

Parish Policy and Programme 2011-13

Introduction

With the increasing emphasis placed on localism it is important to have a simple comprehensive document which sets out the Parish Council policy objectives and means of achieving them. In this way there is a transparent mechanism by which Members can account for their achievements and residents can contribute to the development of our community.

1 Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to provide a clear and easily understood means of defining the Parish Council's approach to a number of key policy issues. It also provides a mechanism for setting out the anticipated Parish programme of activity over a 3 year rolling period.

It is designed to be a dynamic document that :-

- i) Provides a solid basis for pre-planning the financial needs of the Council and a means of reviewing progress against defined objectives.
- ii) Provides a means of reviewing, on an annual basis, adequacy of existing policy and thereby provides an opportunity to amend policy to reflect changing need.
- iii) Provides a means of updating the activity / work programme to ensure a full 3 year planning horizon. The programme will set out all significant work designed to meet the Council's objectives but it will be important to build in sufficient flexibility to meet ongoing operational demand.

The Plan underpins the key priorities the Parish Council has set for ensuring the well-being of our community namely:

- To maintain the character of the Parish
- To ensure a safe environment for Parishioners to live within and move around
- To promote a feeling of inclusiveness throughout the Parish
- To support provision of adequate facilities to enable community members to lead a fulfilling life
- To conduct business in a way that minimises our carbon footprint

2 Policies

This section sets out the detailed policies to be actioned by the Parish Council in order to fulfil its key objectives outlined under Purpose. For each area of the Council's activity, the individual policies have been set out together with the means by which they will be delivered.

Full Council policies

2.1 Community and well-being policy

The scope and the role of the Parish Council in carrying out this function has dramatically changed as a result of the present economic situation. Key service providers have found their budgets significantly reduced in line with central government's deficit reduction measures. As a result a number of local services have found themselves under threat and the Parish Council has been forced to take a proactive role in safeguarding the future of certain key features / services which the local community and Members consider important. This trend is likely to continue and will present the Parish with as yet unidentified challenges as we move forward with the implementation of this plan. Key services and resources which have come under threat and which the Parish have so far committed to safeguarding are:

- The Stanton Room
- The Church Piece public toilets
- Local youth provision
- Neighbourhood management including a local police presence

We aim to:

- 2.1.1 Facilitate provision of services or features which a significant number of the local community deem important
- 2.1.2 Continuously improve effective means of communication between the Parish Council and community residents
- 2.1.3 Identify key issues affecting the Parish; for consideration when determining budget
- 2.1.4 Seek views from the full range of Charlton Kings communities and identify priority issues on a quarterly basis through the Neighbourhood Management Forum
- 2.1.5 Provide and manage allotments for the benefit of the Charlton Kings community
- 2.1.6 Contribute to the well-being of the community by identifying measures that enhance public safety and crime reduction.
- 2.1.7 Promote community health and care services
- 2.1.8 Support schools to engage with their local communities

We will do this by:

- 2.1.9 Taking proactive action to support the maintaining of certain key community functions which are to be withdrawn as a result of service cuts imposed by higher levels of local government (see commitments above) In particular we will:
 - (i) Develop and implement a comprehensive redevelopment proposal for the Stanton Room complex, including public toilets to meet the Parish and community needs for the next 25 years
 - (ii) Include within our redevelopment proposals provision for a Police presence within the new complex
 - (iii) Host and provide management support to the Charlton Kings and Battledown Neighbourhood Management Forum

- (iv) Communicate with schools and voluntary youth bodies and in particular work in partnership with the Kings Hall Youth and Community Centre to ensure the continued provision of youth facilities in the village centre

2.1.10 Develop communication links with the local community via an enhanced website and comprehensive network of Information Points

2.1.11 Actively seek feedback from the community by regularly inviting residents to give details of their priority concerns via survey or other appropriate means.

