



Shared Statement of Partnership Principles

For Hertfordshire's Parish, Town and Community Councils and Hertfordshire County Council

The aim of this document is to set out how the 124 Parish, Town and Community Councils¹ of Hertfordshire and Hertfordshire County Council can work together for the benefit of the communities that they jointly serve. It intends to complement existing Charters between Hertfordshire County Council and other Councils.

The vision for this statement is that it will enable all parties to work together to meet the needs and aspirations of communities through making the best use of Hertfordshire's resources.

Hertfordshire County Council, the Hertfordshire Association of Parish and Town Councils, and Parish, Town and Community Councils will work together to implement the principles of this Statement.

As a strategic partner, HAPTCo will continue to work as an interface between member Parish, Town and Community Councils and the County Council.

Our partnership principles are:

1. Trust and mutual respect

'To develop relationships and partnerships that work'

Residents expect all tiers of local government to work together in harmony. A better understanding of each other's roles and responsibilities, and a willingness to work together, will help to build trust and mutual respect.

¹ In Hertfordshire, there are 102 Parish Councils, 11 Town Councils, 1 Community Council and 10 Parish Meetings

At the same time, it is understood and accepted that there may be times when Parish, Town and Community Councils, and the County Council do not agree on a particular issue and will seek to discuss and resolve differences in a constructive manner.

2. Accountability

‘To work in a transparent and accountable way for residents’

Hertfordshire’s Parish, Town and Community Councils and the County Council will work to ensure that representatives, of these statutory bodies, are responsive and accountable to local communities. We will work to ensure that communities have the ability to elect the people that represent them, whilst also ensuring that councils remain open and accountable to residents.

3. Communication

‘To build on relationships through effective communication’

We recognise the benefits of effective dialogue between councils and the importance of strong working relationships between County and Parish, Town and Community Councillors as local community representatives.

The County Council will:

- Provide information and customer service via: the Herts Direct website, customer service centre, libraries and any community-based services.
- Raise awareness of the role of Parish, Town and Community Councils across County Council departments.
- Listen to Parish, Town and Community Councils.
- Enable Parish, Town and Community Councils to promote services they offer on the Hertfordshire Directory.

Parish, Town and Community Councils will:

- Ensure that local County Councillor(s) and relevant County Council services are kept informed about key activities.
- Use Herts Direct and the Customer Service Centre for day-to-day issues.
- Contact a County Councillor(s) for issues that cannot be resolved through Herts Direct or the Customer Service Centre.

- Share relevant information about the County Council with local residents.

4. Consultation and Engagement

‘To have meaningful and timely consultation and engagement’

We recognise that effective two way consultation and engagement are vital for closer working relationships between the County Council and Parish, Town and Community Councils.

The County Council will:

- Inform and consult with Parish, Town and Community Councils on matters affecting their local area, and provide feedback on the outcomes of local consultations.
- Host six-monthly Parish and Town Council conferences to discuss matters of interest and develop the partnership.
- Invite Parish, Town and Community Councils to other key partnership events such as the Hertfordshire Forward Conference and the Community Leaders consultation event.

Parish, Town and Community Councils will:

- Invite the local County Councillor(s) to Parish, Town and Community Council meetings.
- Work with the local County Councillor(s) to explore joint solutions to local issues.
- Consult the County Council about decisions made by Parish, Town or Community Councils which might affect County Council services, or services which are delivered jointly.
- Respond to relevant County Council consultations.
- Invite the County Council to quarterly HAPTC Board meetings.

5. Collaborative Working

‘To work together to shape local areas’

There are already many examples of effective joint working between Parish, Town and Community Councils and the County Council. Together we want to explore

further ways in which we can work together in influencing, shaping and delivering services to local areas.

The County Council will:

- Look for new ways to work closely with Parish, Town and Community Councils.
- Be open to Parish, Town and Community Councils who want to be more involved in specific County Council services.

Parish, Town and Community Councils will:


- Work with the County Council if interested in becoming involved in the delivery of local services.
- Explore ways of working with the County Council through the 'how we can work together' appendix.

Reviewing the Partnership Principles and Appendix

Any proposed changes to the Partnership Principles will be presented and discussed annually at the Hertfordshire Parish and Town Council Conference.

The 'how we can work together' appendix sets out specific ways that Parish, Town and Community Councils can work with particular County Council Services. The County Council will continue to identify whether there are additional service areas which could be included in this document and update on changes at the Hertfordshire Parish and Town Council Conferences.

Signed on 26 June 2015 by:



Cllr Bill Pryce

Chairman,
Hertfordshire Association of Parish
and Town Councils



Cllr Teresa Heritage

Executive Member for Public Health
Localism and Libraries,
Hertfordshire County Council