

A Charter between
South Gloucestershire Council
&
Town and Parish Councils

Town and Parish Councils Charter

Introduction

South Gloucestershire was established, following the reorganisation of local government, in 1995. From the outset there was an appreciation of the roles of Parish and Town Councils, and how they and the Unitary Authority should work together to best serve the people. The first version of this Charter was agreed, and adopted by the majority of local councils in 2002.

The Charter is a framework for South Gloucestershire Council and the Town & Parish Councils (or Local Councils) to work in partnership in order to improve the well-being of the varied communities that make up South Gloucestershire. Through this Charter the respective councils agree to work in partnership whilst respecting each-other's rights as separate democratic bodies.

Town and Parish Councils are locally elected bodies which play an important role in the lives of communities. They are funded principally by an annual precept collected through the Council Tax on their behalf by South Gloucestershire. They have a wide range of powers, and many of their activities are interlinked with those of South Gloucestershire, and so by working in partnership more can be achieved than by each working alone.

The South Gloucestershire Compact is an associated document which focuses on partnership working with the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector, and shares the same fundamental principles as the Charter. Indeed the Parish and Town Councils are all covered by the public sector commitments of the Compact.

All Town and Parish Councils are invited to formally adopt the Charter as recognition of the relationship with South Gloucestershire, and also that this relationship is managed in accord with the Compact.

This Charter was formally agreed by a meeting of the Cabinet of South Gloucestershire Council on 4 September 2017 and signed on their behalf by the Leader of the Council.

Signed: 

Cllr Matthew Riddle, Leader of South Gloucestershire Council

Getting it right together

Who needs to be involved?

There are 44 Town & Parish Councils in South Gloucestershire and 3 communities that hold an Annual Parish Meeting.

Acton Turville Parish Council	Little Sodbury Parish Meeting
Almondsbury Parish Council	Marshfield Parish Council
Alveston Parish Council	Oldbury on Severn Parish Council
Aust Parish Council	Oldland Parish Council
Badminton Parish Council	Olveston Parish Council
Bitton Parish Council	Patchway Town Council
Bradley Stoke Town Council	Pilning & Severn Beach Parish Council
Charfield Parish Council	Pucklechurch Parish Council
Cold Ashton Parish Council	Rangeworthy Parish Council
Cromhall Parish Council	Rockhampton Parish Council
Dodington Parish Council	Siston Parish Council
Downend & Bromley Heath Parish Council	Sodbury Town Council
Doynton Parish Council	Stoke Gifford Parish Council
Dyrham and Hinton Parish Council	Stoke Lodge and the Common Parish Council
Emersons Green Town Council	Thornbury Town Council
Falfield Parish Council	Tormarton Parish Council
Filton Town Council	Tortworth Parish Meeting
Frampton Cotterell Parish Council	Tytherington Parish Council
Hanham Abbots Parish Council	Westerleigh Parish Council
Hanham Parish Council	Wick and Abson Parish Council
Hawkesbury Parish Council	Wickwar Parish Council
Hill Parish Meeting	Winterbourne Parish Council
Horton Parish Council	

In addition there are two unparished areas of Kingswood and Staple Hill.

Town and Parish Councils come together in the Town and Parish Council Forum, which speaks on their behalf about matters of mutual interest. This function of the Forum is formally recognised by South Gloucestershire Council.

In addition, South Gloucestershire Council and Town & Parish Councils recognise the role of Avon Local Councils Association in supporting and promoting the work of Town & Parish Councils.

What's in it for us?

Better outcomes - Successful co-operation between South Gloucestershire Council and Town & Parish Councils and the Voluntary and Community Sector lead to improved services and an enhanced quality of life for residents and communities.

Guidance - This Charter can be used as a guide to help understand when and how to work with each other which will lead to the design and development of better quality services.

Checklist – Town & Parish Councils have signed up to The Code of Conduct and adherence to this Code of Conduct will ensure compliance with both the law and best practice guidelines for Town & Parish Councils.

Public engagement - In order to ensure continued support from local residents and communities, it is important that we continue to demonstrate effective cross sector collaboration. This can be achieved through successful implementation of The Parish Charter.

What does The Parish Charter cover?

Shared Principles and Commitments – Town & Parish Councils and South Gloucestershire Council share the same vision to create a thriving, sustainable and diverse environment for residents in South Gloucestershire. As the first tier in local government, Town & Parish Councils are well placed to represent the interests of their parish.

