



CHILTERN
District Council



SOUTH BUCKS
District Council

Stronger in partnership



Town and Parish Councils in Aylesbury, Chiltern, South Bucks and Wycombe District Council areas.

Dear Town or Parish Council,

Creation of Parish Charter

You will no doubt be aware that contrary to published expectations there was no announcement from DCLG about a reorganisation of local government in Buckinghamshire in March. We have now been informed that, in the light of the General Election, the current government will make no decision in relation to the unitary question. There will need to be a formal consideration of the submissions that have been made by the new government. Whilst we are disappointed that this Government has not yet announced support for our proposals, we remain confident that a new Government will recognise the merits of the District Council proposal and create two new unitaries in Buckinghamshire.

In the meantime you will be aware that the County Council has launched an online survey for anyone to indicate their views and express support for their preferred unitary option. Obviously we welcome your support in completing the survey in favour of two unitaries and the District proposal but recognise that surveys are not everyone's cup of tea and it is very much up to you. The link is below if you would like to do so.

<http://futurebucks.co.uk/yourviews/>

In the meantime we are keen to ensure that we do not lose momentum in taking forward some of the ideas in our proposals which we feel do not require a decision from government.

In particular we suggested that a Town and Parish Charter would enable us to develop an understanding with parishes about how we want to work together moving forward. We would like to understand whether Town and Parish Councils feel that this would be helpful and what a Charter might usefully include. For example it has been suggested that parishes should have an account manager for each parish. An individual within the Council who would act as a single access point for queries with the Council and who could pursue responses on behalf of parishes and towns when necessary.

A Charter could also set out response times, or provide specific requirements on eg consultation in areas like planning and highways.

There are some examples of Town and Parish Charters below in both unitary areas and those with County and District as a three way Charter with the Town and Parish Councils and their Associations. These are examples only and if you feel that the issues that you feel should be included are different we would be happy to discuss options with you.

https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/info/200393/parishtown_council_and_councillors/620/parish_charter

https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/Images/1-8_tcm15-13359.pdf

http://www.calc.org.uk/Images/Carlisle%20Charter%20smaller%20file_tcm131-98959.pdf

<https://www.peterborough.gov.uk/upload/www.peterborough.gov.uk/council/jobs-and-careers/schools-and-education/strategies-polices-and-plans/strategies-polices-and-plans/strategies-polices-and-plans/strategies-polices-and-plans/strategies-polices-and-plans/Strategies-ParishCharter-2015.pdf?inline=true>

We would welcome your views on whether you would be interested in developing a charter and if so what are the key areas it should cover. Responses can be sent to the current parish liaison officer in each district. We will also be approaching the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Association of Local Councils with a view to asking them to act in a co-ordinating role as has been done in other areas. If it becomes clear that this is an idea that Towns and Parishes would be interested in developing further we will arrange a series of meetings in our respective areas to enable further discussion to take place.

Yours sincerely



Cllr Neil Blake
Leader of Aylesbury Vale District Council



Cllr Isobel Darby
Leader of Chiltern District Council



Cllr Ralph Bagge
Leader of South Bucks District Council



Cllr Katrina Wood
Leader of Wycombe District Council