



Joint Charter

Between North West Leicestershire District Council and the town and parish councils of North West Leicestershire

Front cover photo caption: Top left Ashby de la Zouch Castle, top right Whitwick Church, middle left Diseworth, bottom left Sir John Moore School Appleby Magna and bottom right Castle Donington Church.

Foreword



As Deputy Leader of the District Council I am pleased to support this refresh of our Joint Charter, an agreement between North West Leicestershire District Council and the town and parish councils enshrining how we will continue to work together for the benefit of our residents.

The relationship between the district council and the town and parish councils continues to grow and develop; this can be evidenced through the Parish Liaison meetings we hold every three months and how we share and discuss district-wide issues, that concern and affect our residents.

This Joint Charter not only sets out how we will continue to work together in partnership but also outlines the partnership responsibilities and expectations.

I look forward to us all working together in partnership, to help build stronger communities in North West Leicestershire for now and the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'AS Smith'.

Councillor Alison Smith MBE, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Community Services

We would like to thank the following councils for giving up their valuable time to be involved in the working group;

- Appleby Magna Parish Council
- Ashby de la Zouch Town Council
- Castle Donington Parish Council
- Ellistown and Battleflat Parish Council
- Long Whatton and Diseworth Parish Council
- Oakthorpe, Donisthorpe and Acresford Parish Council
- Whitwick Parish Council



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Introduction

The previous district, town and parish Council Charter was revisited in 2004. Over the last decade district, town and parish councils have evolved with political, social and economic change. So the 2004 charter was in need of being refreshed again.

This Joint Charter sets out how North West Leicestershire District Council (NWLDC) and town and parish councils across the district can work together in partnership. It also outlines the partnership responsibilities for both district and town and parish councils.

A working group was set up in late 2014 following a parish council request at a Parish Liaison meeting to review the 2004 charter. The working group was made up of town and parish Clerks who offered to be involved in the review of some of the key topics and themes that should be included in the Joint Charter; the aim was to make the charter specific to North West Leicestershire and meet the aspirations and aims of the clerks for the benefit of local communities.

The Joint Charter will aim to achieve the following:

- ▶ Improve, develop and maintain positive relationships between North West Leicestershire District Council and town and parish councils.
- ▶ Set out the clear expectations of both North West Leicestershire District Council and town and parish councils.
- ▶ Respect the constraints and acknowledge the dynamic roles delivered by North West Leicestershire District Council officers and town and parish clerks.

Themes this Joint Charter has reviewed:

- Communication and engagement (this includes all sections of services at North West Leicestershire District Council)
- Training
- Consultation
- Planning and Development
- Licensing
- Democratic Services

Communication and engagement

North West Leicestershire District Council to:

- Hold at least four parish liaison meetings throughout the year.
- Encourage and support all teams at North West Leicestershire District Council to work with town and parish councils.
- Make sure the Community Focus Officers have met with and engaged with the town and parish councils in their area.
- Provide a dedicated webpage to share information, updates and meeting dates.
- Email any funding updates, information or consultations in a timely and effective manner.
- Avoid the use of jargon or acronyms when writing to town and parish councils
- Meet with Leicestershire and Rutland Association of Local Councils twice a year and invite them to the quarterly parish liaison meetings.

Town and parish councils to:

- Attend all the parish liaison meetings or provide a representative to be engaged in the meetings.
- Contact their Community Focus Officer if they are coming up against barriers at the district council that they are unable to resolve through their methods of engagement.
- Respond to any survey from North West Leicestershire District Council.
- Keep their webpages up to date with contact details (clerk, councillors, telephone and email), meeting dates and appropriate documents (minutes, agendas, annual reports, etc) as required by the transparency code.
- Encourage their councillors to access the information made available by North West Leicestershire District Council electronically.
- Share information from North West Leicestershire District Council to the local residents.

Training

North West Leicestershire District Council to:

- Offer a range of training to new and existing town and parish councillors following elections, including training from Leicestershire and Rutland Association of Local Councils.
- Arrange training that helps the clerk achieve outcomes from their communities/councillors, such as funding training.
- To promote relevant training that is available to clerks.

Town and parish councils to:

- Promote and encourage new and existing Councillors to attend training provided by North West Leicestershire District Council.
- Encourage the clerk and councillors to have the ability to access a computer and internet.
- Promote any other training to the community and community groups.

Consultation

North West Leicestershire District Council to:

- Consult with town and parish councils on district-wide issues that may have an impact on them.
- Where possible provide prior notification of a consultation.
- Aim to provide a minimum of six weeks to consult with town and parish councils.
- Encourage managers and team leaders of the importance to consult with town and parish councils.
- Include an executive summary, where possible (other than planning applications) to provide a concise explanation.
- Include contact details of the relevant officer that the town and parish councils can approach with any questions.

