

Teignbridge District Council
Executive
2nd December 2025
Part i

Teignbridge - Town and Parish Council Charter

Purpose of Report

To seek approval from the Executive for the adoption of a Town and Parish Charter.

Recommendation(s)

The Executive RESOLVES to:

1. Adopt the Charter, as detailed in Appendix 1.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications arising from this report. The resource to support Teignbridge District Council commitments will be provided from the Strategy and Partnerships team.

Gordon Bryant

Head of Financial Services and Audit

Email: gordon.bryant@teignbridge.gov.uk

Legal Implications

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. The Charter sets out agreed principles of working but is not legally binding.

Charlie Fisher - Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer

Email: charlie.fisher@teignbridge.gov.uk

Risk Assessment

These are as set out in section 3.3.

Tom Pearce – Project Manager

Email: tom.pearce@teignbridge.gov.uk

Environmental/ Climate Change Implications

There are no direct environmental or climate change implications arising from this report. Broader implications are outlined in section 3.4

Tom Pearce – Project Manager

Email: tom.pearce@teignbridge.gov.uk

Report Author

Tom Pearce

Project Manager

Email: tom.pearce@teignbridge.gov.uk

Executive Member

Cllr Richard Buscombe - Executive Member for Housing and Homelessness

Appendices

1. [Town and Parish Charter](#)
2. [Charter Working Group Membership](#)
3. [Charter Working Group Initial Meeting](#)

Background Papers

1. [Governance Improvement Plan – Audit Scrutiny update – 15th April 2025](#)

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to seek formal adoption of the Town and Parish Charter

2. REPORT DETAIL

2.1. Overview

- 2.1.1. The need to address historic issues around relationships with Town and Parish Councils in Teignbridge was recognised internally and highlighted in a recommendation of the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge report of 2024: *‘Strengthen relationships with partners, but particularly town and parish councils.’*
- 2.1.2. This work also aligns with the Action Plan which followed our Corporate Peer Review, under the theme of ‘ongoing engagement with Town and Parish Councils’ ([Background Paper 1](#)):
“An ongoing programme of communication involving detailed workshops on key issues like town planning to build trust, cooperation, and community involvement. This work will involve understanding one another's priorities and potentially co-creating a charter for mutually beneficial working relationships.”
- 2.1.3. The development of a charter is also an objective of the forthcoming council strategy ‘One Teignbridge’ action plan.

- 2.1.4. To obtain input from our colleagues in Town and Parish Councils the Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC) were commissioned to collaborate with a working group on the creation of this charter. DALC also delivered a training on the scales, responsibilities and requirements of Town and Parish Councils to TDC officers on 10th April 2025.
- 2.1.5. Many responses were received from Towns and Parishes across the district, representing both rural and urban communities, small and large settlements. Councils where multiple members/officers responded were asked to select a champion to send on their behalf, in order to be open and transparent about how any selection was done and allowing those councils to have conversations internally to establish priorities in advance of the working group convening.
- 2.1.6. Town and Parish Councils of the working group reviewed charter documents adopted in other areas, including South Gloucestershire, County Durham and North Yorkshire as part of their process.
- 2.1.7. The working group, facilitated by DALC, held their initial meeting on the 29th of May, followed by the sharing of drafts and review by the working group through the summer, with a follow up meeting with TDC officers present on the 9th of September.
- 2.1.8. The resulting charter is attached as Appendix 1, the membership of the working group detailed in Appendix 2, and the notes of their first meeting where the aims and objectives of the group were established are detailed in Appendix 3.
- 2.1.9. The proposed roll out pending approval of this charter by the Executive is for DALC to share this with the Town and Parish Councils, and for the Strategy and Partnerships team to arrange communications to officers and wider members on the charter, process, and implications.

3. Implications, Risk Management and Climate Change Impact

3.1. Financial

- 3.1.1. There are no expected financial implications arising from this report.

3.2. Legal

- 3.2.1. There are no specific legal implications arising from the report. The Charter is a set of principles for how we will work but is not intended as a legally binding agreement.

3.3. Risks

- 3.3.1. There is a reputational risk if TDC does not adhere to the principles laid out in the charter, mitigated by the fact officer resource has been assigned from Strategy and Partnerships service to support collaboration with Town and Parish Councils.

3.4. Environmental/Climate Change Impact

- 3.4.1. There are no direct climate impacts arising from this report.

4. CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1. The alternative options to the proposed recommendation are:
- Amend the proposed Charter – this is not recommended as the charter was created in collaboration with Town and Parish Councils to meet their aims and aspirations whilst aligning with Teignbridge capacity to find mutually agreeable ways of working.
 - Discontinue the process of adopting a Town and Parish Charter – this is not recommended as this is a response to the peer challenge LGA recommendation, is widely anticipated by partner organisations, and forms a part of the Governance Action Plan previously presented to the Audit Committee.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1. Town and Parishes are valued partners, well connected to their communities, providing services and support to residents across the district. With the forthcoming changes under LGR the importance of their work will continue to grow.
- 5.2. This Charter sets down principles for future collaborative working between Teignbridge District Council and the Town and Parish Councils of the area,

created through a process led by partners and setting out a framework for future collaboration.

- 5.3. The recommendation today is to adopt this charter as set out.