Working in partnership - South Gloucestershire Council recognises the different capacity of each of the Town & Parish Councils and acknowledges that by working together in partnership, it can help the effective delivery of services to local communities. They agree that all proposals under the Localism Act will be subject to consultation with Town & Parish Councils.

Mutual respect - South Gloucestershire Council recognises and understands that the work of Town & Parish Councils is heavily reliant on volunteering and good will and will respect the different capabilities of smaller and larger Town & Parish Councils in terms of ability to handle information and resources. They agree that all proposals under the Localism Act will consider and respect these differences.

Localism – Localism can mean different things to different people and can be delivered in different ways. It is not a set of rules, but a way of working.

To support a joined-up approach to the delivery of localism in South Gloucestershire a common definition is considered to be

“The devolution and the fundamental shift of power to councils, communities, neighbourhoods and individuals. Empowering local people to come together to take more responsibility for their community”

Localism or as it is more commonly known, the 'localism agenda', is made up of a number of key elements which can be summarised as follows:

- Local needs and opportunities – places are different and need local solutions to solve their problems
- Local voice and influence – opportunities for all sections of the community to be consulted and involved in improving their area
- Locally responsive services – not a one size fits all approach, but services tailored to meet local needs and priorities
- Local accountability – the performance of all service providers held to account by local communities

The Area's shared vision as set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy is that South Gloucestershire is 'a great place to live and work'. This is supported by a specific commitment to "engage people of all ages so they feel they belong and can help provide local solutions ...". A strong sense of community spirit lies at the heart of this. The Council, along with its partners wants to encourage and support local communities to get involved and work with it to strengthen their ability to deal with local challenges. The Council also wants to work closely with town and parish councils, voluntary groups, local people and other public sector organisations to establish community needs and to help meet those needs in the most effective way.

South Gloucestershire's localism principles

Delivery of the vision is underpinned by seven key principles which set out how localism is to be delivered. Through localism South Gloucestershire will:

- Utilise the **strategic community leadership** role of democratically elected representatives
- Create an ethos of building greater resilience within communities – **communities that are strong and self-reliant**
- Ensure clarity in the arrangements for **community engagement**
- Aspire for **innovative partnerships** and a flexible approach to partnership models
- Promote **flexibility in the delivery of services**, moving away from the one size fits all approach to one which reflects local needs
- Strive for a **balance** between local delivery and economies of scale
- Ensure robust **accountability and scrutiny** mechanisms are in place where services are devolved

At a very local level, more powers and responsibilities will be devolved to those town and parish councils who wish to take over some assets and services - where this makes sense and delivers better value for money.

Leadership roles

Town and Parish Councils – Town and Parish Councils are the first tier of democracy in local government. They bring knowledge and experience that in some instances could be more fully utilised. Localism provides the opportunity to enhance further relationships by building on the commitments outlined in South Gloucestershire's Charter for Parish and Town Councils and by providing support to build capacity so that local councils can take on new roles.

South Gloucestershire Council – The Council as a corporate body must drive, enable and support engagement with and implementation of localism, working with councillors, partners and local people to help them realise expectations and opportunities. Whilst localism means that services could be delivered differently, accountability for specific services will still rest with the Council.

Voluntary and Community Sector – The Voluntary and Community Sector is a vital resource in delivering services to local communities. It can reach parts of the community that some public agencies cannot reach and can deliver more tailored services. Localism presents the opportunity to build on South Gloucestershire's Compact and identify and support ways to build the capacity of the Sector to take on new challenges and opportunities.

Values – One of the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 was that South Gloucestershire Council and Town & Parish Councils had to adopt a Code of Conduct. This Code commits members to behave in a manner that is consistent with the following principles – selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Independence – South Gloucestershire Council will support the independence of Town & Parish Councils as the first tier of local government and respect that many parish councils are small and located in sparsely populated rural areas and that they generally have modest and constrained resources.

Sustainability – South Gloucestershire Council and Town & Parish Councils recognise the importance of building sustainability for the future.

Town & Parish Councils should actively promote their work and achievements to local residents and South Gloucestershire Council through all appropriate media.

Appendix 1

Commitments

It is mutually acknowledged that many of the topics on which South Gloucestershire Council consults the public and Town and Parish Councils are operational in nature, and relate to local implementation of wider policies. In many cases the process, audience, and timetables for such consultation are laid out in statute, and must take precedence over the Town and Parish Council Charter.

