

THE LOCAL COUNCILS' CHARTER –

HOW SHOULD LOCAL COUNCILS MAKE USE OF IT?

The Charter is a document to be made use of by all three tiers of Local Authority. It describes the responsibilities placed on each tier of authority to put into practice the partnerships between them.

Some very useful services are offered to Local Councils by Principal Authorities. The potentially most useful ones are summarised below. Local Councils can make use of the Charter to remind the Principal Authorities of their responsibilities to Local Councils.

By the same token, Local Councils should be aware of the expectations placed upon them. These are listed on the last page of this summary.

The numbers refer to the paragraphs in the Charter

Communication and Access Improved 5.1

District and County Councillors are expected to attend Local Council meetings. These councillors act as a useful two way communication between Local Councils and Principal Authorities.

Principal Authorities encouraged to appoint Parish Liaison Officers 5.1

Code of Conduct 5.1

The Monitoring Officers at Principal Authorities will provide guidance to Local Councillors over prejudicial and non prejudicial issues.

Standards Committees membership will include Local Councils' representatives 12

Community Strategies and Partnerships 3

Principal Authorities will involve Local Councils in the preparation of Community Plans.

Concurrent Services and Double Taxing 13

Principal Authorities will consult with Local Councils where it wishes to change the basis for the delivery of concurrent services and will seek to agree on the basis for concurrent services as far as possible to avoid Double Taxation.

Consultation 7.7

There is an undertaking that Principal Authorities will consult Local Councils on any decision that will affect their area including adjoining parishes and give them adequate time to respond in accordance with statutory requirements: including planning applications, highway matters

Electoral Roll	10.4
Will be provided to Local Councils for the parish on request	
Emergency Planning	8.3
Local Councils will be provided with unfilled sandbags	
Health and Safety and Fire Safety Matters	15.3
Free of charge help from Principal Authority where resources permit	
Landscaping and Community Enhancement	15.3
Free of charge help from Principal Authority where resources permit	
Maintenance Contractors	15.2
Local Councils may request Principal Authorities approved list of maintenance contractors and agreed schedules and rates.	
Planning Issues	4.2
Parish Plans and Village Design Statements maybe adopted as supplementary planning guidance - Some Principal Authorities had not worked out their policy towards Parish Plans inclusion in the Charter has forced the issue	
Development Plans	4.3
Principal Authorities will discuss with Local Councils any changes as part of the review process	
Procedures for the Determination of Planning Applications	7.7
Principal Authorities will consult on procedures for the determination Planning Applications	
Play Equipment Inspections	15.3
Principal Authorities will provide for a fee a qualified engineer to carry out annual inspections.	
Promotion of Local Council Initiatives	10.2
Principal Authorities consider promoting Local Council initiatives in Their newsletters and on websites	
Quality Councils	16.2
Principal Authorities willing to discuss in particular with Quality Parish Councils delegation of services on basis of a Service Level Agreement	
Right of Address and Representation	5
Local Councils have the right of address at County Council and District Council Area Committees and other joint forums	
School Governors	6.2
Due to a change in the legislation, Local Councils no longer have automatic right of appointment to junior schools' Governing body. The Charter ensures that Local Councils will be given the opportunity to appoint.	
Shared Use of Buildings	6.1
Principal Authorities will willingly consider the shared use of buildings	

Traffic Calming Schemes	15.3
Principal Authorities will design and supervise for a fee	
Websites	10.6
County Council will provide Local Councils with free of charge assistance on web site design	

EXPECTATIONS PLACED ON LOCAL COUNCILS BY THE CHARTER TO ACHIEVE PARTNERSHIP WORKING WITH PRINCIPAL AUTHORITIES

Casual Vacancies	5.1
Local Councils follow correct procedure to fill casual vacancies, which should include notifying the District Councils of any vacancies.	
Complaints Procedure	11.2
Local Councils will have a Complaints Procedure in place to investigate complaints about the administration of their Council. The National Association of Local Councils' model for handling complaints is given at Appendix 1	
Information and Access Points	17
Local Councils may provide information on Principal Authority services	
Local Councils' Meetings	5.1
Local Councils will send on request, meeting papers to relevant principal authority councillors	
Principal Authority councillors will be given the opportunity to speak at Local Council meetings	
Parish Plans. Market Plans Village Design Statements	7.8
Local Councils will involve Principal Authorities in the preparation of Town or Parish Plans, Village Design Statements, Market Town Health Checks, Guided Walk Publications, Community Transport Initiatives	
Community Grants or Donations to Voluntary Groups	14.2
Just as Principal Authorities grant aid community groups, Local Councils should make use of their power under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, to aid voluntary or community groups within their parishes	
Co-operate with Emergency Planning Procedures	8.1
All Local Councils will co-operate with these procedures	
Newsletters	10.2
Local Councils, on request, will send Principal Authorities a copy of their Newsletters	
Urgent Information	9
Local Councils will disseminate urgent information to parishioners, when requested by Principal Authorities	