

GREAT AYCLIFFE TOWN COUNCIL CONSTITUTION

CONTENTS AND INTRODUCTION

Introduction

- 1. How the Council Operates**
- 2. Committee Structure**
- 3. Powers and Duties of Committees**
- 4. Information for the Mayor**
- 5. Members Allowances Scheme**
- 6. Standing Orders**
 - (a) Relating to Proceedings and Business of the Council**
 - (b) Relating to Contracts and Procurement**
- 7. Financial Regulations**
- 8. Scheme of Delegation**
- 9. Rights of Citizens**
- 10. Member's Code of Conduct**
- 11. Officer's Code of Conduct**
- 12. Protocols:-**
 - (a) Councillor / Officer Relations Protocol**
 - (b) Use of Council Facilities and Resources by Councillors**
- 13. Strategies / High Level Documents / Service Plans**
- 14. Council Policies (List Only)**

INTRODUCTION

The following Constitution has been agreed by Great Aycliffe Town Council. It contains information about how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure that those decisions are efficient, transparent and accountable to the community.

The Constitution is divided into 14 articles which set out the basic rules for governing the Council's business.

If the document is being viewed electronically hyperlinks will take you to the policies and procedures referred to.

However, if you wish to view a hard copy, arrangements should be made by contacting Great Aycliffe Town Council, Council Offices, School Aycliffe Lane, Newton Aycliffe, Co. Durham DL5 6QF or telephone 01325 300700 or email info@great-aycliffe.gov.uk.

There may be a small charge for copies of documents. In addition a large amount of information can be found on the Council's website www.great-aycliffe.gov.uk.

PURPOSE OF THE CONSTITUTION

The purpose of the Constitution is to bring together a number of documents to:

1. Enable decisions to be taken efficiently and effectively;
2. Enable the Council to be a clear, transparent and accountable organisation;
3. Create an effective means of holding decision-makers to public account;
4. Ensure that those responsible for decision making are clearly identifiable;
5. Encourage the active involvement of citizens in the Town Council's decision making;

MISSION STATEMENT

All of the elements of the Constitution aim to assist the Town Council in achieving its mission to be:-

"A proactive and responsive Council, working in partnership, listening to and speaking up for the community, contributing towards making Great Aycliffe an excellent place in which to live for all its residents".

COUNCIL STRATEGIC AIMS

The Council has agreed eight strategic aims in support of its mission statement. These are:

1. *To provide good quality governance and management of the Council.*
2. *To manage the council's finances and assets in a responsible manner.*
3. *To provide accessible, affordable leisure facilities and opportunities.*
4. *To provide pre-school education as appropriate in Great Aycliffe.*
5. *To contribute to the environmental improvement of Aycliffe by managing and developing parks, play areas and green spaces.*
6. *To help and encourage partnership working to improve the services and facilities for the residents of Great Aycliffe.*
7. *To encourage the residents of Great Aycliffe to become involved in local democracy.*
8. *To research information and make the case for Great Aycliffe.*

COUNCIL SERVICES

Great Aycliffe Town Council provides a wide variety of services to the local community and these services are set out below:

- Oakleaf Sports Complex which provides indoor bowls, multi-use sports hall, squash courts, bar and catering service, function room, children's holidays activities and indoor and outdoor sports coaching.
- Oakleaf Golf Complex offering an 18-hole golf course, 16 bay floodlit driving range, changing rooms and golf shop.
- Manage Stephenson Way Cemetery and West Cemetery and provide a burial service at these cemeteries. Also provide grounds maintenance and burial services at St Andrew's Churchyard in Aycliffe Village.
- Manage the following nine parks, all with play equipment:

Town Park	West Park
Moore Lane Park	Aycliffe Village
Simpasture Park	Byerley Park
St Oswald's Park	Woodham Park
Cobblers Hall Park	
- Provide four additional play areas at Scott Place, School Aycliffe, Oak Leaf Complex and Horndale.
- Provide six football pitches and mini-soccer pitches.
- Run two pre-school play settings at St Oswald's Park both with an 'outstanding' Ofsted rating.
- Provide and manage a wide range of community events including Fun-in-the-Parks, Santa Tours, Firework Display, Senior Citizen Trips, Christmas Lights.
- Assist and support other organisers to provide events including the 10km race, 3km fun run, Remembrance Day Parade, Big Brass Bash, Aycliffe Music Festival, Junior Cross Country, Annual Indoor Bowls Competition, golf competitions and the Community Enhancement Awards (floral displays and festive lights).
- A range of civic events including the civic ball and mayor at home.
- Provision and maintenance of Aycliffe Angels Memorial Garden,
- Maintenance of the war memorial and flagpole.
- Five allotment sites with pigeon, poultry and apiary facilities.
- Provide an environmental centre at Moore Lane and a programme of environmental activities and voluntary work programmes.
- Comment on all planning applications, with particular reference to the Great Aycliffe Neighbourhood Plan.

- Public seats in many locations
- Bus shelters with litter bins (not the ones with adverts)
- Grounds maintenance and environmental management in the following areas:-

North Agnew Plantation

Woodham Burn

Great Aycliffe Way

Butterfly Meadow at Rail Halt

Cobbler's Hall Plantation

Simpasture Railway Walk

Millfields / Bickford Terrace

School Aycliffe Wetlands

- Aycliffe Village Greens – legal custodians and maintenance.
- Youth Council.
- Crime prevention - the Council provides park wardens and CCTV cameras.
- Community Empowerment and Engagement via the Customer Panel, Consultation and Open Days.
- Grants and Donations – small grants and donations to local community and voluntary organisations.