Involvement in Policy Development

(a) Commitments for South Gloucestershire Council

1. Include Town & Parish Councils in the public consultation on all issues which are likely to affect their areas, and where appropriate highlight the responses from Town & Parish Councils in reporting the results.
2. Have regard to the views of Town & Parish Councils when making decisions and offer feedback on the outcomes once the consultation has taken place.
3. Keep under review the level and quality of consultation.
4. Prepare a brief synopsis for all council consultations that are more than four pages long and allow 6 weeks for Town & Parish Councils to respond to consultations. For consultation involving major changes to services or key council strategies the council will endeavour to consult for a period of 12 weeks. If this is not possible, the Council will seek approval in advance from the Chair / Vice Chair of the Town and Parish Council Forum for a shorter consultation period. (NB – there are specific arrangements for consultation on Planning Applications and Planning Policy Documents – see appendix 6).
5. Make it explicit if information or material provided to Town and Parish Councils is to be kept confidential; and any dates after which it may be provided to others or discussed in public.
6. Respond to requests for information from Town and Parish Councils in a helpful, efficient manner within 10 working days.
7. Provide information/briefings to raise awareness among staff to ensure they have a good understanding of the role, function and size of Town & Parish Councils.
8. Provide briefing sessions/workshops to groups of Town & Parish Councils on complex central and local government policies and initiatives which are relevant to and will have an impact on Town & Parish Councils. In addition they will assist partnership working and local delivery.

9. Produce a regularly updated contact list of South Gloucestershire Council Officers and Members and compile a directory of Town & Parish Council Clerks' email addresses and make this available on the South Gloucestershire Council website.
10. Give as much notice as possible to Town and Parish Councils about opportunities to fund extra levels of service, and take account of Parish budget-setting timetables when establishing services on this basis.

(b) Commitments for Town & Parish Councils

1. Endeavour to take part in consultation exercises and respond electronically within the given period.
2. Work with South Gloucestershire Council to seek the views of residents on issues of common interest.
3. Identify local needs and consult with local communities and South Gloucestershire Council.
4. Notify South Gloucestershire Council if they cannot respond to a consultation within the given period. Town & Parish Councils should recognise that it may not always be possible for their views to be taken into consideration if they are unable to respond within the given period.
5. Maintain the confidentiality of information or material shared in confidence, and not provide this to others or discuss in public in advance of dates notified by South Gloucestershire Council.
6. Respond to requests for information from South Gloucestershire Council in a helpful, efficient manner with 10 working days and notify South Gloucestershire Council when any changes of personnel, councillors or community assets occur in order that the Directory is kept up to date.
7. Make every effort to attend meetings/events run by South Gloucestershire Council in which they have an interest and co-operate with South Gloucestershire Council in making their meeting places available for public, community or partnership meetings in which they have an interest.
8. Provide email address information to South Gloucestershire Council to allow the compilation of the directory of Town & Parish Council Clerks' email addresses and enable general correspondence to be sent electronically.

Resources

(a) Commitments for South Gloucestershire Council

1. Make every effort to attend Town & Parish Council meetings when invited.
2. Provide Town & Parish Councils with information and access to relevant training courses at the same cost as they are offered to South Gloucestershire Council officers and members.

3. Assist in enabling a Town & Parish Council to develop services within their own community where the Council holds specialist expertise
4. To ensure that officers and councillors attending meetings will be treated with respect in line with the council's code of conduct.

(b) Commitments for Town & Parish Councils

1. Allow officers and councillors of South Gloucestershire Council to speak at local council or parish meetings on matters of mutual interest if they request to do so.
2. With a view to providing a good quality service to local residents, encourage members and staff to attend relevant training courses and briefings.
3. Consider whether they wish to take on any functions/services from South Gloucestershire Council having regard to local considerations, needs and their capacity to deliver such functions/services, bearing in mind any implications for raising their precept this may have.
4. To ensure that officers and councillors attending meetings will be treated with respect in line with the council's code of conduct

Both South Gloucestershire Council and Town & Parish Councils should take account of three successful strands to "meaningful engagement" that under-pin the more tangible aspects of engagement between the two partners. They are trust, partnership working and clarity of roles.

Town and Parish Councils come together in the Town and Parish Council Forum, which speaks on their behalf about matters of mutual interest and this role of the Forum is recognised by South Gloucestershire Council.