2.2 Young people policy

We aim to:

2.2.1 Ensure that the young people within the community feel included and have a voice in local decision making

2.2.2 Support the adequate provision of local facilities to enable young people to have access and support to a range of social activity

2.2.3 Identify areas of concern to young people and seek means by which to improve their sense of well-being

We will do this by:

2.2.4 Establishing and supporting a Youth Forum as part of the Parish administration

2.2.5 Supporting the Kings Hall Youth and Community Centre with a rolling 3year financial grant and working in partnership with the centre to enhance and best use its facilities for the benefit of young people

2.2.6 Upgrading recreational facilities within the Parish for the use of young people

Environment committee policies:

2.3 Environmental policy

We aim to:

2.3.1 Minimise consumption of resources and raw materials

2.3.2 Minimise emissions and reduce energy consumption

2.3.3 Minimise waste from our activities and recycle wherever possible

2.3.4 Purchase goods and services from suppliers who share our concern for the environment and wherever feasible and subject to financial constraint purchase and use recyclable products or products from sustainable sources

2.3.5 Exercise a positive influence within the community through our awareness raising and behavioural change in activities

We will do this by:

- 2.3.6 Complying with and wherever possible exceeding all relevant environmental legislation when carrying out our activities including procuring services
- 2.3.7 Implementing a system to monitor and measure our impact on the environment
- 2.3.8 Reducing our consumption of paper by making better use of electronic means of communication and storing data
- 2.3.9 Reducing energy consumption by installing energy efficient and self-monitoring lighting systems in the refurbishment of the Stanton Room including exploring the use of solar panels for power production and grey water for use in the toilets
- 2.3.10 Integrating environmental aims into our business planning processes for on-going improvement
- 2.3.11 Working with the community and service providers to enhance Charlton Kings' overall environmental performance and reduce our collective 'carbon footprint'.
- 2.3.12 Monitoring and reporting on our progress with periodic reviews

2.4 Highway and transportation policy

We aim to:

- 2.4.1 Encourage and on occasion contribute towards the achievement of the highest practical standards of highway maintenance of roads and footways within the Parish
- 2.4.2 Identify areas of community concerns regarding traffic safety and champion their resolution
- 2.4.3 Support measures to encourage the use of alternative means of transport to that of the car for local journeys

We will do this by:

- 2.4.4 Developing our partnership with Gloucestershire Highways and other key service providers. In particular we will explore the use of technology to better provide the community with direct access for reporting faults to the service providers.
- 2.4.5 Exploring options for taking on or supplementing certain cyclic tasks to ensure highest standards of compliance are achieved
- 2.4.6 Continuing to identify community priorities for action and work with service providers to gain their inclusion in work programmes and where appropriate make financial contribution.
- 2.4.7 Taking measures to help ensure the attractiveness of public transport for our local community. In particular we will provide bus shelters and work with public transport providers to identify practical routing options to suit community need.
- 2.4.8 Widening the scope of the salt warden scheme to cover other vulnerable areas of the Parish
- 2.4.9 Providing cycle racks at key locations within the Parish

2.5 Planning committee policy:

Planning is an area of the Council's work that has a potential impact on every resident. It is however an area in which the Council cannot take the initiative – it can only respond to planning applications – and in which it does not have the right or authority to make decisions – it can only comment on individual planning applications.

We aim to:

Taking account of the limits on our authority, we aim to become increasingly influential in shaping the future of Charlton Kings, creating an environment where people can live, work and play in ways which make the best and most sustainable use of our resources and protect the areas and features that the residents of Charlton Kings most value. We will attach particular priority to:

- 2.5.1 Encouraging Cheltenham Borough Council to take timely and effective enforcement action in all cases of breaches of planning regulations
- 2.5.2 Resisting cases of 'garden grabbing' where these impact adversely on neighbours' quality of life or the overall environment
- 2.5.3 Seeking to maintain the unique character and feel of Charlton Kings and avoid inappropriate design
- 2.5.4 The protection of green spaces within Charlton Kings

We will do this by:

- 2.5.5 Developing a more constructive relationship with Cheltenham Borough Council planning authority and improving two way communications between us in order to ensure that full account is always taken of our comments.
- 2.5.6 Seeking improvements in the standard of documentation submitted for our scrutiny
- 2.5.7 Dealing quickly, consistently and transparently with all applications on which we are invited to comment

2.6 Rights of Way committee policy:

We aim to :

- 2.6.1 Work with the County Rights of Way Office and other service providers to ensure existing Public Rights of Way (PRoW) are serviceable and available to all for recreational and access purposes.
- 2.6.2 Organise local RoW Working Parties to maintain and tidy PRoW to complement Rights of Way Office contractors.
- 2.6.3 Look to rationalise and improve the Parish's PRoW network and jointly fund new and improved provision as required.

We will do this by:

- 2.6.4 Developing an online map of PRoW within the Parish.
- 2.6.5 Encouraging users to notify the County Rights of Way Office and Parish Council of problems with existing PRoW and identify new needs.
- 2.6.6 Carrying out periodic surveys and spot checks to ensure continued serviceability of routes throughout the Parish.

