

The background of the cover is a photograph of a large bronze statue. The statue depicts Neptune, a bearded man with a crown, seated in a chariot. He holds a trident in his right hand. The chariot is pulled by several horses. The statue is set in front of a building with classical columns. A fountain with water spraying upwards is visible behind the statue.

CHELTENHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

THE CHELTENHAM CHARTER

A CHARTER BETWEEN CHELTENHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL AND THE 5
CHELTENHAM PARISH COUNCILS


SECOND EDITION 2013

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.

.....
Chairman/ Clerk/ Councillor for

.....
Parish Council


.....
Leader, Cheltenham Borough Council

10th APRIL 2013
.....
Date

The Cheltenham Charter

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

INTRODUCTION

This is the second version of the charter which was first published in 2008. Through this charter, we will formalise the long standing agreement that Cheltenham Borough Council and Cheltenham's 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.

This charter will continue to be monitored by the C5 Parish Councils Group and will be reviewed every two years, with a view to making further amendments as necessary.

BOROUGH COMMITMENTS TO PARISH COUNCILS

We will inform all our staff of this council's chartered commitments and ensure that we abide by them.

We will appoint liaison officers to provide information and help, and act as the first point 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 allocate a seat on the Positive Participation Partnership for a representative of parish councils.

We will organise and support meetings of the C5 parish councils group.

We will make all reasonable attempts to attend meetings of parish councils when requested to do so in order to address specific issues.

Borough Councillors will endeavour to attend parish council annual meetings within their ward, and other meetings where practicable; and will let the council know if they cannot attend. If a councillor cannot attend regularly they will endeavour to make other arrangements for briefings and communication.

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 a link to the parish council website where it exists. 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 maintain the published register of interest for the parish councils as required by the Localism Act 2011.

We will publish the weekly list of planning applications and identify any proposals within a parish council area.

We will adhere to statutory requirements for consultation and allow as much time as possible within which parish councils can respond. We will co-ordinate consultation to avoid duplication. We are signed up to the Gloucestershire Compact relating to consultation and we 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 will notify parish councils of licensing applications in a weekly list.

We recognise the value of community led planning in encouraging local solutions to local issues. We 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 as detailed in 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* - Localism Act 2011.

We will respond to all correspondence as quickly as possible. Where there are delays, 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. Complaints are responded to within 10 working days.

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.

The Group will be chaired for one year by each Parish Council on a rotational basis.

The Group will meet quarterly.

Meetings will be held at the Cheltenham Borough Council Municipal Offices.

Agenda management will be the responsibility of all members of the Group. The agenda will consist of no more than five items (two core matters and additional items) and meetings will usually last no more than two hours. In exceptional circumstances meetings can be extended with the prior agreement of partners. Agenda and papers will be sent out fourteen days before each meeting.

Minutes will be issued within fourteen days of the meeting. All partners have fourteen days from receipt of minutes to challenge or lodge a disagreement with a decision taken at a meeting they not attend or send a substitute to.

Membership organisations should strive to be represented at all meetings. A minimum of three out of five parish councils must be represented for quoracy. If a vote is to be taken, this will be limited to two votes per Parish Council. There is no upper limit on the number of representatives that may attend the meetings but this will be restricted to two speaking and voting members from each parish. If necessary, the Chair will take the casting vote.

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

POSITIVE PARTICIPATION PARTNERSHIP

The Positive Participation Partnership (PPP) meets every two months to bring together groups and agencies who work with specific communities within Cheltenham, including communities with shared needs or interests and geographic communities. It aims to build stronger communities that can influence service delivery and to produce regular community analyses to support commissioning of better services.

Parish councils will be represented on the PPP by one appointed parish councillor.

In 2012, partners agreed to an ambitious aspiration, which all partnership members including parish councils should work towards:

“All people in Cheltenham are able to live happy, successful and productive lives in strong, resilient and healthy communities”.

Every person has the right to:

1. Live free of poverty
2. Live in decent, affordable housing
3. Engage in positive and meaningful activity
4. Make healthy lifestyle choices
5. Have positive relationship within their home and the wider community
6. Feel safe in their own home and their community
7. Be able to access services within their community
8. Be inspired to take part in recreational and cultural activities.
9. Enjoy the benefits of a sustainable built and natural environment.

PARISH COUNCIL COMMITMENTS

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

We will provide Cheltenham Borough Council with contact details of the clerk and of the most convenient times when contact can be made. We will advise Democratic Services 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 GAPTC.

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

We will inform our borough councillor of the dates of meetings as soon as they are set and will provide them with a copy of the agenda and minutes within 3 days of the meeting.

Where we request a Cheltenham Borough Council officer to attend a meeting, we will make the request one month before hand.

We will appoint flood wardens if possible, and notify Cheltenham Borough Council of any flooding or potential flood risks.

We will inform Cheltenham Borough Council where we wish to undertake a community or neighbourhood plan, and work with them in these endeavours.

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

CONTACT DETAILS

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