

Stockton-on-Tees Partnership Strategy for Local Councils



**STOCKTON-ON-TEES
PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY FOR
LOCAL COUNCILS**

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STOCKTON-ON-TEES PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY FOR LOCAL COUNCILS

INTRODUCTION

1. The **STOCKTON-ON-TEES PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY FOR LOCAL COUNCILS** is intended to enhance the continuing partnership between Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council, (the local authority), and the parish and town councils which represent the interests of residents, non-domestic ratepayers and a wide variety of other organisations in Stockton-on-Tees.
2. The **PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY** has been agreed between Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council and local parish and town councils in the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees
3. The **PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY** will provide the basis for effective communication and consultation between Stockton-on-Tees- Borough Council and parish and town councils.
4. Under the provisions of the **PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY**, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council and the parish and town councils will work together to develop an effective partnership.

PRINCIPLES OF THE PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY

5. The **PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY** recognises the legitimacy and potential contribution of each partner in the effective local governance of their area and acknowledges the important but separate roles and functions carried out by each democratically elected tier of local government, as outlined below:-
Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council - The role of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council is to operate at the strategic and local level to ensure that competing needs and interests are balanced in order to achieve the equitable distribution of services throughout the area and to protect minority communities and special needs or interests.
Parish and Town Council's - Parish and town councils will operate at the local level to safeguard and promote the interests of the residents and other stakeholders in their respective villages, towns and communities.
6. The **PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY** recognises the value of both the strategic and local tiers of local government operating together in order to secure an effective response to the needs and aspirations of all of the people of the Borough.
7. **Parish and town councils** will have a key role in providing Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council with an assessment of the needs and wishes of residents of individual communities, (in terms of general social, economic and environmental issues). In return, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council will

undertake to:

- Consider those needs
 - Inform parish and town councils of wider strategic issues affecting local communities
- 8.** In addition to matters relating to the general social, economic, and environmental well-being of local communities, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council and parish and town councils will undertake ongoing consultation on the planning and monitoring of the full range of local government services in each area.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL AND PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS

- 9.** Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council and the parish and town councils will maintain a close and effective relationship. In order to facilitate such a relationship Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council and the parish and town councils make the following undertakings.

10. Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council will:

- Maintain its commitment that elected members will meet regularly with parish and town Councils, through appropriate Forum arrangements, to discuss local issues
- Ensure that Cabinet Members with geographical portfolios, (i.e. North Borough, South Borough and Central Borough), work closely with parish and town Councils in their area and chair meetings of appropriate Parish Council Liaison Forums.
- Encourage its elected members (including appropriate Cabinet Members) to accept invitations to attend meetings of parish and town councils in their areas whenever possible;
- Send copies of correspondence from parish and town councils on any significant matter to local authority Councillors representing that area and to appropriate Cabinet Members.

11. The Parish and Town councils will:

- Maintain their commitment to meet with elected members of

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council to discuss local issues

- Invite Councillors, (including appropriate Cabinet Members), to attend meetings of parish and town councils and, at the discretion of the local council, allow them to speak at such meetings
- Provide, on request, to local authority elected members, (including appropriate Cabinet Members), agendas, reports and minutes of meetings of the parish and town councils; and
- Help to ensure that appropriate Borough Council elected members are informed about local views on any matter relating to Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council responsibilities.

COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION

- 12.** Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council will undertake to consult directly with individual parish and town councils over matters specifically relating to their town, village or community. Such matters will include local planning applications and proposals for traffic management schemes. A list of issues which will be automatically referred to parish and town councils for consideration is attached as **Appendix 1**.
- 13.** Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council will ensure that parish and town councils are given every reasonable opportunity to comment on and influence local authority decisions. Consultation with parish and town councils will be undertaken in accordance with Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council's Consultation Strategy and the local authority will:
 - Involve parish and town councils as early as possible in the consultation process
 - Clarify the nature of the consultation exercise and make known any limitations upon the degree of consultation, (i.e. legislative or financial limitations).
 - Examine complaints about breakdowns in communication
- 14.** Within the constraints imposed by statute, by necessary service delivery implications, committee timetables, and/or any special urgency requirements, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council will allow parish and town councils a reasonable, (and, where possible, mutually agreed), time to respond to consultation. Parish and town councils will, for their part, respond as promptly as possible and within any reasonable or agreed timescales.
- 15.** Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council will also consult with parish and town councils on strategic service matters having an impact on individual

councils and their surrounding communities.