Both South Gloucestershire Council and Town & Parish Councils recognise the role of Avon Local Councils Association in supporting and promoting the work of local town and parish councils.

Achieving Equity

(a) Commitments for South Gloucestershire Council

1. Keep Town & Parish Councils fully apprised of all strategic partnerships entered into by the authority, how they may effect services in their area and invite town and parish councils to have representation on appropriate partnerships.
2. South Gloucestershire Council undertakes to work on an impartial basis with Town & Parish Councils to the best of its ability whilst recognising the wide variation in size, financial status and ability to deliver additional services of town and parish councils.

(b) Commitments for Town & Parish Councils

1. Seek to fill places offered on strategic partnerships to provide a local perspective.
2. Town & Parish Councils should acknowledge the fact that South Gloucestershire Council may not always be able to offer support to allow Town & Parish Councils to take on additional services.

(c) Commitments for both parties

1. To promote the continuous improvement of the working relationship between South Gloucestershire Council and the 44 Town & Parish Councils and 2 Parish meetings in South Gloucestershire through the Parish Charter.
2. To ensure that all Town & Parish Councils in South Gloucestershire can participate in the dialogue and raise issues through the Town and Parish Council Forum

Appendix 2

Constitution of the Town and Parish Council Forum

Name:

The name of the group shall be: The South Gloucestershire Town & Parish Councils' Forum (T&PCF).

Membership:

The membership of the group shall comprise the following:

- The Clerk to every Local Council (Town and Parish Councils and Parish Meetings) in South Gloucestershire
- The Chairman, or the Chairman's nominated representative, of every Local Council in South Gloucestershire
- An appropriate Senior Officer of South Gloucestershire Council (SGC)
- The Chairman of the Communities Committee of SGC
- Political representation from other parties for Communities Committee SGC
- Compact

Administrative support is provided by SGC

Meeting facilities provided by Local Town and Parish Council's (rotate)

Purpose:

The purpose of the T&PCF shall be to act as a forum for the Local Councils to interact with SGC to an agenda set by the local councils. Principal among such matters will be the constant monitoring and periodic review of the Charter between SGC and the Local Councils known as the Parish Charter. Additionally the T&PCF will provide the input in parallel with SGC to the South Gloucestershire Compact between SGC and the Voluntary & Community Sector.

Officers:

The T&PCF is to elect a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman. These honorary posts are to be elected on an annual basis (normally in January). There is no limit to the term of office for either post, but it is recommended that they serve for no more than 3 years continuously, with no bar to future re-election.

The posts are open to any of the Clerks or Chairmen who are members of the Forum.

Meetings:

Initially the meetings will be held 4 times per year, but extra meetings may be called if though necessary; similarly a meeting may be postponed or deleted in the absence of appropriate business.

Agenda:

The agenda for each meeting will be set by the Chairman in consultation with the Vice Chairman and SGC Officers. Matters for the agenda may arise from:

