



North

Yorkshire County Council

North Yorkshire County Council Parish Charter:

**Sets out the working relationship between
North Yorkshire County Council and parish/
town councils and parish meetings in North
Yorkshire**

Chief Executive's Group

Section 1: Introduction

The purpose of this charter is to set out in one document how North Yorkshire County Council and parish/town councils and parish meetings can work together to provide high quality and efficient public services for the people of North Yorkshire.

The charter is intended to be a starting point, a commitment to work together, and a statement of the principles by which the County Council and parish/town councils and parish meetings approach their work together.

The charter provides a list of practical offers that the County Council can provide. It also sets out arrangements for parish/town councils to have a greater influencing role.

Section 2: Partnership working

(i) Working together for our communities

- We (North Yorkshire County Council) will work in partnership with you (parish/town councils and parish meetings) in our area to promote sustainable social, economic and environmental development for the benefit of local communities.
- We recognise that as democratically accountable bodies, you are the grass-roots level of local government. In turn, we ask that you recognise the strategic role of North Yorkshire County Council and the fair distribution of services that it must achieve.

(ii) Parish plans and sustainable community strategies

- We know that parish plans can be useful because they allow people living in a parish to have their say on what is needed and wanted and how this could be accomplished. But we recognise that for parish plans to make a difference we need to take them into account when developing and implementing the Sustainable Community Strategy for North Yorkshire.
- We will also consult and involve parish/town

councils and parish meetings when preparing the strategy.

Section 3: Local governance

- We have established seven Area Committees (one in each district) made up of all the County Council Members in that district. Parish/town councils will be given the opportunity to sit on Area Committees, subject to the nominations for appointment of Co-opted Members by County Council Area Committees and agreement by the full County Council.
- We ask that parish/town councils consider making representatives available for our committee places/working groups when invited to do so.
- We ask that our officers and members be given an opportunity to speak at your meeting on matters of mutual interest.

Section 4: Consultation

- We will give you the opportunity to comment before we make a decision affecting your local community. To assist this we will circulate our Area Committee agendas to your parish clerk at the same time as they are sent to our Members and provide you with an opportunity to ask questions or make statements at our Area Committee meetings.
- We will attend twice-yearly parish liaison meetings in those districts where there is a joint commitment with the district council to implement such arrangements. An Executive Member and senior officer will normally attend. The purpose of these meetings will be to act as a liaison between parish/town councils, ourselves and the district council on matters of mutual interest and to discuss this charter and its ongoing development.
- We will use plain English and keep our information jargon free when we consult with you.
- We will offer our information in different formats e.g. on CD or tape where that is appropriate.

- We will follow Government practice and allow 12 weeks for consultation where possible.
- We will feed back to you what has been said and what we are going to do as a result.
- We ask that wherever possible and relevant you will respond to consultations when approached by us and by the agreed deadlines. For instance delegating the task to a committee or having an extra council meeting to meet the deadline.

Section 5: Information and complaints

- We will notify you of all programmed maintenance and improvement schemes due to be undertaken in your parish.
- We ask you to gather evidence or feedback to assist us in our service delivery, including reporting road defects (e.g. potholes and drainage problems), and reporting misuse of weight restricted routes by heavy goods vehicles in local towns and parishes.
- We ask that during normal office hours you will wherever possible report road defects/highway emergencies by telephone, using the main County Council telephone number (**0845 8727374**). This will help us to respond more quickly. To report highway emergencies outside normal office hours we ask that you contact North Yorkshire Police on **0845 6060247**. (Highway emergencies include any highway hazards such as flooding, mud/diesel spillages, carriageway debris, fallen trees and any road or footway defects which may be a danger to highway users.) If your call relates to a social care emergency outside of normal office hours we ask you to telephone **0845 0349417**.
- We ask you to wherever possible use our website at www.northyorks.gov.uk to find information about our services and news updates including road, footpath closures, temporary traffic lights and diversions. The website contains a number of online forms which can be used to request a service or

obtain more information. If you cannot find the information you need or wish to speak to someone you can telephone **0845 8727374**.

- We will acknowledge communications sent by you in accordance with our customer services standards. Our policy is to acknowledge communications sent to us within 5 working days of receipt, and we will normally provide a full response (if required) within 20 working days. If this is not possible we will contact you to explain why and give you an indication of when you can expect a full reply. When we contact you we ask that you send a substantive reply within 28 working days (not including responses to consultation documents). This is unless there are exceptional reasons why this cannot happen.
- If you are dissatisfied with our actions, the response to a request for information, or a failure to consult, you may make a formal complaint through our complaints procedure.
- We ask you to notify our Committee Services section of changes to the names/contact details of your parish clerk and parish chairman so that we can ensure that our parish contacts database is up-to-date.

Section 6: Delegating responsibility for service provision (applies to parish/town councils only)

- If you wish to carry out functions on our behalf we will consider delegation where it provides best value (taking into account cost, quality, local preferences and practicability). This will exclude a range of services which we are not able to delegate because of their particular statutory nature e.g. children's education, social care.

Section 7: Practical support

- We will offer you access to some of our services (e.g. printing, purchasing and training), at a mutually agreed price, and joint procurement opportunities. This includes

being able to join our street lighting energy contract and street lighting maintenance contract (applies to parish/town councils only).

- Our Policy, Performance and Partnerships Unit is able to act as a first point of contact when you are developing or refreshing your parish plan. To help guide you through the process we have produced a Parish Planning Guide: 'Parish Planning: A guide to the support available from North Yorkshire County Council'. Copies can be downloaded from the parish and town councils webpage on our website www.northyorks.gov.uk. When we receive a parish plan we will consider whether there are areas of a plan where we could help you locally.
- Our Economic Development Unit can act as a point of contact for grant funding opportunities for community-based projects.
- Our Emergency Planning Unit can provide you with advice and guidance to develop a Community Resilience Scheme. This will enable you to increase your local community's resilience in the first few hours of an incident such as flooding, before the emergency services reach you.
- Your local County Councillor can provide information about County Council issues in your area and take your community's views into the County Council's decision-making process. You can find your local County Councillor at <http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=10227>
- If you wish to become a local information and access point for the County Council on a voluntary basis we will help you to do so. In particular we will:
 - issue to you (and up-date as necessary) relevant written information and application forms for our services
 - give electronic access to similar information and forms (where we provide these electronically) provided you have the appropriate technology
 - provide you with suitable briefing, training and support (parish clerk or parish/town councillor)

Contact us

North Yorkshire County Council, County Hall, Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL7 8AD

Our Customer Service Centre is open Monday to Friday 8.00am - 5.30pm (closed weekends and bank holidays). Tel: **0845 8727374** email: **customer.services@northyorks.gov.uk**
Or visit our website at: **www.northyorks.gov.uk**

If you would like this information in another language or format such as Braille, large print or audio, please ask us.

Tel: 01609 532917

اگر آپ کو معلومات کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہوں تو براہ مہربانی ہم سے پوچھئے۔

如欲索取以另一語文印製或另一格式製作的資料，請與我們聯絡。

যদি আপনি এই ডকুমেন্ট অন্য ভাষায় বা ফরমেটে চান, তাহলে দয়া করে আমাদেরকে বলুন।

Aby otrzymać te informacje w innym języku lub formacie, np. w alfabecie brajla, w wersji dużym drukiem lub audió, prosimy się z nami skontaktować.

Email: communications@northyorks.gov.uk

