

Brixton Parish Council

How Brixton Parish Council manages the performance of the council as a corporate body

Introduction

The Council's role is to have overall responsibility for the wellbeing of the local community and covers:

- Representing the community taking into account diversity and different interests.
- Delivering services to meet local needs.

To deliver against these responsibilities, the Council needs to be able to identify the critical issues, eg its purposes and plans, financial resilience and quality of governance, and be able to review these at regular intervals.

The following questions should assist the Council in the review and decide what to focus on. It is based on the RAG (red, amber green) matrix to identify areas that need improvement and record them in an easy format.

1. Strategy: Does the Council have a clear vision?

Has the Council developed long term aims with clear priorities in a plan which is regularly reviewed and monitored?

Judgement	Evidence	Improvement plans
Green	<p>3 year Business Plan</p> <p>Annual Action plan monitored and reviewed quarterly through the Parish Council agenda</p> <p>Agendas and Minutes of meetings</p> <p>Project Plans monitored and updated</p>	<p>Annual review and update of Business Plan</p> <p>Build on completed objectives</p> <p>The Council is able to adapt to issues as they arise i.e. COVID-19</p> <p>Continue to work closely with neighbouring parish councils</p>

Does the strategic planning cycle drive the Council's activities and agenda setting?

Judgement	Evidence	Improvement plans
Green	<p>Business Plan gives a 3 year vision for the Parish</p> <p>Annual Budget review</p> <p>Action Plan feeds into agenda and council activities</p> <p>Neighbourhood Plan</p> <p>Sport & Recreation Plan</p> <p>Community Emergency Plan</p>	<p>Working towards Quality Gold Award encourages strategic planning.</p> <p>The Council is able to adapt to issues as they arise i.e. COVID-19</p>

2. Engagement: Is the Council properly engaged with its community, wider community and other bodies

How does the Council listen and understand its community?

Judgement	Evidence	Improvement plans
Green	<p>Monthly Council meetings include a Public Open Forum for public participation providing the opportunity for parishioners to raise any issues of public interest</p> <p>Separate public consultation meetings are held on key strategic issues i.e. purchase of land.</p> <p>Councillors hold specific roles and responsibilities on community groups</p> <p>Personal engagement</p> <p>Consultation on Neighbourhood Plan, Sport and Recreation Plan</p> <p>Use of social media</p> <p>Meetings with Devon County Council (DCC) Highways</p> <p>Personal Contact</p>	<p>Since March 2020 virtual parish council meeting have taken place due to COVID19</p> <p>Environment Agency & SWW public consultations have continued virtually</p> <p>Review annually</p> <p>Continue to work closely with neighbouring parish councils and the public</p> <p>Continue to liaise with the public regarding plans</p> <p>Cllr responsible for monitoring and linking with social media and posting on behalf of parish council.</p> <p>Continue to meet virtually with DCC Highways Officer and parishioners to discuss traffic issues within the parish</p> <p>Continue to listen to parishioners concerns and signpost / act accordingly</p>

How does the Council report to its community?

Judgement	Evidence	Improvement plans
Green	<p>Regular quarterly newsletters which were increased to weekly during the first COVID 19 lockdown</p> <p>Website Social media Notice Boards Parish meetings Email Publication of minutes Parish Magazine</p> <p>Personal contact</p> <p>Attendance at Sherford surgery meetings</p>	<p>Remain vigilant to the importance of increased communication particularly during a crisis i.e. COVID -19</p> <p>Continue with the high level of communication to the community across the parish</p> <p>Continue to listen to parishioners concerns and signpost/act accordingly</p>

Does the Council work in partnership with other Councils and other bodies locally and nationally?

