Transparency Working Party

Report to Council 3/3/2021

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Wicken Parish Council

Objectives

- Review of our compliance with requirements for Parish Councils to publish policies, procedures and activities
- Source documents
    - NCALC Local Council Documents and Policies Version 7
    - Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities (Dept for Communities & Local Government Dec 2014)

Our obligation

“This Code is issued to meet the Government’s desire to place more power into citizens’ hands to increase democratic accountability. Transparency gives local people the tools and information they need to hold local public bodies to account.”

“The data and information specified in this Code must be published on a website which is publicly accessible free of charge.”

Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities

Project parameters

Phase 1 : To examine all items in NCALC list coded red (Must Have) Feb to May 2021

Phase 2 : To consider which of the Amber items should also be included (Nice to Have) May to Sep 2021

BP – Best practice	Status	
SR – Statutory Requirement	RED	Must have
AR – Audit Requirement	AMBER	Good to have
CR – Contractual Requirement		

Section	Comments	Status	Check
Basic Governance			
Standing Orders	Model available from Northants CALC – 2018 Edition	AR/BP	
Financial Regulations	Model available from Northants CALC – 2019 Edition	SR[1]	
Minute book	Not necessarily a "book" but the council must keep all minutes as a formal record of the council's business	SR[2]	
Code of Conduct	All councils are required to adopt Code of Conduct. Examples available from Northants CALC	SR[3]	
Planning register	A list of planning applications received, their status and the council's response.	BP	

Extract from NCALC document

Project Progress

- Working Party meets fortnightly on Teams
- We have divided areas into four subsections
    - Financial
    - Governance
    - Disclosures
    - Policies and procedures
- Documents created from templates where available or paraphrasing existing documents
- Emphasis on relevance to Wicken and brevity
- Arrangements made to have dedicated webpage

Sign off process

Bring most important policies/documents to May 19th meeting for sign off/minuted

Create review plan for each document :

- annual,
- 3 yearly,
- when there is a material change