

NEWNHAM (Northamptonshire) PARISH COUNCIL

(<http://www.newnham-parish.org.uk>)

BUSINESS PLAN

A Parish Council Business Plan is

- a statement of the Parish Council's vision for Newnham, its purpose, values, objectives and key priorities.
- a document that sets out what Newnham Parish Council can achieve, either directly or indirectly by trying to increase its influence on the relevant delivery body, such as the District or County Council.

The purpose of having an agreed strategy for the Parish Council to work within, enables it to operate in a more consistent and co-ordinated way.

It will help the Parish Council to forecast its budgets into the future. The Business Plan will also help the local community have a better understanding of what the Parish Council does and, just as importantly, clarify what it doesn't do.

Introduction

Newnham Parish is located in Daventry District, Northamptonshire.

Newnham is situated approximately 3 miles from Daventry Town and 11 miles from Northampton Town

Newnham Parish Council was established in its own right prior to 1923 and is the tier of local government closest to the community.

It has an important role to play in promoting the Parish, representing its interests and supporting the work of different groups in the community.

Daventry District Council is the second tier and is responsible for services including planning, car parks, housing and street cleaning. Newnham Parish Council does engage the services of a handyman who ensures the parish remains in a neat and tidy condition.

Northamptonshire County Council is responsible for highways (relating to both roads and pavements), education, health and social services, public rights of way and libraries.

The Parish has 241 Households comprising a population of 580 based on the 2011 census.

In the financial year 18/19 (1 April to 31 March), the Precept received by the Parish Council from its parishioners was £26,326.00. In the financial year 19/20 the Precept has increased to £31,556.00.

The only employee of Newnham Parish Council is the Clerk. The Clerk receives queries relating to any of the three tiers of local government and actions anything that is required, where applicable, referring matters to a full meeting of the Parish Council.

Newnham Parish Council has 8 councillors who act together as a corporate body and make decisions. The Chairman of the Council is elected annually at the Annual Parish Council Meeting in May.

Councillors are unpaid and commit their time to improving Newnham Parish and maintaining it as an attractive and sustainable place in which to live, visit and to do business.

The full Parish Council meets monthly (usually on the first Monday of the month) in the Village Hall in Newnham. All meetings are open to the public with a period of time set aside for members of the public to ask questions of or raise matters with the Council. Public speaking time may be extended at discretion of the chairman.

Members of the public may record or use other digital communications throughout the meeting, but it must be done in a discreet manner and to protect those who do not wish to be filmed, and anyone recording the meeting is asked to be respectful of that.

Working groups may be formed to deal with issues as they emerge and may include non- Councillors.

Advance notice of meetings are publicised through an Agenda that is posted on the Newnham Parish Council website and posted on it's various notice boards within the parish.

Likewise, minutes of all meetings are available on the Parish Council Website. The minutes of the last Parish Council Meeting are posted onto the various notice boards within the parish, which are then replaced by the minutes of the subsequent meeting.

Parish Council Staff and Management

The Council currently employs one member of staff on a part time basis which is the Clerk to the Parish Council.

The administration of the Parish Council is carried out by a qualified Clerk who is appointed by the Council and who is also the Council's Responsible Financial Officer ("RFO") and Burial Clerk.

As the Parish Council's Proper Officer, the Parish Clerk must carry out all of the functions required by law, which includes the issue of all statutory notifications and documentation.

Management systems

The Parish Council operates under Standing Orders and Financial Regulations which are reviewed regularly and confirmed annually.

Key documents are published on the Parish Council website.

The council has adopted the requirements detailed in the Freedom of Information Act whereby the public can request sight of any council documentation (with the exception of confidential items).

The council also has Data Protection Registration with the Information Commission and have a Data Protection Policy posted on the website.

Other policies include Health & Safety Policies, risk assessments and Complaints procedures.

Newnham Parish Council is insured and is the subject of both an internal and external audit each year; the audit reports are available on the Parish Council Website

Newnham Parish Council Vision and Objectives

The Parish Council aims to improve the quality of life for the residents of Newnham Parish by ensuring that Newnham Parish is a desirable, thriving and sustainable place in which to live.