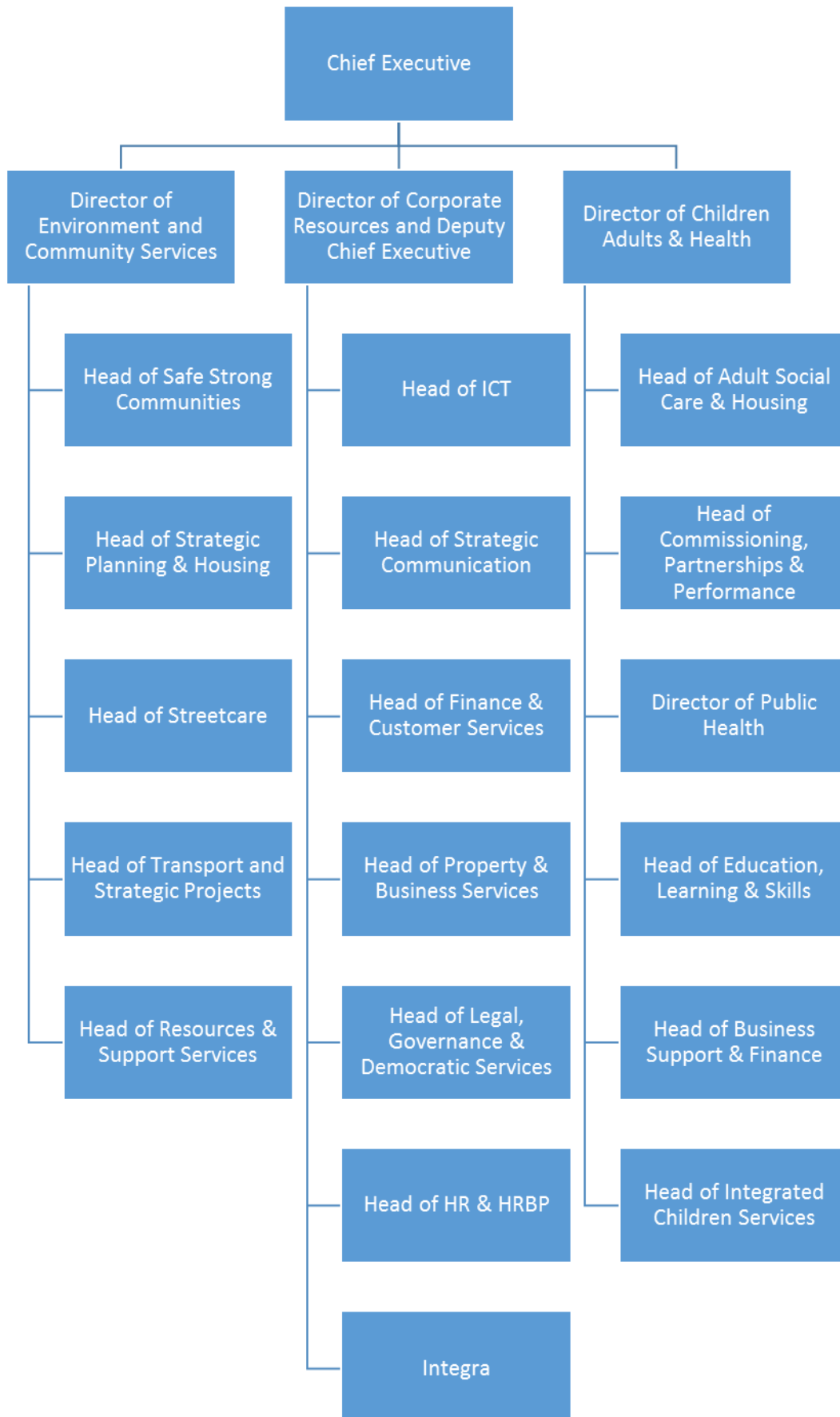
- Suggestions made at a previous meeting
- Matters of significance that have come to the notice of the Chairman or Vice Chairman
- Matters that SGC wish to bring to the meeting
- Any matters that may be raised from any of the local council members of T&PCF

Members and / or officers of SGC may be invited to meetings to facilitate the understanding of members on specific matters. It is expected that Members and Officers will respond positively to any such requests from T&PCF.

Minutes:

Draft minutes will be circulated as soon as is reasonably practical to all members for checking for accuracy and omissions. Once checked, the minutes will be confirmed at the following meeting and, once confirmed, shall be placed in the public domain.

Appendix 3 - South Gloucestershire Council structure



Direct contact email addresses

Chief Executive and Corporate Resources

General	cecrdirectoratesouthglos.gov.uk
Council meetings	democraticservicesouthglos.gov.uk
Property owned or operated by South Gloucestershire Council	property.servicesouthglos.gov.uk
Traded Services	tradedservicesouthglos.gov.uk
Traveller Unit	travellerunitsouthglos.gov.uk

Children, Adults and Health

General	cahfeedbacksouthglos.gov.uk
Early years services for children	earlyyearssouthglos.gov.uk
Emergency Planning and major emergencies	emergencyplanningsouthglos.gov.uk
Housing waiting list	homechoiceteamsouthglos.gov.uk
Homeless people and those at risk of homelessness	homelessnessouthglos.gov.uk
To report safeguarding concerns about a child:	Monday to Thursday 9am-5pm; Friday 9am-4.30pm phone 01454-866000 Out of these hours and at weekends phone 01454-86615165
To report safeguarding concerns about an adult:	Monday to Thursday 9am-5pm; Friday 9am-4.30pm phone 01454-868007 Out of these hours and at weekends phone 01454-86615165
Young people services	ypservicesouthglos.gov.uk
Early years services for children	earlyyearssouthglos.gov.uk