Town and parish councils to:

- Respond within the timescale of the consultation period. If they are unable to respond in the given time to make contact with the appropriate team/officer as early as possible to discuss their needs.
- Respond to the district council consultations that represent the views of the town and parish council.
- Consult the district council on issues that could have an impact on the district (e.g. Neighbourhood Plans)
- Support consultation through engaging with task and finish working groups¹.

¹Task and finish working group – a select number of town and parish councils who wish to be involved in a group to review a specific piece of work or be involved in a pilot and who can share the views of other parish councils perhaps of similar size or structure.

Planning and development

North West Leicestershire District Council to:

- Undertake a formal period of public consultation prior to deciding a planning application (this may vary for listed building and conservation area consent).
- Issue required planning consultation to the relevant town or parish council.
- Publish information online in an open data format so that it is available to anyone who wishes to comment.
- Make planning applications available for comments for no less than 21 days or 14 days where a notice is published in a newspaper.
- Notify town and parish councils of the decision taken on planning applications.

Town and parish councils to:

- Respond to the planning applications within the 21 days consultation period if they wish to respond².
- Respond to amended plans within the 14 days consultation period, if they wish to respond.
- Ensure their Clerk has the capacity to receive planning applications electronically, in order to then circulate amongst their town and parish councillors.

² no representation will be reported as 'no comments received'

Licensing Service

North West Leicestershire District Council to:

- Inform the town and parish councils of any of the licence applications listed, providing 28 days to respond:

Licensing Act 2003 – Premises Licence - New

Licensing Act 2003 – Premises Licence - Variation

Licensing Act 2003 – Premises Licence – Interim Authority

Licensing Act 2003 – Club Premises Certificate – New

Licensing Act 2003 – Club Premises Certificate – Variation

Gambling Act 2005 – Premises Licence – New

Gambling Act 2005 – Premises Licence – Variation

Sexual Entertainment Venue – New

Sexual Entertainment Venue – Renewal

- Inform the relevant town and parish councils of any Street Trading Consent (new or renewal), providing 28 days to respond.
- Provide training to town and parish councils to use the Public Access for Licensing portal and any other software used for the purpose of consultations
- Provide training to town and parish councils on licensing laws and procedures
- Inform the relevant town or parish council in advance of an outdoor music event where, in the Licensing teams opinion, it is likely to unduly disturb by residents after 10pm. Details of the event and instructions on what a resident should do if they experience unreasonable noise levels will also be shared.

Town and parish councils to:

- Attend any relevant training provided by the Licensing Team
- Respond to licensing applications within the 28 days timeframe if they wish to comment

Democratic Services

North West Leicestershire District Council to:

- Following either a contested or uncontested election, the Returning Officer will give notice to the town or parish clerk the name of each candidate elected. In the absence of a town or parish clerk the notice will be given to the chair of the parish.
- The Returning Officer will share the 'statement of persons nominated' to the town or parish clerk.
- Maintain a register of members' interests and will publish the register on the council's website.
- Provide training to parish members on the Code of Conduct following an election.

Town and parish councils to:

- Provide details to the Monitoring Officer for members' pecuniary and non-pecuniary within 28 days of their election or appointment to office. If a member/s fails to complete a declaration of interests form the clerk will notify the Monitoring Officer.
- Notify the election team when a casual vacancy occurs in order to ensure that the correct procedure for filling the vacancy is followed.
- Encourage members to attend Code of Conduct training.

Dispute resolution section

We always aim to provide a good quality service to all of our residents; however we don't always get things right first time.

We would encourage you to try to resolve your issues with the relevant department in the first instance, but if you are unable to, you can escalate your issues via the council's corporate complaints process.

If you wish to make a formal complaint against the council, you are able to do so by telephoning us on 01530 454545, writing to "Customer Feedback" at the normal council address, emailing feedback@nwleicestershire.gov.uk, completing an online form, or tweeting us @nwleics.

Joint Charter review period

The Joint Charter will be initially reviewed in 12 months' time by the working group including officers from North West Leicestershire District Council, following that it will be reviewed as appropriate.



This Joint Charter has been delivered in partnership with town and parish councils of North West Leicestershire.

North West Leicestershire District Council

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Role

Appleby Magna Parish Council

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Role

Ashby de la Zouch Town Council

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Role

Ashby Woulds Town Council

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Role

Belton Parish Council

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Role

Breedon on the Hill Parish Council

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Castle Donington Parish Council

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Charley Parish Council

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Coleorton Parish Council

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Ellistown and Battleflat Parish Council

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Heather Parish Council

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Hugglescote and Donington le Heath Parish Council

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Ibstock Parish Council

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Kegworth Parish Council

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Lockington cum Hemington Parish Council

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Long Whatton and Diseworth Parish Council

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Measham Parish Council

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Oakthorpe, Donisthorpe and Acresford Parish Council

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Osgathorpe Parish Council

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Packington Parish Council

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Ravenstone with Snibston Parish Council

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Snarestone Parish Council

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Swannington Parish Council

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Sweepstone Parish Council

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Worthington Parish Council

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Whitwick Parish Council

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