



Wem Rural Parish Council

Parish Council Performance Review

Introduction

The Council's role is to have overall responsibility for the wellbeing of the local community and covers:

- Representing the community taking into account different interests.
- Delivering services to meet local needs.
- Striving to improve the quality of life in the community.
- In England, organising the annual parish meeting.

To deliver against these responsibilities, the Council needs to be able to identify the critical issues, eg its purposes and plans, financial resilience and quality of governance, and be able to review these at regular intervals.

The following questions should assist the Council in the review and decide what to focus on. It is based on the RAG (red, amber green) matrix that allows the identity of areas to that need improvement and record them in an easy format.

1. Strategy: Does the Council have a clear vision?

Has the Council developed long-term aims with clear priorities in an ambitious plan which is regularly reviewed and monitored?		
Judgement	Evidence	How this will be improved?
Green	Business Plan Annual Action Plan is continuously monitored and reviewed. Meeting Minutes	Annual review of Business Plan building on completed objectives. By seeking inspiration from other Parish Councils
Does the strategic planning cycle drive the Council's activities and agenda setting?		
Judgement	Evidence	How this will be improved?
Green	Community Plan feeds into 4 year vision of Parish. Budget review starts Autumn each year. Business Plan includes budget implications.	Feedback from parishioners in Community Plan Re-fresh questionnaire. Working towards Quality Gold Award encourages greater strategic planning. Council also adapts to issues that occur mid-year.

Clerk: Carole Warner,
Orchard Cottage,
Rowe Lane,
Welshampton,
Ellesmere, SY12 0QB
Tel. 01948 710672 email: clerk@wemrural-pc.gov.uk
www.wemrural-pc.gov.uk



2. Engagement: Is the Council properly engaged with its community, wider community and other bodies

How does the Council listen and understand its community?		
Judgement	Evidence	How this will be improved?
Green	Meetings include Public Participation Period which allows raising matters of public interest (not just agenda items) Parish Meetings held when key issues are being considered. Councillors holding roles on community bodies/groups. Personal engagement. Preparing a Community Plan Re-refresh questionnaire'	Remind parishioners to contact Councillors. Consider 'surgeries' at appropriate venues and times. Retain/recruit Councillors with strong community links.
How does the Council report to its community?		
Judgement	Evidence	How this will be improved?
Green	Regular newsletters Website Social Media Parish meetings Noticeboards Personal contact	Ensure two-way communication on key issues. Development of opportunities will be sought and actioned
Does the Council work in partnership with other Councils and other bodies, locally and nationally?		
Judgement	Evidence	How this will be improved?
Green	Wem Economic Forum Joint events with Wem Town Council. SALC meetings Shropshire Council Town and Parish Forum Regular reports from Shropshire Councillors	Explore appropriate national bodies. Foster links with community action groups. Explore 'twinning' with another PC in England.
What benefits does the Council gain from working in partnership with other Councils and other bodies, locally and nationally?		
Judgement	Evidence	How this will be improved?
Amber	Able to discuss common issues. Consistent approach to issues. Ability to inform local community of issues.	Good at local partnerships need to explore more national

	Ability to challenge. Assists with decision making	
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3. Effectiveness: Is the Council as effective as it could be?

Does the Council and Councillors individually understand their roles and responsibilities?		
Judgement	Evidence	How this will be improved?
Green	By achieving Quality Award. Minutes evidence decisions /actions within Council's powers and duties. Minutes evidence attendance. Adoption of recommended Standing Orders and other policies. Compliance with employment law.	Training Achievement of Quality Gold Award WRPC is generally constrained by outside influences.
Does the Council have a qualified clerk?		
Judgement	Evidence	How this will be improved?
Green	Qualifications	CPD Networking with other Clerks
Are meetings run effectively?		
Judgement	Evidence	How this will be improved?
Green	Minutes Chair and Clerk discussions prior to meetings Preparation by Councillors	Continued attention to follow meetings protocol.
Is the decision-making process and committee structure conducive to effective working?		
Judgement	Evidence	How this will be improved?
Green	Minutes reflect Working Parties / Task & Finish Groups to advance research / actions in-between monthly meetings. Use of Extraordinary Meetings when required.	Further specialist training of Councillors and Clerk and peer support.
What does the Council know about good practice from across the country?		
Judgement	Evidence	How this will be improved?
Amber	Clerk's subscription of SLCC Reports from SALC	Research other Quality Gold Councils of similar size.

4. Finances: How does the Council manage and make use of public money

Are the Council's financial management systems robust and does the Council ensure best value for money?		
Judgement	Evidence	How this will be improved?
Green	Adoption of recommended Financial Regulations. Monthly Financial Statement and Bank Reconciliation. Procurement procedures followed. Clerk has accounting qualifications	Further consideration of outside funding bids.
What is the Council's policy on reserves?		
Judgement	Evidence	How this will be improved?
Green	At least 3 months revenue expenditure as Contingency Reserves. Budget	
Does the Council review its contracts with others to deliver public services?		
Judgement	Evidence	How this will be improved?
Amber	Insurance contracts reviewed annually No 'public services' as such currently delivered	Explore opportunities when services are delegated from Shropshire Council

5. Councillors and Staff: Does the Council make best use of its human resources?

Has the Council completed a skills audit?		
Judgement	Evidence	How this will be improved?
Green	Yes, completed and reported in December 2018 meeting	Repeat periodically and for all new Councillors.
On co-option/appointment of roles does the Council consider skills?		
Judgement	Evidence	How this will be improved?
Amber	None documented	Include in assessment of candidates.
Does the Council have a training budget and it is used?		
Judgement	Evidence	How this will be improved?
Green	Budget and Financial Statement Reports in Minutes	Assessment of training needs in relation to Community and Action Plans. Commission more bespoke training for councillors
Does the Council engage in good succession planning?		
Judgement	Evidence	How this will be improved?

Amber	Informal approach	Implementing a planned and structured approach. Continue to ensure CPD for councillors Identify requirements for CPD
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