Environment and Community Services

General	<u>ECSFeedback@southglos.gov.uk</u>
Anti-Social Behaviour	<u>asbreporting@southglos.gov.uk</u>
Breaches of Planning Permission	<u>planningenforcement@southglos.gov.uk</u>
Cycling and cycleways	<u>streetcare@southglos.gov.uk</u>
Dangerous buildings	Phone 01454-868004
Highway Maintenance	<u>streetcare@southglos.gov.uk</u>
Libraries	<u>libraries@southglos.gov.uk</u>
Noise, fly tipping, pollution or other environmental problems	<u>environmental.protection@southglos.gov.uk</u>
Parking Enforcement	<u>parklegally@southglos.gov.uk</u>
Planning applications	<u>planningapplications@southglos.gov.uk</u>
Public Rights of Way	<u>rightsofway@southglos.gov.uk</u>
Vermin or pests	<u>pestcontrol@southglos.gov.uk</u>
Safety Advisory Group for public events	<u>sag@southglos.gov.uk</u>
Street Care	<u>streetcare@southglos.gov.uk</u>
Trading Standards	<u>trading.standards@southglos.gov.uk</u>
Waste Management	<u>waste.management@southglos.gov.uk</u>

Appendix 4

Strategic / Policy Partnerships

West of England Partnership

The West of England Partnership comprises Councillor representatives from the four local unitary authorities, South Gloucestershire Council, Bath & North East Somerset, North Somerset and Bristol City Council. The Partnership seeks to achieve mutually agreed objectives across a wider range of cross border issues. The Partnership has its own administrative organisation and website (www.westofengland.org)

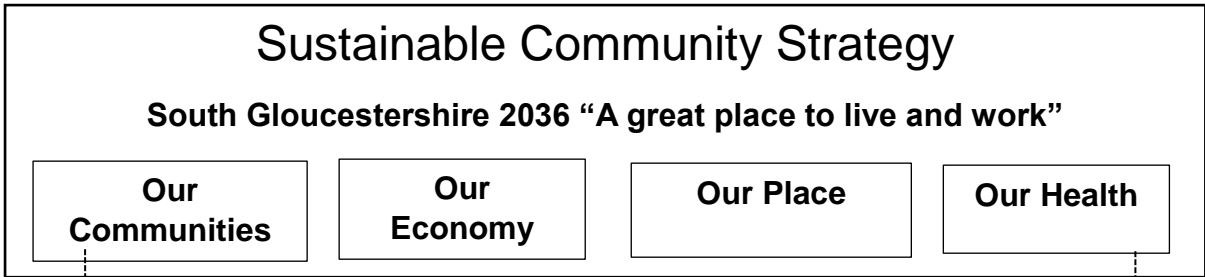
The Partnership was formed to focus on things that are better planned at the West of England level, rather than at the level of the individual council areas. One example is major transport schemes, which have an impact on the West of England as a whole and which may cross the council boundaries.

South Gloucestershire

The strategic and policy partnerships in South Gloucestershire are as follows:

South Gloucestershire Partnership Board	The South Gloucestershire Partnership is made up of private, public, voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations who work with communities to identify and tackle key long, medium and short-term local issues to ensure South Gloucestershire remains a great place to live and work.
Safer and Stronger Communities Strategic Partnership	The Safer and Stronger Communities Strategic Partnership is made up of organisations who work together and with communities to tackle crime and disorder and improve community strength by: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• establishing a strategic direction;• co-ordinating and helping deliver actions that support the development of safer and stronger communities ;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> exercising the functions of the statutory Community Safety Partnership for South Gloucestershire; In particular, to encourage, support and propose actions that will help achieve the agreed aims set out in the South Gloucestershire Sustainable Community Strategy. <p>Further details are available at www.southglos.gov.uk/community-and-living/stronger-communities/community-strategy/safer-stronger-communities-strategic-partnership or by emailing sscsp@southglos.gov.uk</p>
<p>Health and Wellbeing Board</p>	<p>The Health and Wellbeing Board will provide leadership to achieve, for all ages, improvement to the health and wellbeing of the local population, including the safeguarding of children young people and vulnerable adults. It will report on progress to the Local Strategic Partnership. It will Monitor and support the configuration of services and the allocation of resources to meet priority outcomes, and drive evidence based and collaborative approaches to commissioning. The focus will be on areas where a multi-agency integrated approach is beneficial to the people of South Gloucestershire.</p> <p>Further details are available at https://council.southglos.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=435 or by telephoning 01454-863009.</p>
<p>Children, Young People and Families Partnership</p>	<p>The Children, Young people and Families Partnership brings together agencies working to make South Gloucestershire a great place for children and young people to grow up in.</p> <p>Key priorities for children, young people and families in South Gloucestershire include reducing child poverty, supporting children to have the best start, early help, improving outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disability, improving mental health and wellbeing for all and closing achievement gaps in education.</p> <p>Further information is available at www.southglos.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/strategies-plans-and-policies/children-young-people-and-families/children-and-young-people-plan</p>



