



# PAINSWICK PARISH COUNCIL

TOWN HALL  
01452 812722

PAINSWICK

STROUD

GLOUCESTERSHIRE GL6 6QA  
clerkpainswickpc@hotmail.com

## Value for money

Painswick Parish Council appreciates that it is dealing with public money and has due responsibilities to provide value for money. The Clerk is Cilca qualified and the Council has adopted the General Power of Competency. The Council reviews its Financial Management annually; including the Financial Risk Policy, Standing Orders and adheres to the Financial Regulations. The Council has a 'Financial Internal Controller' and the Financial and General Purposes Committee meets at least twice per annum where the budget is carefully reviewed and scrutinised.

The Council regularly reviews all its contracts to ensure they remain competitive.

The Council endeavours to fully utilise its assets. A good example of this is the conversion of Council owned toilets in St Mary's Street, Painswick. The toilets were old and needed attention with possible large financial implications. The Council undertook a public consultation to establish whether the community valued the facility. The Community came out strongly in favour of retaining a toilet within the centre of the village but did not wish the Council to spend large amounts of money. The Council then agreed to refurbish the disabled toilet to a multi user toilet, ensuring that a toilet was kept in the centre but reduced the costs of maintenance (as only one toilet to look after). They then also spent a little to convert the Ladies and Gents into Enterprise Units which now provide an income, as well as opportunities for two local businesses.

The Council regularly looks at initiative ways to reduce its overheads. For example when the Council took on an apprentice; it realised that this would free up some time for the Handyman to undertake additional jobs. This enabled the Council to bring back 'in house' some jobs like grass cutting around the villages, some cleaning. Also, through this initiative the Council has been able to assist other neighbouring Parish Councils like Pitchcombe, Upton St Leonards and Harescombe; by 'hiring' out the Handyman to undertake some agency work for them. Therefore, the Council has managed to provide an excellent opportunity for a young person to gain experience and qualifications whilst enhancing the service we provide to the Community at very little cost.

## Bio-diversity

Painswick and its wards of Sheepscombe, Slad and Edge have 'Conservation Areas' and large areas which fall within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). In addition, Painswick and its wards have significant areas of Common/Manorial Land and 'Sites of Special Scientific Interest'. In this unusual set of circumstance Bio-Diversity is carefully managed. The Council achieves this by working closely with its partners; Natural England, The Blow family (owners of the Manorial Land), The Forestry Commission, Rights of Ways Officers, Stroud District Council and The Painswick Beacon Conservation Group.

The Parish Plan takes into consideration the need to protect the environment and the Council have a Rural Environment Committee, which meets twice annually. <http://www.painswick-pc.gov.uk/uploads/parish-plan-feb-17.pdf>

The Council do not have a Neighbourhood Plan but have actively engaged with the development of Stroud District's Local Plan. The Local Plan has significant policies to protect the AONB and strict rules on when land can be developed. The Council has indentified an area which they consider could in the correct circumstance be developed as an Exception Site.

The Council owns a small plantation in which it seeks funding and management through a scheme with the Forestry Commission. It manages this through a third party agent closely supervised by The Rural Environment Committee.

The Council's apprentice was tasked with improving the Town Hall Garden as part of her NVQ Horticultural training. See attached link <http://www.painswick-pc.gov.uk/news/2016/10/town-hall-frontage>.

## **Crime and Disorder**

Painswick Parish Council work closely with the Police and Community Department of Stroud District Council. The Police are part of a Community Safety Group that hold a surgery in Painswick Town at least once per month. The Police also visit the Town Hall office on a regular basis and assist with Crime Prevention, for example during a recent spike in Rural Crime the Police held a 'Bobby Bus' event, at the request of the Council.

The Council sends at least one representative to the Cluster and District Councils Forum meetings. The Council also contributes to the District Council's Neighbourhood Warden scheme. This enables a two way communication for the community and the Neighbourhood Warden provides a monthly report.

There are large areas of the villages that have 'Neighbourhood Watch' schemes.

Painswick Parish Council frequently liase with our District Cllr Keith Pearson, who is on the Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel.

Painswick Parish Council also provide significant support for PSALMS who provide weekly activities for the youth of the parish.

## **Leadership in planning for the future of the community**

Painswick Parish Council regularly reviews the Parish Plan in consultation with the community. To this end the Council actively encourages feedback and proposals. The Council also sponsors various events to encourage community involvement. For example each year, it pays for coffee and mince pies at the Christmas Country Market, where various Members will attend and engage with those present (normally a healthy turnout). The Annual Parish Meeting this year, was a more informal event and feedback was sought to enable the Members to decide whether to proceed with certain initiatives.

