



Odiham
Parish Council

**STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT
TO THE PARISH OF ODIHAM
2019-23**

Adopted on 11th February 2020

Introduction

Odiham Parish Council (OPC) is committed to representing the interests of all residents and businesses within the Odiham and North Warnborough parish and to delivering a high standard of services to its area.

OPC recognises that an effective local council relies upon establishing and maintaining the confidence and trust of its residents. The OPC Statement of Commitment to the Odiham Parish sets out in a transparent manner the aims and core values driving the way in which the Council conducts its business and describes the standards of service which local people should expect.

Aims and objectives

1. Odiham Parish Council aims to:

- i) Represent and promote the interests of Odiham and North Warnborough residents, seeking to achieve the best outcomes possible, balancing competing demands fairly and explaining decisions.
- ii) Conduct Parish Council business in a respectful and positive manner.
- iii) Be accountable, approachable and open in all its activities and decisions.
- iv) Pay attention to the needs of all ages and demographics in Odiham and North Warnborough and promote inclusivity.
- v) Provide amenities and services to the highest possible standard within the resources available to the Council.
- vi) Actively involve local people in decisions which affect the community.
- vii) Protect and enhance the heritage and environmental assets within the community.
- viii) Support community cohesion including supporting the strong relationship between the community and RAF Odiham.
- ix) Support and promote community enjoyment.
- x) Support and promote the local economy.
- xi) Promote equal opportunities and oppose discrimination.
- xii) Promote sustainable practices wherever possible.

2. To achieve these aims the Council will:

- i) Keep residents informed of Parish Council work and plans.
- ii) Undertake consultations on major proposals to help ensure evidence-based decision making.
- iii) Continue to ensure OPC supports events organised by individuals and organisations in the Parish to promote prosperity and community cohesion.
- iv) Respect the Odiham and North Warnborough Neighbourhood Plan because it was overwhelmingly endorsed by the Community.
- v) Support sustainable development which is economically, environmentally and socially sound, including affordable housing.
- vi) Liaise closely with residents, businesses and community groups to monitor and respond to the needs of the local community.
- vii) Seek and listen to professional advice when reaching its decisions.
- viii) Have regard for relevant legislation when setting policy and carrying out the Council's functions.
- ix) Consult the community on strategic priorities and be proactive on agreed short and longer term goals.
- x) Ensure expenditure is reasonable, cost-effective, modest and justifiable and seek external funding wherever possible to extend the scope of its activities.

- xi) Preserve open spaces and leisure facilities for the enjoyment of all, providing adequate and accessible recreational opportunities that meet local requirements.
 - xii) Reach out to vulnerable and harder to reach members of the community.
 - xiii) Provide funding opportunities to local groups and causes in line with the Council's grant giving policy.
 - xiv) Support local businesses in any local matter which may impede their business
 - xv) Support initiatives which aim to protect and regenerate the High Street.
 - xvi) Report on the progress of these aims and objectives on an annual basis.
3. Through reaching its aims and objectives, OPC hopes to achieve the following outcomes:
- i) Contributing towards making Odiham and North Warnborough pleasant and enjoyable places to live.
 - ii) Support for a community which is thriving economically and socially.
 - iii) Community confidence and trust in the Council's decisions.
 - iv) Better communication and engagement with the local community.
 - v) An improved understanding within the community of the role of the Parish Council and its Councillors.
 - vi) Public satisfaction with local public services provided by the Parish Council.

Contacting the Council

OPC accepts and welcomes complaints, comments and compliments from the Odiham and North Warnborough community.

The Council employs a Parish Clerk who acts as the Council's Responsible Officer and Responsible Financial Officer. They can be contacted by email to clerk@odiham.org.uk, by telephone on 01256 702716 or at the Parish Council Office, The Bury, The Bridwell, Odiham, Hook, RG29 1NB. The Clerk can forward correspondence to all Councillors, including the Chairman, on your behalf and all Councillors can be contacted directly using the email addresses published on the Council's website www.odiham.org.uk. Please refer to the data management policy to see how your data will be kept safe.

Complaints

Whilst OPC aims to serve everyone in its community, there may be occasions where people are dissatisfied with the Council's actions, decisions or quality of services. If you are unhappy with the standard of service you receive from OPC or are unhappy about lack of action taken by the Council please contact the Parish Clerk or Chairman of the Council in writing.

The Council operates a three tier complaints procedure and aims to deal with all complaints in a fair, reasonable and consistent manner.

- i) In the first instance, the Parish Clerk or Chairman will try to resolve the matter immediately or offer a solution within a practical timescale. If this is not possible, the Parish Clerk, Chairman or someone acting on behalf of the Parish Clerk will acknowledge the complaint within 5 working days.
- ii) If your complaint is substantial or cannot be resolved by the Parish Clerk or Chairman, the complaint will be referred to an Appeals Panel appointed by the Council and a decision will be notified within one calendar month (this may be extended in exceptional circumstances).
- iii) If you are dissatisfied with the response of the Appeals Panel, you may ask for your complaint to be referred to full Council. Unless the matter is of a confidential nature, a decision will be reached in a public session and a decision will normally be notified within two calendar months. The decision of the Full Council is final.

This process does not cover:

- I. Complaints about the behaviour of a Councillor – any complaint against a Councillor should be referred to the Monitoring Officer at Hart District Council.
- II. Complaints from an employee against another employee or against the Council – such complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the Council's own grievance procedure.
- III. Complaints from the Council against an employee – such complaints will be dealt with through the Council's internal disciplinary process.

In extreme and rare circumstances, the Council may consider a complaint or complainant to be unreasonably persistent or vexatious. When the Council considers that a complaint or complainant is impacting on the Council's ability to serve everyone in Odiham and North Warnborough, the Council will consider whether any action is required. The Council reserves the right to restrict or cease communication with a complainant on a specific matter. The Council will consider whether any action is required at a confidential Full Council meeting and notify the complainant of the outcome in writing. The decision to restrict or cease communication with a complainant will not be taken lightly.

The Council will not tolerate abusive, offensive, threatening or false complaints in any instance. Such correspondence may be considered to be harassment and, in extreme circumstances when the welfare and safety of staff or Councillors is at risk, the Council may seek legal advice and report the matter to the Police.