



**CHIPPENHAM
TOWN COUNCIL**
Improving the quality of town life

Quality Council Status statements for the accreditation panel

Ensures that the council delivers value for money

Chippenham Town Council appreciates that it is dealing with public money and has due responsibilities to provide value for money. The Chief Executive is CiLCA qualified and the Council has adopted the General Power of Competency. The Council has appointed a qualified accountant; the Director of Resources as the Responsible Finance Officer and the Council reviews its Financial Management annually; including the Financial Risk Policy, Standing Orders and adheres to the Financial Regulations.

The Finance Working Party meets on a regular basis and although cannot make decisions it makes recommendations to the Council's Strategy & Resources Committee for consideration, such as the budget which is reviewed and scrutinised. Councillors are updated on the financial position of income and expenditure against budget for the each quarter. Internal and external audits are carried out on a regular basis. Councillors have adopted a 5-year Medium Term Financial Plan which outlines the capital programme. The Council adheres to the procurement policy and regularly reviews all its contracts to ensure they remain competitive.

Meets its duties in relation to bio-diversity and crime and disorder

Chippenham Town Council works closely with key partners in addressing community safety issues that may arise. Chippenham was awarded Purple Flag status in 2015 and has successfully been reaccredited with this prestigious award for the past 5 years. Purple Flag status signifies towns and cities which are safe, diverse, vibrant, appealing, and well-managed and those that offer a positive experience to consumers.

In addition to this, Chippenham Town Council facilitates the Chippenham Community Safety Forum facilitating partnership working for the wellbeing of Chippenham. The primary role of this forum is to facilitate and bring together partner agencies to collaboratively seek solutions to local issues that arise and cause concern to the wellbeing of the community in Chippenham. Terms of Reference have been adopted by Chippenham Town Council and the forum meets on a quarterly basis in the municipal year.

Responsibilities & Scope - Representatives from the public, private and voluntary sectors act as conduit between their organisations and the forum by putting forward the views of the body they represent and providing feedback to its members regarding the work of the Chippenham Community Safety Forum.

Chippenham Town Council operates the town centre's CCTV system and this year has invested in upgrading all 7 cameras which will allow better picture quality for evidential purposes. The local police have access to the monitoring room and can download imagery when required. Partnership working protects the community.

Chippenham Town Council manage 6 different Allotments, allotment holders are encouraged to recycle water, make their own compost and avoid using chemicals, Allotments are a great contribution to bio diversity.

Chippenham Town Council have recently agreed a devolution package that will see an increased area of green space to maintain. Chippenham Town Council have engaged with the Wiltshire Wildlife trust to assist with Management plans for both Monkton Park and Donkey fields to increase the output of local biodiversity.

Chippenham Town Council have added an Arboricultural Officer to their staff whose primary role will be to manage all trees under Chippenham Town Councils control. A tree policy is being developed to reflect Chippenham Town Councils commitment to tree planting to support biodiversity and carbon reduction.

On 27th March 2019 Chippenham Town Council announced a climate emergency and are aiming to be carbon neutral by 2030. It has since set up a Climate Emergency Advisory Group, comprising of 6 Town Councillors and 6 members of the local community who have relevant skills and experience in the subject.

Their initial priorities were: to work towards a goal of making Chippenham carbon neutral by 2030, taking into account Green House Gas emission from both production and consumption; call the UK Government to provide the powers and resources to make the 2030 target possible; and work with Wiltshire Council, surrounding parish councils, other councils and relevant partners including businesses, educational establishments and civil society organisations, to determine and implement best practice methods to limit Global Warming to less than 1.5°C. A baselining exercise of the Town Council estate has recently been carried out which will help to identify the immediate changes the Town Council could make to reduce its carbon footprint and to identify the longer term projects. In other areas of the Council practical work has already begun to achieve this - with greener vehicles, power tools, LED lighting and water recycling.

The Council is in Year 2 of developing a Neighbourhood Plan for Chippenham. The purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to provide a suite of planning policies to guide the future development of the Town. A key focus for the Neighbourhood Plan is on green infrastructure, and a Topic Group with local community members is currently drafting planning policies to protect and designate local green spaces and identify wildlife corridors which will help to increase biodiversity by linking the countryside to the Town. The Topic Group will also look to see if there are further planning policies it could draft to maintain or increase biodiversity.

