
Formed *by* Parish Councils - Run *for* Parish Councils - Delivering *to* Parish Councils

Planning – A Parish Council Perspective

Jake Atkinson

Chief Officer, LRALC

Parochial

pə' rəʊkiəl/
adjective

1. relating to a parish.

2. having a limited or narrow outlook or scope.

synonyms: narrow-minded, small-minded, provincial, insular, narrow, small-town, inward-looking, limited, restricted, localist, conservative, conventional, short-sighted, petty, close-minded, blinkered, myopic, introverted, illiberal, hidebound, intolerant.

The top 3 issues in any Parish Council

1. Dog Poo
2. Speeding
3. Planning



NO MORE HOUSES

Keep our Green fields

GREEN!

Planning and Parish Councils

- PCs consulted by the relevant Planning Authority (PA); right to ask for copies of planning applications affecting their area.
 - Views expressed by the PC taken into account by the PA before decision is made, if;
 - The points made are relevant to the determination of a planning application (material considerations).
 - Final decision is made by the PA, not the PC.
 - New community rights under Localism Act
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Fluid Legal Framework

- Publication of the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017 is a significant matter for local councils.
 - Enacted against a background of years of significant changes and deregulation of the planning system.
 - Follows a period of repeated promises that communities can take control of shaping their area through neighbourhood planning.
 - Many PCs characterise this as a period of broken promises.
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Theory vs Reality?

- Different priorities (PA role as enabler vs PC role of “pulling up the drawbridge”).
 - Political differences (political vs apolitical, different political colours between PA and PC, etc.).
 - Failure of PCs to engage with developers.
 - Lack of understanding amongst parishioners.
 - Lack of training of those making decisions (compulsory training at PA level not replicated).
 - Decision making varies vastly (agendas, background papers, delegated authority, brown envelopes/emails, assumption of opposition, etc).
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“there are those local councils who understand the system and have influence...and there are those that don’t.”



So what can we do?

- Raise ambition and broaden outlook of PCs.
 - Support and encourage engagement with PA consultations (Local Plan, etc.).
 - County Associations (CALCs) offer specialist training and advice; PA can work with CALCs to encourage PCs to engage with this.
 - Use of Sustainable Communities Act?
 - Compulsory training for PC Planning Committees.
 - Clarity and consistency of message from PAs.
 - Maximise benefit of Transparency Fund.
 - Strengthen knowledge of and compliance with Code of Conduct.
 - Increase take up of Neighbourhood Plans by PCs.
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Leicestershire & Rutland Association of Local Councils

Supporting Local Councils in Leicestershire & Rutland

Chief Officer: Jake Atkinson
Jubilee Hall, Staddon Road
Anstey, Leicester LE7 7AY
Tel: 0116 235 380