South Gloucestershire Partnership Board
Cross-cutting, thematic issues including carbon reduction, infrastructure & place, economy & skills

Chief Officers' Group

Safer and Stronger Communities Strategic Partnership

Senior officer group

Health and Wellbeing Partnership Board (is also a committee of the council)

Senior officer group

Children, Young People and Families Partnership



Appendix 5

Right to bid / assets of community value

The Localism Act gives local communities the chance to nominate, for inclusion on a formal register, assets that are of value to the local community (assets of community value). Communities also have the right to bid to purchase registered assets of community value if they come up for sale.

An asset is a physical building or land and can be privately owned – it does not have to belong to the council or a public sector organisation. Examples of assets that would be eligible are:

- community centres
- libraries
- leisure centres
- the last public house / shop in an area
- post offices
- theatres
- museums

For an asset to be eligible, either

- a) its current main use must further the social interests or social wellbeing of the local community, and it must be realistic to think that such a use can continue, or
- b) a use in the recent past must have furthered the social interest or social wellbeing of the local community, and it must be realistic to think it could be brought back into such use within the next five years.

Town and Parish Councils are amongst the organisations eligible to submit applications for assets of community value.

Full details including application forms and the register of assets of community value can be found at

www.southglos.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/localism/community-right-to-bid/

Appendix 6

Planning issues

Applications for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (such as the proposal for a new nuclear power station at Oldbury on Severn) are made to the Planning Inspectorate, and the decision is made by the Secretary of State. The following agreement relates solely to those applications to be determined by South Gloucestershire Council as a Planning Authority.

Development Management

South Gloucestershire Council will:

- Consult Town and Parish Councils on all applications for planning permission.
- Allow 21 days for the submission of representations by Town and Parish Councils.
- Notify Town and Parish Councils of any significant amendment to a planning application and allow up to a further 14 day period for representations to be made before a decision is taken on the amended plan. This period will be dependent on the case officer's assessment of nature of the changes proposed and the need to ensure timely decision making. (Significant amendments are those considered by the case officer to materially affect the planning application, but not to require a new application).
- Have regard to the views of Town & Parish Councils which will be summarised in all cases on either the circulated schedule (proposed decisions under delegated powers) or to the relevant Development Control Committee, in accordance with the Council's scheme of delegation.
- Send to Town & Parish Councils, a list of proposed decisions appearing on the Circulated Schedule. Where the Town & Parish Council's view on any planning application differs from action proposed under delegated authority, they may make representation to their Ward Councillor who will have the power to seek call in of the application for consideration at a Development Control Committee.
- Notify Town and Parish Councils of all planning decisions on which they have been consulted.
- Provide Town and Parish Councils with copies in electronic format of the Planning Committee agenda items on request.
- Allow a representative of Town & Parish Councils to attend and speak at meetings of South Gloucestershire's Sites Inspection Panel in respect of any

planning application and to address the Development Control Committee in accordance with the Council's scheme of public participation.

- Endeavour to make officers available to attend meetings of Town and Parish Councils to clarify the details of significant or controversial applications where more than 200 dwellings/or 4 hectares or 10,000 square metres of commercial floor-space is proposed.
- Where resources permit, provide periodic training sessions for local councillors and/or parish clerks to aid an understanding of the planning process and the matters which have a material bearing upon the determination of a planning application.
- Provide a substantive response to enforcement complaints within 20 working days and provide progress updates at not less than 6 weekly intervals on longer cases.

Town & Parish Councils will:

- Acknowledge that South Gloucestershire Council will not always be able to accede to requests of Town & Parish Councils.
- Respond promptly in writing to all planning applications received from South Gloucestershire Council and respond using electronic forms of communication unless otherwise agreed with South Gloucestershire Council.
- Comment on planning applications on planning grounds, and specify as fully as possible the reasons for an objection to, or support for, a particular application.
- Create a mechanism whereby the Town and Parish Councils can respond to any amended plans received from South Gloucestershire Council.
- Attend meetings, briefings and training to gain a better understanding of the planning process.

