

Decision Session – Executive Member for Economic Development & Community Engagement 10 May 2016

Report of the Assistant Director (Communities, Culture & Public Realm)

Review of York’s Parish Charter

Summary

1. This paper reports back on a review of the charter between City of York Council and the 31 parish and town councils within the York local authority area, as represented by the York Branch of the Yorkshire Local Councils Associations (YLCA). A revised version is proposed.

Recommendations

2. The Executive Member is asked to approve the final draft Charter for signing by City of York Council and offer it to the York Branch of the YLCA for signing on behalf of the city’s parish and town councils.

Reason: To advance joint working between City of York Council and York’s parish councils.

Background

3. There are two tiers of local government operating in the outer wards of the City of York local authority area. Those parts of the City of York which were outside of the pre-1996 non-metropolitan district of York have parish councils, of which there are 31 in total. One of the parish councils (Haxby) takes the style of Town. In order to advance joint working between the two tiers of local government – and to recognise the legal and other relationships between the two – a Parish Charter was produced setting-out an agreed way of working.
4. The Charter was last reviewed in 2011. The 2011 Charter states that the document should be reviewed every three years, meaning the review is now two years overdue. The 2016 review of the Charter has been co-ordinated by the York Parish Council Liaison Group which meets bi-monthly with the aim of improving working relations between the parish councils and City of York Council.

The Liaison Group comprises six parish councillors (who are appointed by the York Branch of the YLCA) and City of York Council representation (currently the Executive Member for Community Engagement and the Head of Communities and Equalities). The York Branch of the YLCA comprises representatives from the 31 parishes, which are all member councils of the YLCA, which in turn is a county association of the National Association of Local Councils.

Consultation

5. Consultation has been undertaken within City of York Council and with the 31 parish councils. Parish councils were requested to consider the existing Charter and whether any amendments were required. No submissions were received. City of York councillors were consulted through the Members' Newsletter. No submissions were received. City of York Council officers were consulted through the internal newsletter and where appropriate the four responses have been incorporated into the final draft. The Parish Council Liaison Group proposed numerous minor alterations, which have all been incorporated.

Proposals

6. The proposed revised draft is attached at Annex 1.

Options

7. The principal options open to the Executive Member are:

Option 1: Approve the final draft Charter for signing by City of York Council and offer for signing by the York Branch of the YLCA.

Option 2: Approve the final draft charter, with amendments, for signing by City of York Council and offer for signing by the York Branch of the YLCA.

Option 3: Not approve the final draft Charter.

Analysis

8. Option 1 will reinforce existing joint working, taking into consideration the contributions of consultees. Option 2 provides an opportunity to make amendments to the text in Option 1. Option 3 would further delay the review of the Charter with a risk that the existing Charter becomes unfit for purpose or obsolete.

Council Plan

9. Parish councils are the first tier of local government in the neighbourhoods they serve and (to quote the motto of YLCA) “closest to the people”.

In the parished wards of the city, the Parish Charter is fundamental to advancing the Council Plan. In particular, relations with parish councils are a key component of the Council Plan’s priority for the City of York to be “a council that listens to residents”.

Implications

10. There are no additional **Financial, Equalities, Human Resources, Legal, Information Technology, Property, Crime and Disorder** or **Other** implications arising from the report.

Risk Management

11. In compliance with the Council’s risk management strategy the main risks that have been identified associated with the proposals contained in this report are those which could lead to the inability to meet business objectives and to deliver services, leading to damage to the Council’s reputation and failure to meet stakeholders’ expectations. The level of risk is assessed as “Low”. This is acceptable but means that regular monitoring is required of the operation of the new arrangements.

Annex: The final draft Parish Charter

Contact Details

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	Report Approved	✓	Date 28.4.16.
Specialist Implications Officers:	None		

Wards Affected:

Bishopthorpe, Copmanthorpe, Fulford & Heslington, Haxby & Wigginton, Heworth Without, Huntington & New Earswick, Osbaldwick & Derwent, Rawcliffe & Clifton Without, Rural West, Strensall, and Wheldrake

For further information please contact the author of the report