

# Northumberland Town and Parish Council Charter

## Communication

### Communication

#### 1. Northumberland County Council

##### Methods

By using a wide range of communication methods Northumberland County Council (NCC) can ensure that messages reach all Town and Parish Council's (T&PCs) within Northumberland. In selecting the most appropriate communication method NCC will consider the message and who the recipient of the message is, i.e. Chair only, Clerk only, or all Councillors via the Chair or Clerk. Methods which can be used include:

- Dedicated Northumberland T&PC website
- Electronic communication including emails and making documents available online
- Hard copies of documents
- Leaflets
- Meetings – Town and Parish Council liaison meetings, group meetings, one to one meetings, drop in events and workshops

##### Contact details

As part of the development of a dedicated website for T&PCs, NCC are working towards enabling Councillors and Clerks access to individual contact details for relevant Officers.

##### Reporting issues

In order to achieve high standards of service it is important to maintain good channels of two way communication. To do this it is important that there are opportunities for everyone, including T&PCs, to log issues. NCC has systems in place which are available for everyone to use. In the first instance issues should be raised through this normal system, methods of reporting include;

- Online forms
- Customer call centre
- By post
- By telephone

### Responding to issues

Timescales in responding to the normal reporting methods will depend upon the type of query. However should T&PCs experience a delay in receiving a response using the normal reporting methods, they are able to contact their designated Locality Development Officer who will investigate the status of the logged issue.

On raising an issue with the Locality Development Officer a log will be maintained identifying when the issue was raised with the Locality Development Team and progress will be tracked using this system until the T&PC have received a response.

## **2. Northumberland Town and Parish Councils**

### Methods

T&PCs have the ability to communicate with NCC using a wide range of methods. In selecting the appropriate method of communication T&PCs will assess the most appropriate method of communication based on the message and the recipient.

Methods which can be used include;

#### Individually

- Using normal communication methods such as online queries
- Contacting known Officers directly
- By email
- In writing
- By telephone
- In person

#### Collectively

Liaise with T&PCs that are facing similar issues to for example;

- share best practice
- mentor/ support each other through particular issues
- collectively respond to consultations when felt appropriate

## **3. Northumberland Association of Local Councils (NALC)**

NALC are able to offer a facilitation role between NCC and T&PCs to help support Local Councils in their role as a voice of local communities and as providers of local services. NALC also give professional advice on matters such as law, procedures, good practice, public accountability and management issues.