Planning Policy

South Gloucestershire Council will:

- Produce a "Local Plan" setting out the planning policies for the area. The Local Plan for South Gloucestershire will consist of the Core Strategy, the Policies, Sites & Places DPD and the Joint Waste Core Strategy with some supporting Supplementary Planning Documents on detailed matters. Planning Applications in South Gloucestershire are judged against policies in these documents as well as guidance in the National Planning Policy

Framework and “other material considerations” where relevant.

- Consult Town & Parish Councils when drawing up planning documents in line with national guidance and the Council’s Statement of Community Involvement.
- Help Town and Parish Councils to understand Neighbourhood Planning processes through holding training events and a dedicated Neighbourhood Planning web page.
- Within the resources available, endeavour to support any Town or Parish Councils who want to undertake Neighbourhood Planning with technical advice and advice on sources of information and support.

Town & Parish Councils will:

- Respond to consultations by the Council on statutory planning documents including a wider consultation with their communities where appropriate.
- Review and consider the issues that affect their communities and set objectives which can be expressed as policies/actions for achieving identified outcomes through the planning system.
- Recognise that Neighbourhood Planning will be led and managed by Parish & Town Councils.
- At their own discretion, consider whether any of their aims, objectives and priorities could be furthered through the preparation of Parish or Community Led Plans, Village Design Statements or Neighbourhood Plans.

(Under the Localism Act, parish & town councils now have the right to undertake Neighbourhood Planning by producing Neighbourhood Development Plans, Neighbourhood Development Orders and/or Community Right to Build Orders if they wish to. Where such documents are produced under the statutory process set out in the Localism Act and Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, they will become part of the statutory Local Plan and any planning applications will be judged against the policies within them, alongside the other national and local planning policies.

Parish or Community Led Plans and Village Design Statements would be non-statutory plans. Such plans produced by Parish or Town Councils can assist local communities in producing a common vision of how their community should look or develop in the future. Each has a role in helping communities identify and articulate what is of value in their area and to guide planning decisions. Where relevant they may be considered as material considerations in making planning decisions but they will not have the same weight as documents in the statutory Local Plan.)

Appendix 7

Licensing issues

South Gloucestershire Council will:

- For new Licences and review of Premises/Club Licence consultations, South Gloucestershire Council's Licensing Team will consult with the relevant Town and Parish Council.
- For new Street Trading consent consultations, South Gloucestershire Council's Licensing Team will consult with the relevant Town and Parish Council.
- Representations by Town and Parish Councils must be according to the statutory or policy timescales.
- Written observations and objections, made in line with the statutory or policy frameworks, received from Town and Parish Councils will be taken into consideration when determining an application.
- If valid objections are received against the granting of a Street Trading Consent or Premises/Club Licence, from a Town or Parish council the application will normally be referred to the Council's Licensing Panel for determination.
- Where objections or comments have been received, notification will be given to the Town and Parish Councils of the licensing decision.
- Provide the relevant advice and information to any Town or Parish Council wishing to complain or call a review of a licence.
- Provide periodic training courses for local councillors and/or parish clerks to aid an understanding of the licensing process and the matters, which have a material bearing upon the determination of a licensing application.

Town and Parish Councils will:

- Acknowledge that South Gloucestershire Council will not always be able to accede to the requests of Town and Parish Councils.
- Make representations in accordance with the Statutory or Policy guidelines and endeavour to respond using electronic forms of communication.

- Recognise that if representations are made outside of the consultation time period they have to be deemed invalid.
- Ensure that every representation regarding a Licensing Act 2003 application, is linked to one of the four objectives:
 1. The protection of children from harm
 2. Public safety
 3. Prevention of public nuisance
 4. Prevention of crime and disorder

If representations are not related to at least one of these objectives, South Gloucestershire Council's Licensing Team, are not legally allowed to consider your views and they will be disregarded.

- Ensure that every representation regarding a Street Trading Consent application is linked to one of the following objectives:
 - Public Safety
 - Public Order
 - Avoidance of Nuisance

If representations are not related to at least one of these objectives South Gloucestershire Council's Licensing Team will deem the objection invalid.

- Create a mechanism whereby the Town and Parish Councils can respond to any amended applications received from South Gloucestershire Council.
- Ensure that representations are evidenced based and just not anecdotal.
- Attend meetings, briefings and training to gain a better understanding of the licensing process.