

Birchington Parish Council

Forward Work Programme & Organisation 2025

Guiding Principles

The Council has overriding obligations in the way it conducts its activities, these are described in its mission, vision and values statements.

Recommendation

To confirm the BPC mission, vision and values set out in Appendix A.

Carrying Out Our Duties

The Council has a range of procedural and governance duties that it must carry out. It is the delegated responsibility of the BPC Parish Clerk to ensure that the Council fully fulfils its duties.

Recommendation

To confirm that the BPC Parish Clerk has delegated responsibility to carry out the tasks and related activities as shown in Appendix B.

Using Our Powers

The Council has discretionary powers to undertake activities for the benefit of the community and which are compatible with its mission, vision and values.

Recommendation

To confirm the programme of projects for the current and future years as listed in Appendix C.

Committees & Processes

The Council is obliged to organise and operate as efficiently and effectively as it can in order to achieve its goals and best value outcomes for the community.

Recommendation

To confirm adoption of the arrangements set out in Appendix D and to agree to their implementation.

Nick Blankley
Chairman
July 2025

OUR MISSION

To meet our statutory and social obligations in a way that most benefits the people of Birchington. We will endeavour to support all residents of Birchington to achieve their aspirations by encouraging them to participate in shaping and deciding on matters that affect their lives, through our actions and by us influencing others.

OUR VISION

Birchington as a place with wellbeing at its' heart, where all residents and visitors are enabled to enjoy a good quality of life and where they are encouraged to participate in community life. A place where visitors are welcomed to share and respect our well-maintained natural environment, heritage, resources and facilities.

OUR VALUES

Selflessness - Integrity - Objectivity – Accountability

Openness - Honesty - Leadership

Birchington Parish Council delegates responsibility for oversight and management of the following matters and associated tasks to the Birchington Parish Clerk:

- Administrative support
- Financial management
- Legal compliance
- Community engagement
- Project management
- Policy development
- Communication & public relations

The Clerk shall be responsible for ensuring that all these activities are performed to a high standard across BPC activities and shall provide assurance reports to Full Council from time to time.

The Council commits to progressing the following activities through committees and working groups with the objectives of furthering the aspirations set out in the Councils' Mission Statement and Vision Statement:

Conservation Area Review & Management Plan – In progress with TDC leading consultation and implementation processes

Formal assessment of Areas of High Townscape – In progress as part of the Neighbourhood Plan Review activities.

Establishment of the list of "local heritage assets" – Initial list requires further analysis and adoption, in progress as part of the Neighbourhood Plan Review activities.

Survey of "landmark" trees – Survey to identify trees which enhance the natural and built environment around the village but have not been included in Tree Preservation Order(s).

Station Road Improvements – Follow up action from the review conducted in January 2021 when the Parish Council approved a "brief" for consultants to: "Review and analyse existing information about the commercial heart of the village"

Development of facilities at the Memorial Recreation Ground – Short term projects in progress, long term plan required for facilities across the village, taking into account possible development of 1,600 new homes.

Enhancements to Dog Acre – Considerable progress already, development required for further improvements.

Review of community halls – Assessment of usage, viability and condition community halls and how they meet current needs. Proposals for longer term development to meet growing demand.

Rossetti Gardens – Seek and take necessary steps to ensure the long terms protection of this open space.

Asset Transfers – In anticipation of local government reorganisation, create a checklist of TDC and KCC assets in Birchington and devise a methodology for assessment of desirability of such assets and long term funding implications.

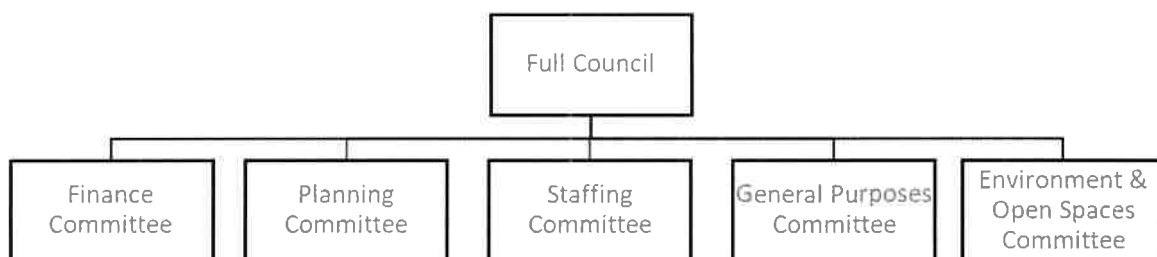
Office Accommodation – Conduct a needs assessment for BPC office accommodation and assess cost effectiveness of different scenarios. Monitor local property movements for suitable opportunities.

Allotments – Seek to address shortage of allotments in the village by identifying vacant plots of land and seeking discussions with Ptarmigan / Places for People re extending the existing allotments into the new development.

Wellbeing – Develop a programme of BPC projects and interventions which would support wellbeing. Devise a means to assess all current and future projects for their potential to contribute to overall wellbeing in Birchington.

In response to comments made in the Internal Audit Report 2024/25, the Council will trial the following committee structure and meeting frequency for a period of two meetings of each committee from 1 July 2025.

At the end of that cycle of meetings the Council will review effectiveness of the arrangements and determine whether further changes are required.



Meeting frequency shall be:

Full Council	6 per annum
Finance Committee	4 per annum
Planning Committee	12 per annum
Staffing Committee	4 per annum
General Purposes Committee	4 per annum
Environment & Open Spaces Committee	4 per annum

Committees to be decision based meetings with focussed minutes.

Committees to be advised and supported by working groups comprising appropriate local interest group representations and other non-councillors.

Committee responsibilities shown on next page.

Environment	Finance	General Purposes	Planning	Staffing
• Environmental improvements as agreed by Council. • MRG, Dog Acre, Allotments and Shelters management. • Tree strategy. • Grounds and assets maintenance.	• Oversight of financial procedures. • Oversight of officer's preparation of financial documentation. • Coordinate budget planning and annual precept. • Monitor budgets, expenditure and reserves. • Scrutiny of requests for virements. • Investments and borrowing. • Review and implementation of audit reports. • Annual financial report for the Annual Parish Meeting. • External financial support. • Loans and grants policy and applications. • To consider and monitor loan and grant applications and make recommendations to Full Council. • Council financial regulations. • Oversee all legal matters pertaining to property and debt. • To verify and review insurance annually. • Annual appraisal of the asset register.	• Research needs and issues of the community. • To produce strategic plans. • To review and respond to all external consultations. • To communicate with the public and gather opinions on major issues. • To publicise, oversee and manage Parish Council events.	• Planning applications. • Planning appeals and public inquiries. • Planning enforcement. • District and local development plans. • Street naming and signage. • Car and cycle parking. • Public Rights of Way (PROW). • Preservation of trees, historic buildings, and conservation. • Climate change. • SP16 progress • Station Road project • Highways Improvement Plan • Neighbourhood Plan.	• Staffing structures. • Contracts of employment, job descriptions and person specifications for staff and to review the Clerk/RFO performance. • Staff salaries and terms and conditions. • Recruitment and appointments. • Disciplinary and appeals panels. • Staff grievances. • Health and safety at work. • Staffing policies. • Employment legislation.