- 16.** To enable effective consultation to be carried out, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council and the parish and town councils make the following undertakings.

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council will undertake to:

- Provide all relevant information on the issues upon which the parish or town Council is being asked to provide a view;
- Give a commitment that the views of parish and town councils will be taken into account and that, where a decision falls to be made by Cabinet, Committee or by the principal council, the views of the parish or town council will be fairly reported;
- Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council will provide, upon request, a full explanation of any decision which does not accord with local views.

The Parish and Town Councils will :

- Provide a practical and realistic response to the matter under consideration;
- Enter into appropriate discussions with the local authority

Exempt Items

- 17.** Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council reserves the right to withhold information defined as 'exempt' or 'confidential' under the Local Government Act 1972. This right shall also apply to parish and town councils.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

- 18.** In view of the particular local impact of planning applications the following undertakings will be agreed by all parties and will govern consultation arrangements relating to development control matters.

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council will:

- Notify the parish or town council of all planning applications received in respect of their parish;
- Allow 21 days for the submission of representations by the parish or town council (the statutory minimum is 14 days);
- Notify the parish or town council of any significant amendment to a planning application and provide an opportunity for representations to be made, (within a period determined by the Council), before a decision is taken on the amended plan;
- Where a matter is to be decided by a Planning Committee, undertake to report the parish or town council's representations to that

committee;

- Upon request, provide the parish and town council with copies of Planning Committee agendas, minutes and decision notices in respect of their area, together with a written explanation for any decision which is contrary to the view of the parish or town council.

The Parish and Town councils will :

- Acknowledge that Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council will not always be able to accede to the requests of parish and/or town councils;
- Respond in writing to those planning applications upon which they wish to make representation, within the time limits set by Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.
- Specify as fully as possible the reasons for an objection to, or support for, a particular planning application;
- Create a mechanism whereby they can respond in a timely manner to any amended plans.

ELECTIONS

- 19.** Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council and parish and town councils agree that, wherever possible, elections to local councils and to the Borough Council should be held at the same time in order to stimulate increased electoral activity and minimise costs to parish and town councils.

MONITORING AND REVIEWING THE STRATEGY

- 20.** The consultative arrangements set out in this Strategy shall be the subject of continuous joint monitoring and periodic joint review.
- 21.** Parish and Town Councils will report to Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council any instances where they feel that this Partnership Strategy has not been followed.
- 22.** Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council will raise, for the attention of parish and town Councils, instances where they feel that this Partnership Strategy has not been followed.

ISSUES UPON WHICH STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL WILL CONSULT DIRECTLY WITH INDIVIDUAL LOCAL COUNCILS

- Drainage plans
- Footpath orders
- Designation of conservation areas and environmental schemes
- Traffic management schemes, traffic regulation orders
- Criteria for allocating housing, particularly for special needs
- Public entertainment and other local licenses
- Applications for planning permission, listed building consent, conservation area demolitions
- The provision of civic amenity sites
- Proposals for the reorganisation of schools
- Proposals for changes in the opening hours of local libraries
- Provision of mobile libraries' service
- Significant changes to local community education/leisure facilities
- Policies for pollution monitoring
- Arrangements to be made for dog control
- Provision or withdrawal of local information centres
- Provision or withdrawal from permanent use of public conveniences

Partnership Strategy

- Proposals for amendments to or provision of new recycling facilities
- Provision of new car parking facilities or changes in the permitted waiting periods
- Emergency planning arrangements within individual parishes
- Preparation of the Borough Housing Strategy
- Stockton-on-Tees on Tees Local Plan
- Refuse Collection Arrangements
- Cleansing Regimes
- Recycling Proposals
- Street furniture (Bus Shelters, Highway Seats, Street Lighting)



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