Whilst the Council has decided against going forward with a Neighbourhood Plan at the present time, the Council input into and actively engages with Stroud District Council's Local Plan. The Council has set up working groups to investigate certain aspects of the Local Plan, for example the scope of protection for 'the village centre'. This has commercial implications to the retail businesses, in which a loss of one retail property can adversely affect the other shops in the area. The Strategic Land Housing Assessment has just been carried out by Stroud District Council and this document will be duly studied as part of the response to the Local Plan review.

Painswick PC have a fully delegated Planning Committee (made up of all the Members) that normally meet twice per month (there is a period of public time prior to each meeting). The District Councillors are always invited to the Planning meetings and copied into the documentation. There are links from the Council's website to the Local Plan, NPPF, Planning Applications and the National Planning Portal. Both Councillors are Staff regularly attend the various planning forums and training.

The Parish Council also works with a number of partners; including Stroud District Council, Gloucestershire Rural Community Council, The Tourist Information Centre and Love Painswick (Business Group).

### **Manages the performance of the Council as a corporate body.**

Extract from 'Arnold-Baker on Local Council Administration Ninth Edition' - on Parish Council's as Corporate Bodies:-

*As a Corporate Body the council is a person and is distinct from its members (either as individuals or collectively) for the time being. Its lawful acts, assets, liabilities are its own and not those of its members.*

Painswick Parish Council employs a Cilca qualified Clerk, who is also the Proper Officer and Financial Responsible Officer. It is his responsibility to ensure that the Council complies with the administration of the Council's Governance and Regulations. To assist the Clerk with his duties the Council subscribes to Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Councils, who regularly cascade relevant information and training opportunities.

Painswick Parish Council is a corporate body with perpetual succession, as per the Local Government Act 1972 and is comprised of 12 Councillors over 4 Wards (Painswick, Slad, Sheepscombe and Edge). The Members are elected every four years, with the next election due to take place in May 2020. Any vacancies are duly advertised and appointed; please see link to the latest example <http://www.painswick-pc.gov.uk/uploads/casual-vacancy-19.pdf> .

The Annual General Meeting of the Parish Council is held every year (again in accordance with the LGA Act 1972); in which the first item of the Agenda is to elect a Chairman. The Council has adopted a 'Code of Conduct', Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and a variety of other policies (which are regularly reviewed). Each Member of the Council also completes a Declaration of Acceptance to Office and a Register of Members Interests. The Council have adopted a Committee System, in which each Committee have their own Terms of Reference.

New Councillors are given a detailed induction (which covers Standing Orders etc) and a copy of the 'Good Councillors Guide'. All Members and Staff are encouraged to attend training and seminars. A training event is organised annually at the Town Hall; which seeks to ensure that current legislation and good practices are in place (this training is provided by Kim Bedford).

### **Manages the performance of each individual staff member to achieve its business plan**

The Council has a Parish Plan which forms the basis of what it wishes to achieve. The Business Plan is then formatted to prioritise the objectives with the necessary funding requirements fed into the 3 year budget. The Parish Plan and Budget are regularly reviewed.

Painswick Parish Council ensures that each individual staff members personal action plan is linked to the Council objectives in line with the Business Plan. The personal action plan spreadsheet is reviewed as part of the Staff Appraisal procedures and includes the following:-

- Records of their personal achievements.
- Staff to identify their strengths and weaknesses.
- Objectives – in line with the Councils' Business Plan should be identified.
- Specific achievable goals should be set and monitored, with targets agreed and reviewed.
- Skills review – any refresher training or new training required.

The Council currently employs a Clerk, Deputy Clerk, Handyman/Cemetery Manager and an Apprentice. Appropriate remuneration is motivation for the staff members and the Council pays in staff in line with NALC pay scales, in addition the Council has adopted the 'Living Wage UK' (as per the Living Wage Foundation), that pays a minimum of £8.45 per hour (as opposed to the National Living Wage which is currently set at £7.20 per hour). With the exception of the Apprentice, all current members of staff are enrolled in the Gloucestershire Local Government Pension Scheme.

The Council has a Personnel Committee, which meets at least twice annually. The Council has recently undertaken a Staff Review for the Clerk and Deputy Clerk and is planning a Staff Review for the Handyman and Apprentice later this year.