Judgement	Evidence	Improvement plans
Green	<p>Ivybridge and District Local Councils (IDALC) - councillor meetings - clerk meetings</p> <p>The Yealm Climate Emergency & Environment Alliance</p> <p>Yealm Water Quality Group</p> <p>South Hams Networking Climate & Biodiversity - Sustainable South Hams</p> <p>River Yealm Estuary to Moor (YEM) Wildlife Corridor</p> <p>Yealm Harbour Authority</p> <p>Yealmpton Parish Council for Silverstream Way</p> <p>Dementia Friendly Parishes around the Yealm</p>	<p>Continuous development of working closely with neighbouring parishes and local organisations</p> <p>Contribute to national guidance being produced by NALC – Dementia Friendly Communities Guide</p>

	<p>Leading on national guidance e.g. Dementia Friendly Communities Guide in association with NALC.</p> <p>Make greater impact e.g. Yealm Climate Emergency & Environment Alliance Group and River Yealm Water Quality Group</p>	
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3. Effectiveness: Is the Council as effective as it could be?

Does the Council and Councillors individually understand their roles and responsibilities?

Judgement	Evidence	Improvement plans
Green	<p>Roles & responsibilities discussed and agreed annually</p> <p>Held Local Council Award Scheme Quality since 2018</p> <p>Minutes evidence decisions and actions made within the Councils powers and duties</p> <p>Adoption of recommended Standing orders and other policies and compliance with employment law.</p> <p>Training</p> <p>Councillors feedback from meetings attended in relation to their roles</p>	<p>Additional training when/where required</p> <p>Annual review and any changes in circumstances</p> <p>Training and personal development plans for individual councillors / clerk and the council as a whole</p>

Does the Council have a qualified clerk?

Judgement	Evidence	Improvement plans
Green	<p>Qualified clerk</p> <p>Annual Performance Appraisal completed by Chairman and Vice Chairman with the clerk</p>	<p>Continuous personal development / training</p> <p>Networking with other clerks</p>

Are meetings run effectively?

Judgement	Evidence	Improvement plans
Green	<p>Structured agenda with time limits for Public Open Forum and Council meeting</p>	<p>Constantly review the effectiveness of the meeting including the agenda order and responding to feedback.</p>

	Public Open Forum includes reports from County and District Councillors. Sherford Residents Association & Sherford Community Land Trust Minutes Preparation in advance by Chairman and clerk and councillors	
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Is the decision making process and committee structure conducive to effective working?

Judgement	Evidence	Improvement plans
Green	Minutes reflect effective working of the Council through regular update from working groups. Extraordinary meetings are held if required	Constantly reviewed

How does the Council know about good practice across the country?

Judgement	Evidence	Improvement plans
Green	Clerk's subscription of SLCC & monthly magazine Reports from Devon Association of Local Councils DALC NALC website and newsletters	Constantly reviewed

4. Finances: How does the Council manage and make use of public money?

Are the Councils financial management systems robust and does the Council ensure best value for money

Judgement	Evidence	Improvement plans
Green	Adoption of recommend Financial Regulations & Internal Controls Monthly Financial Statement and Bank reconciliation approved at monthly parish council meeting Quarterly reconciliation verified independently by Cllr Internal Auditor compliments the clerk & council on the accuracy of the accounts External Auditor have stated 'no matters have come to our attention'	Processes constantly reviewed and updated as required.

What is the Councils policy on reserves?

Judgement	Evidence	Improvement plans
Green	Budget planning and quarterly monitoring reviewed annually Funds are allocated to specific projects which are reviewed monthly	

Does the Council review its contracts with others to deliver public services?

Judgement	Evidence	Improvement plans
Green	Insurance contract reviewed annually Grass cutting contract put out to tender every two years Maintenance contract for Silverbridge Way reviewed every two years with Yealmpton Parish Council Other work/contracts put out to tender in line with Financial Regulations No 'public services' currently delivered	Constantly reviewing all contracts

5. Councillors and Staff: Does the Council make best use of its human resources?**Has the Council completed a skills audit?**

Judgement	Evidence	Improvement plans
Amber	Skills audit completed for all Councillors and Clerk	Analyse Cllr and Clerk skills audit and identify training through a personal development plan for each councillor and clerk. Identify gaps in skills for future vacancies when they occur.

On co-option/ appointment of roles does the Council consider skills?

Judgement	Evidence	Improvement plans
Amber	Questions about skills are central to the candidate interview process	Look towards the future of the parish council and identify skills required

Does the Council have a training budget and is it used?

Judgement	Evidence	Improvement plans
Amber	Training budget is reviewed annually	Linked to the skills audit above