

1	Introduction to the Constitution of Bursledon Parish Council
<p>Bursledon Parish Council is responsible for a number of local services. It must provide some of these services by law; others are discretionary. It is a statutory corporation - that is, a body created by government under an Act of Parliament.</p>	
<p>Bursledon Parish Council ("the Council") has agreed a constitution which sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people. Some of these processes are required by the law, while others are a matter for the Council to choose.</p> <p>The Constitution is divided into sections, the first of which set out the basic rules governing the Council's business. More detailed procedures and codes of practice are provided in separate rules and protocols at the end of the document.</p>	
<p>The Constitution also contains procedural rules which apply to the conduct of meetings of the Full Council and to its Committees.</p>	
<p>In order to ensure the sound management of the Council's financial affairs and good corporate governance, the Constitution includes financial regulations and rules that apply to all contracts for works and the supply of goods and services to the Council.</p>	
<p>The Constitution is a living document. It is kept under continual review and is re-examined annually by the Finance & Administration Committee.</p>	
<p>The Constitution is split into a number of different chapters and articles and the supplementary policy documents in the Index form the Constitution for Bursledon Parish Council:</p>	
2	What's in the Constitution?
<p>The Constitution commits the Council to providing clear leadership and support for the local community; making decisions efficiently and effectively, in a way which is transparent, accountable, does not discriminate and delivering continuously improving services which meet the needs of diverse communities.</p>	
3.	Who decides? - Members of the Council
<p>Every four years, voters in the parish boundary of Bursledon elect 12 Parish Councillors. They take all major decisions in Council; or in a council committee or sub-committee. Decisions are always collective and voted on unless they have been delegated to the Proper Officer (The Parish Clerk).</p> <p>The overriding duty of Councillors is to the whole community, but they have a special duty to their constituents, including those who did not vote for them.</p> <p>Councillors follow a code of conduct to ensure high standards in the way they undertake their duties. Responsibility for dealing with complaints that a Councillor may have breached the code lies Eastleigh Borough Council's Monitoring Officer.</p>	
4.	The Council's job
<p>Bursledon Parish Council's role is to deliver its services to the people of Bursledon in an open, transparent and cost-effective way; acting in the best interests of Bursledon and its citizens as a whole. This sometimes means that the 'greater good' is more important than individual or</p>	

particular group's interests, but this is what democratic local government is all about. Taking those decisions, after listening to the community, is the job of the Parish Councillors acting collectively as Bursledon Parish Council.

5 How is the Council organised to carry out its job?

The Council makes all policy and other decisions within the powers given to a town council by law. Committees can make decisions only on those issues the Council has delegated, otherwise a Committee has to make a recommendation to Council.

- The Council's Committees are
- Finance & Administration Committee
 - Planning & Highways Committee
 - Staffing Sub Committee

Sub-Committees can make decisions only on those issues the Committee has delegated otherwise it has to make a recommendation.

Working Parties and Open Forum Groups can be appointed by any of the above and can be made up of Councillors and/or Officers and/or representatives of other organisations and/or individuals. They can make recommendations to the parent committee or Council as appropriate and cannot decide on matters.

Officers deliver the Council's services in line with policies or directions as determined by Councillors, collectively in Council, a Committee or a Sub-Committee. They can advise Councillors on policy issues and statutory requirements the Council has to meet. They carry out the day to day detailed management of the Council's services.

6. Who pays?

- Money for services comes from the following sources:
- Fees and charges e.g. Allotment Rents, Sports hire
 - Grants
 - Council tax
 - Additional Support Grants from Eastleigh Borough Council

Bursledon Parish Council receives no income from business rates and its general expenditure is not subsidised through a government grant. There are no central government controls or "cap" on the Council's expenditure. This makes Bursledon Parish Council directly accountable to residents for the financial implications of its actions.

7 Citizens' Rights

Citizens have a number of rights in their dealings with the Parish Council. Some of these are legal rights, whilst others depend on the Council's own processes. The local Citizens' Advice Bureau can advise on individuals' legal rights.

Citizens have the right to:-

- vote at local elections if they are registered;
- contact their local Councillor about any matters of concern to them;
- obtain a copy of the Constitution;

- attend meetings of the Council and Committees except where, for example, personal or confidential matters are being discussed;
- under the direction of the Chair of the Council or Chair of a Committee and in accordance with the relevant procedure rules speak or ask questions at any meeting on any matter in which they may have an interest except where exempt or confidential information is involved;-
- submit a petition under the Council's Petition Scheme;
- participate in the Council's public question time, subject to the procedure rules of the Council and those Committees;
- see reports and background papers and any record of decisions made by the Council and Committees subject to any restrictions in connection with exempt or confidential information;
- complain to the Council about the way in which services are being delivered and the conduct of Officers and Members;
- complain to the Local Authority Standards Committee if they have evidence which they think shows that a Councillor has not followed the Council's Code of Conduct;
- inspect the Council's accounts and make their views known to the external auditor within the given timeframes.

The Council welcomes participation by its citizens in its work. For further information on your rights as a citizen, please contact the Parish Clerk.

Citizens' Responsibilities

Citizens must not be violent, abusive or threatening to Members or Officers and must not wilfully obstruct them in their duties.

7.	Further Information
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The Parish Clerk, Roland Potter, can be contacted on 020380407535 or clerk@cursledon-pc.gov.uk	
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