit of this agreement.

..... Chair of Charlton Kings Parish Council
..... Chair of Leckhampton with Warden Hill Parish Council
..... Chair of Prestbury Parish Council
..... Chair of Swindon Parish Council
..... Chair of Up Hatherley Parish Council
..... Leader, Cheltenham Borough Council
..... Date

Introduction

This is the third version of a charter that was first published in 2008. Through this charter, we will formalise the long-standing agreement that the borough council and five parish councils have in working together to secure efficient and effective service delivery, and in representing the needs and aspirations of all residents. Through this relationship, we recognise the contribution of each partner in the effective governance of the area.

To ensure that it remains fit for purpose, this charter will be reviewed annually by the C5 Parish Councils Group and re-published every five years.

C5 PARISH COUNCILS GROUP

The aim of the C5 Parish Councils Group is to act as a conduit of information and sustain a good working partnership between Cheltenham Borough Council and Cheltenham's five parish councils. It will seek to align all councils' strategic priorities, and make the most effective use of our financial and human resources.

The Group will meet quarterly at the borough council's municipal offices and be chaired for one year by each parish council on a rotational basis.

Each council should strive to be represented at every meeting. A minimum of three parish councils must be represented for quoracy. There is no upper limit on the number of representatives that may attend, but only two members from each parish may speak except by prior agreement. If a vote is to be taken this would be limited to 2 votes per parish council.

Cheltenham Borough Council will be represented at every meeting by the relevant cabinet member or a nominee.

Agenda management will be the responsibility of all members of the group. An agenda will focus on no more than two substantive matters and meetings will usually last no more than two hours. In exceptional circumstances meetings can be extended with the prior agreement of members. An agenda and papers will be sent out seven days before each meeting.

Minutes will be issued to members, and copied to all borough councillors, within fourteen days of the meeting.

The meetings will be facilitated by the strategy and engagement team at Cheltenham Borough Council.

Cheltenham Borough Council's commitments to the parish councils

We will inform all our staff of this charter and our commitments, and ensure that we abide by them.

We will appoint liaison officers to provide information and help, and act as the first points of contact for any concerns or queries a parish council may have.

We will invite parish councils, where we are able, to meetings, training, seminars and other events which are relevant and of value to them.

We will organise and support meetings of the C5 Parish Councils Group.

We will, where possible, ensure that a relevant officer attends meetings of parish councils when requested to do so, in order to address specific issues.

Borough councillors will endeavour to attend their parish council's annual meeting, and other meetings when relevant to their wards. If a councillor cannot attend a parish council's monthly meeting, they will send their apologies or make a short report on current matters of mutual interest.

We will undertake community governance reviews, in accordance with The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (Part 4).

We will organise the administration of parish council elections, although election costs are the responsibility of the parish councils.

We will publish the contact details of parish clerks on our website and provide links to each parish council's website. We will update this information promptly when changes are notified to democratic.services@cheltenham.gov.uk

Our Monitoring Officer will work with parish councils to promote good ethical governance by providing advice on matters concerning the codes of conduct adopted by Cheltenham Borough Council and the parish councils, and maintaining the published registers of interest for the parish councils as required by the Localism Act 2011.

We will consult parish councils via the circulation of the weekly planning applications list on all planning applications in their parish and give appropriate weight to the local opinions they express when determining them.

We will, where appropriate, consult parish councils on all applications in their parish made under Tree Preservation Order regulations.

We will notify parish councils of licensing applications in a weekly list.

We will adhere to statutory requirements for consultation and allow as much time as possible for parish councils to respond. We will co-ordinate consultations to avoid duplication. We are signed up to the Gloucestershire Compact relating to consultation and will endeavour to take account of the cycle of parish council meetings in consultation phases, and to involve parish councils at the earliest opportunity.

We recognise the value of community-led planning in encouraging local solutions to local issues and will engage between the three tiers of local government before, during and following the development of community-led plans.

We will support, provide information and work with parish councils wishing to undertake a neighbourhood plan under the Localism Act 2011.

We will acknowledge and work with parish councils where they wish to act upon the *community right to challenge* and the *community right to bid* under the Localism Act 2011.

We will respond to all correspondence within our published service standards. If there needs to be a delay, we will keep the sender informed.

If a parish council is dissatisfied with our actions, our response to a request for information, or failure to consult, it may initiate our formal complaints procedure.

Parish councils' commitments to Cheltenham Borough Council

We will respond to all consultations within the time limit specified. We will put in place mechanisms, such as delegation to a committee or the convening of extra council meetings, to meet consultation deadlines.

We will provide Cheltenham Borough Council with contact details of the clerk and the most convenient times when contact can be made. We will advise the democratic services team promptly of any changes for the purposes of updating the council's website.

We will respond as appropriate to community planning consultations and invitations to participate, either individually or collectively through the Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Councils.

We will contribute where we can, to borough council initiatives.

Where appropriate, we will seek to keep the public in our parish informed on local government matters and seek to assess public opinion. We will make the results of major surveys available to Cheltenham Borough Council.

We will inform all of our borough councillors of the dates of all meetings of full council and standing committees as soon as they are set. We will email agendas for meetings of full council at the same time as our councillors receive them and minutes within 3 days of the meeting.

We will seek to develop close working relationships with our borough councillors and invite them to attend our liaison meetings with other statutory service providers such as Gloucestershire Highways.

Where we request a borough council officer to attend a meeting, we will ensure that reasonable notice is given.

We will work with Cheltenham Borough Council where we wish to undertake a community or neighbourhood plan.

We will maintain professional working relationships and work constructively with other parish councils in the borough.

CONTACT DETAILS

Contact	Phone	Email / Web
Cheltenham Borough Council (CBC) contacts		
Cheltenham Borough Council (CBC)	01242 262626	www.cheltenham.gov.uk
CBC Officer - Helen Down	01242 264272	helen.down@cheltenham.gov.uk
CBC Officer - Louise	01242 264297	louise.forey@cheltenham.gov.uk

Forey		
Monitoring Officer – Sara Freckleton	01684 272011	sara.freckleton@tewkesbury.gov.uk
Planning	01242 264328	planning@cheltenham.gov.uk
Ubico	01242 262626	cleansing@cheltenham.gov.uk
Democratic Services	01242 264246	democratic.services@cheltenham.gov.uk
Parish Council Contacts		
Charlton Kings Parish Council	01242 250087	clerk@charltonkingsparishcouncil.gov.uk www.charltonkingsparishcouncil.gov.uk
Leckhampton with Warden Hill Parish Council	01242 465762	clerk@lwwhpc.org.uk
Prestbury Parish Council	01242 575129	parishclerk@prestbury-pc.gov.uk www.prestburyparishcouncil.co.uk
Swindon Parish Council	01242 517991	Parish.clerk@swindonparish.org www.swindonparish.org.uk
Up Hatherley Parish Council	01242 527770	clerk@uhpc.org.uk www.uphatherleyparish.co.uk
Other useful contacts		
Gloucestershire County Council	01452 425000	customerservices@gloucestershire.gov.uk
Gloucestershire Highways	08000 514514	highways@gloucestershire.gov.uk
Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Councils (GAPTC)	01452 883388	info@gaptc.org.uk
Gloucestershire Rural Community Council	01452 528491	info@grcc.org.uk