Provides leadership in planning for the future of the community

The council knows what it wants to achieve and has clear priorities which chart that course. Within this context, it aims high and gauges progress well. Its current Corporate Strategic Plan (2018-22) has, on the back of significant public consultation, five core priorities with an emphasis on strong provision of services, promoting well-being, working in partnership, creating a safe environment, promoting Chippenham and the effective use of resources. The ambitions behind these are well developed and the council's progress in achieving them is well documented and on track.

The Neighbourhood Plan process, borne out of the Localism agenda, is very much 'bottom up' with the local community being involved at every stage of the process. The Steering Group that is responsible for the management of the Neighbourhood Plan comprises of 6 Town Councillors and 6 members of the local community.

Since October 2019 the Neighbourhood Plan has been in its 'Topic Group phase' with 7 Topic Groups being formed: Sustainability & Climate Change; Housing; Town Centre; Transport; Economy; Community Infrastructure; and Green Infrastructure. 40+ keen and enthusiastic volunteers drawn from across the Town have been busy reviewing existing planning policies, formulating survey questions, helping run workshops, and auditing existing facilities or assets in the Town.

Notable examples of engagement with the local community since the Neighbourhood Plan commenced includes: a Pre-Vision Survey (online and using street stalls) in March 2019 (where there were over 600 respondents); 2 x public surveys and 3 x specific user surveys in March 2020 (where there were over 400 respondents for the main public survey); and holding 2 public workshops on future energy strategies and 3 public workshops on housing design in February 2020.

Core to this platform and the council's strong current position, is the strength of its leadership, both, politically and managerially. This is embodied in the relationship between the council's Leader and its Chief Executive. They jointly set the tone for the organisation, working collaboratively, forging a strong but importantly constructively challenging relationship and a collective drive which pushes the council on. The recent appointment of two Corporate Director posts, one for Resources and the other for Communities is creating strategic capacity and this, alongside the appointment to a new Head of Service level team, affords the council an ideal opportunity to spread that leadership further, so that it lives and breathes throughout the council as a whole and is fully owned and managed.

The messages above aligns well with the 'One Council' drive at CTC that has been evident since 2017 and the associated development of the councils Behaviours Framework. Building upon this and having implemented this new senior structure, the council now can fully focus on embedding and inducting all staff into an organisation that will behave differently as it grows and becomes accountable for more key services in the town. An additional financial investment may be required to ensure both staff and councillors can grow into their new roles and work together more effectively too.

Manages the performance of the council as a corporate body

Chippenham Town Council is an ambitious and progressive council. It warmly welcomes external challenge as a means of driving its own improvement and raising the standards and aspirations within the sector as a whole. It was therefore apt that it was the subject of the Town and Parish Council sectors' first ever Corporate Peer Challenge.

Chippenham Town Council's ambition and innovation abounds, a great example being its proactive approach to the devolution, asset transfer and delegation of responsibility plans with Wiltshire Council, focussed on establishing sustainable, locally led and well delivered services for Chippenham and its residents. The council took the initiative to purposefully engage with the principal authority, and in the short term this positive engagement with Wiltshire has helped augment service delivery and standards around the town's street cleansing, green space management and cleanliness, and into the medium term is securing the future of significant assets such as Monkton Park and the Neeld Community & Arts Centre

Manages the performance of each individual staff member to achieve its business plan

The Corporate Strategic Plan (2018-22) has five core priorities with an emphasis on strong provision of services, promoting well-being, working in partnership, creating a safe environment, promoting Chippenham and the effective use of resources.

This is the ethos behind all actions and outcomes that Chippenham Town Council strives to deliver. On an annual basis, all staff in agreement with their line managers have 6 main objectives to assist in achieving all elements within the Corporate Strategic Plan. Core priorities are cascaded from the Corporate Management Team and shared throughout the organisation.

Performance of achievement is managed by agreeing the description of the objective, the level of performance expected, how it is measured and date to be reviewed. All objectives are linked to the Corporate Strategic Plan and the council's progress in achieving them is well documented and on track and reported back to full council on a quarterly basis.