It seeks to do this in a number of ways:-

- It provides a democratic and representational voice for the community;
- Where services are provided directly, it is aimed to manage them to a good quality standard, in an efficient, effective and responsive way, at an affordable cost;
- Where services are provided by others, the Parish Council endeavours to ensure that they are dealt with effectively and in accordance with the wishes of the community;
- It works with its residents, local authorities and other service providers, businesses and community organisations with the aim of strengthening partnerships, promoting communication, achieving a safe, healthy, prosperous and sustainable community.

Our key objectives

To Strengthen Partnerships

Work proactively to strengthen and improve working relationships with our partners; statutory bodies, organisations, local business and voluntary groups.

Through proactive networking and Parish Council representatives, encourage partners to approach the Parish Council with clear, well thought out constructive ideas which will benefit all sections of the community and on which there can be joint working.

To promote Communication at all levels

Publicise the work of the Parish Council through its website, newsletters, and notice boards. Information may also be obtained from the clerk.

Give the public the opportunity to ask questions at all of its public meetings. Encourage public feedback, both positive negative, with ideas for development, during public participation at Council meetings.

By including the community through staff and councillors canvassing opinion and by any method which is relevant to the subject being considered.

To Manage the Council's resources

Have good financial control through documented procedures and quality auditing to ensure that resources are spent on the needs of the community.

Focus resources on what matters to our community.

Attain maximum benefit from management of the Council's assets.

Ensure council procedures are carried out at least cost but still maintaining quality

To promote a Sustainable community

Acknowledge the diversity of what heritage means to Newnham Parish and seek to maintain this through active engagement in the ongoing reviews of the Local Development Plan

Encourage ways in which our community can improve our environment and promote building resilience for the future, which includes being proactive in emergency planning and flood awareness.

Work to encourage balancing the current needs of people, the economy and the environment without compromising the future.

Be sensitive to our environment and contribute to a high quality of life.

To promote safety and inclusion, opportunities and good services for all.

Work with the business community to sustain economic vibrancy.

The Parish Council seeks to provide an improved service for its community and will explore every opportunity to take responsibility for those services which may prove to be provided more reliably, efficiently and economically on a local basis.

Core values

Leadership - councillors are elected to represent their communities and to lead on issues that will affect the lives of local people.

Integrity – operating with integrity, being ethical, trustworthy and reliable and treating others with respect.

Tenacity/ Persistence – work proactively to achieve the decision of the Council even if it takes a long time and a great deal of effort.

Communication – to give the public the opportunity to ask questions and engage with the Council, and to publicise the work of the Parish Council.

Strong financial management – to ensure that the Council’s resources are managed effectively and efficiently, at least cost, yet maintain quality.

Training – to support relevant training for Councillors and staff members.

Working as a corporate body – to respect decisions made democratically.

These values ensure that local people gain good value for money and improved local services.

Current position

The Parish Council’s asset portfolio is set out on the asset register, a copy of which is available on the Parish Council website.

We use several methods to communicate with the community. These include the Parish Council websites, Facebook, Parish Council notice boards, the Parish Council Annual report, monthly posting of minutes. In addition, information can also be requested from the clerk.

Parish Councillors are involved with the majority of events in the parish and try to attend as many local events as possible so that we can outline and promote the activities of the Council.

The Parish Council is keen to raise its profile and to secure, as far as possible, services which may, without intervention, be lost to Newnham Parish. This is of particular concern given the demise of the Northamptonshire County Council which is due to be abolished in 2020 with the setting up of a new unitary authority.

The Parish Council has the advantage of being elected by the local community and working for residents in the Parish. All the councillors live within the community and are therefore better informed of the issues and problems which are causing concern to local residents.

The Parish Council is constant, enduring, open and encourages public participation.

Working collaboratively can assist our community through economies of scale and through shared expertise and networking.

Adopted May 2019