- 2.6.7 Providing a nucleus of specialist equipment, and expert advice on its use, to enable local voluntary working parties to maintain PRow.
- 2.6.8 Negotiating with landowners where appropriate in order to improve the Rights of Way network, by improving existing PRow, creating new PRow or re-routing PRow where necessary and attempt to secure new 'Permissive Access' where it is not possible, or too expensive, to create new PRow.

2.7 Allotments committee policy:

We aim to :

- 2.7.1 Provide and manage allotments for the benefit of the Charlton Kings community.
- 2.7.2 Continuously improve the effectiveness of communication about allotments between the Parish Council and community residents.
- 2.7.3 Support schools' engagement with their local communities.

We will do this by:

- 2.7.4 Ensuring our allotment plots are all well used and always available in good condition for the largest number of allotment tenants.
- 2.7.5 Seeking opportunities and supporting finance to create new allotment sites or availability of plots to minimise waiting lists
- 2.7.6 Using the experience and knowledge of our allotment tenants.
- 2.7.7 Using all communications channels e.g. website, site notice boards, committee meetings, yearly reports, to communicate effectively with our tenants and the community.
- 2.7.8 Building on current initiatives with local schools to use our allotments to enhance our children's understanding of gardening and the natural world.

3 Statutory Consultations

Statutory consultations are becoming increasingly important and are an area in which the Council can become more proactive.

We aim to:

- 3.1 provide a coherent, timely and balanced response that accurately reflects the views of Charlton Kings' residents to all statutory consultations that impact the parish.

We will do this by:

- 3.2 Putting in place mechanisms to ensure that (the Council) Councillors are made aware of such consultations in a timely manner and where necessary modifying the Council's procedures to ensure that it is able to provide an appropriate response.
- 3.3 Ensure that statutory consultations are well publicised to the residents of Charlton Kings

- 3.4 Putting in place mechanisms whereby the Council is able to collect and represent the views of Charlton Kings' residents.
- 3.5 Monitoring, and where appropriate commenting on:
- 3.5.1 the quality of procedures
- 3.5.2 The transparency of processes
- 3.5.3 The accessibility of processes

4. Works and Activity Programme 2011-13

The means by which the Parish Council intends to deliver its policy objectives has been developed into a rolling 3 year programme of works and activities and this is set out in diagrammatic form below

Committee	Activity	2011	2012	2013
Full Council	Redevelop Stanton Room complex	_____	_____	
	Establish youth forum		_____	
	Establish new procedures to improve response to consultations		_____	
Environment	Cudnall Street area highway proposals – Oakland Street one way	_____	—	
	Improvements to skate park	_____		
	MUGA lighting scheme	_____		
	Environmental audit of Parish activities		_____	
	Enhance highway fault reporting system		_____	_____
	Extend salt warden scheme	—	—	
	Provide cycle racks at strategic points in village		—	—
Rights of way	Create permissive path ZCK53 to ZCK54	_____	—	
	Improve ZCK53	_____	—	
	Improve ZCK23	_____	—	
	Create bridleway access on Ravensgate Common		_____	

Allotments	Develop new tenancy terms and rules, and introduce new tenancy agreements.	_____	_____	
	Secure northern and eastern boundary of Ryeworth allotment site with new fence.	_____		
	Improve water pressure at Ryeworth.	_____		
	Carry out tree maintenance on Ryeworth Rd boundary at Ryeworth	_____	_____	
	Ensure all Gates at Croft/Sappercombe can be fixed closed.	_____	_____	
	Review role of gardener(WP)	_____		
	Review role and appointment of Allotment Site Representatives (WP)	_____		
	Review need for an annual award scheme (WP)	_____	_____	
	Install a new notice board at the Ryeworth Road entrance to Ryeworth allotments.		_____	
	Review allotment provision and seek additional Allotment Site as appropriate.		_____	
	Introduce a new regular 'standards' review regime.	_____	_____	
	Investigate and clarify ownership of remaining boundaries and seek remedial works.		_____	

	Consider an annual 'spring clean' programme for all sites (WP)		_____	
	Complete survey of plot number marker posts and replace as necessary.		_____	

5. Responsibility for Delivery

The foregoing plan sets challenging goals for the Parish Council and it will need an element of successful partnership working with local service deliverers and the community as a whole if all the aims are to be met within an acceptable timescale. The document has been laid out to indicate which of the Parish Council committees will take lead responsibility. However the ultimate responsibility for delivery of all aspects remains with the Full Council.