



Princes Risborough Town Council

Business Plan 2015-2018





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Introduction

What is a Town Council Business Plan?

A Business Plan is the Town Council's blueprint for how it will work in a co-ordinated way in the best interests of all who live or work in the town or who use the Council's services. The Plan sets out the Council's values, vision and key objectives.

A Business Plan sets out the mission, objectives and key priorities of what an organisation wants to achieve, either directly or by trying to increase its influence on the relevant delivery body, such as the District or County Council. It is a Council's action plan for a set number of years. The Plan will help drive and determine the direction and content of all other internal strategies and resources of the Council.

This Business Plan sets out for Members, staff, and the community we serve, our mission, purpose and priorities for the next three years.

Why has Princes Risborough Town Council decided to produce a Business Plan?

This Business Plan will help ensure that Princes Risborough Town Council can take a planned and consistent approach to:

- The design and delivery of services
- The prioritisation and allocation of resources
- The achievement of real value for money

Having an agreed strategy provides a framework for the Town Council to work within, enabling it to operate in a more consistent and co-ordinated way. The Business Plan will allow the Council to become more confident and proactive in its decision making.

Later in the Plan we have identified:

- The core objectives of the Council over the next three years.
- The key processes and actions associated with each of the Council's priorities

How we ensured Community Involvement

In determining the aims of the Council the Business Plan has:

- Recognised national and local priorities
- Taken account of the views of local communities





Princes Risborough Town Council is developing a comprehensive Area Action Plan which involves a series of public consultation periods and events allowing residents to provide their input. The issues and public opinions highlighted during these consultation events will be used to help form and prioritise the Council's key aims and strategic points.

Monitoring the Business Plan

As mentioned above, the Plan will help drive and determine the direction and content of all other internal strategies and resources of the Council. The detailed content of the Plan will be strongly influenced by other work and will need to be regularly reviewed and updated accordingly. Internal pressure may arise from plans to improve service quality and the availability of resources, while external pressure may come from partnership work, other strategic plans, and Government legislation.

PRINCES RISBOROUGH

The Local Picture

Princes Risborough is situated on the western side of Buckinghamshire. The civil parish comprises the small country town of Princes Risborough, the village of Monks Risborough, and the hamlets of Whiteleaf (with its notable Cross cut in the chalk hillside), Alscot, Askett, Cadsden and part of Horsenden. In area it measures approximately four square miles. Princes Risborough is splendidly situated between the steep westward escarpment of the Chiltern Hills and the fertile Vale of Aylesbury. The town stands about 400 feet above sea level but the higher parts of the parish above Whiteleaf attain an elevation of nearly 800 feet.

The Chiltern Hills here command some of the finest panoramic views obtainable in the Home Counties, extending over the Thames into Berkshire, westwards to Oxford and to the northwest across the Midland shires. It is also a fantastic place to spot Red Kites that are flourishing in this part of the Chilterns. Princes Risborough lies below the western slopes of the Chiltern Hills in a broad gap to which, in all probability, it owes its existence. This provided travellers with a link between the River Thames and the Icknield Way, both of which were routes of prime importance from earliest times.

Also, the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which we protect today for our leisure would have had much greater practical significance for those travellers. The chalk downland of Saunderton Lee and clear springs, such as Pyrtle Spring, are cited by J.F. Head as making the area particularly favourable to early settlement, when much of the region was either wooded or marshy. Local names such as Slough and Ilimire (Ilmer) and even Summerleys (the summer fields) point to a generally higher water table than that of today.

There is ample evidence of those first inhabitants. The block of pebble conglomerate, commonly known as a 'Pudding Stone', which sits prominently at the roundabout in Horns Lane, is one of several in the Chilterns thought to have been way-markers for prehistoric man. For many years only its tip was visible, at the foot of a post in Back Lane, and the decision to use it to mark the New Road reflects a growing awareness of our heritage.

More familiar human traces lay in the recently re-excavated Neolithic barrow, some 5,500 years old, near Whiteleaf Cross and in a Beaker burial found in 1983 in Clifford Road, close to where an old track known as Barrow Way crossed the hill to Culverton. A Bronze Age axe was found on the site of the British Legion Hall, and the Iron Age is represented by earthworks on Pulpit Hill and Lodge Hill. Whiteleaf Cross itself, which dominates the landscape, remains a mystery, but probably dates from the 17th century. It is not mentioned in writing before 1738 and the earliest known drawing of it, dated 1742, is in the Bodleian library and entitled 'Crux Saxonica'. It is cut into the face of a promontory of the Chilterns above Whiteleaf and can be seen clearly across the Vale of Aylesbury.

Kop Hill is a long climbing road that leads from the town up towards Whiteleaf Cross. This steep hill was a very famous venue for Motor Racing in the early 20th C when the Kop Hill Climb was a popular and regular event in the racing calendar. It was abandoned after two accidents in 1925, but has recently been revived with great success. On the left as you climb Kop Hill, you will find the Brush Hill Local Nature Reserve. An Area of Special Scientific Interest, Brush Hill was awarded a grant from The Heritage Lottery Fund to help with its management and maintenance, as it is an important site for rare and endangered plants and wildlife.



The Council's Vision, Aims and Long Term Objectives

The Town Council's aim is to improve the quality of life for the residents of Princes Risborough. A working group consisting of Council Members and the Clerk addressed how the Council will achieve this and as such Members agreed Princes Risborough Town Council needs to work towards achieving eight **Core Objectives** over the next three years;

- 1) The Completion of a successful Area Action Plan and ensuring that the plan is being used appropriately to judge planning permissions within the town
- 2) Improve community Spirit
- 3) Establish greater active engagement with local Partners and Public
- 4) Promote and improve economic activity within the town
- 5) Maintain, improve and expand our green and open spaces (to include expansion of Stratton Memorial Garden)
- 6) Maintain Quality Council Status
- 7) Develop an effective resources plan (to include an income generation plan, adequate staffing to achieve our ambitions and good value council processes)
- 8) Make Princes Risborough an even more attractive town/parish (including improved infrastructure)

Each of these objectives contains specific projects and activities that the Council is already doing, or must begin, to achieve the set objective.

Key Processes

The successful achievement of the Council's core objectives is dependent on the Council and its Officers performing certain key projects, process and activities exceptionally well, in order for us to be confident that we are well placed to be achieving the objectives set out above.

The Council has highlighted the below six processes as being crucially important;

- Developing Capability of Council Staff
- Liaising with, and influencing, other key bodies
- Long term and tactical planning
- Knowledge Management
- Developing Policy
- Community Engagement

The Council has reviewed threats and opportunities for each of the Key Processes and has developed action points for each. This includes consideration during the setting of precept.



Performance Indicators

It is important that the Council measures its progress and creates an avenue to adapt its workings to ensure the plan is a success. The Council has created measurable Performance Indicators for each of its eight objectives. The Forward Policy Panel will review the Council's progress against these indicators on a regular basis. A report will be issued to the Council every 12 weeks, ensuring the Council is actively pursuing its objectives, adapting and taking action to meet its targets when necessary.

An Overview of Princes Risborough Town Council

Princes Risborough has three tiers of local government, each with differing areas of responsibilities. Princes Risborough Town Council is the first and most local tier of government for residents of Princes Risborough Parish.

Wycombe District Council is the second tier and is responsible for services within Princes Risborough including, parking, housing and street cleaning. The third tier of local government is Buckinghamshire County Council, its responsibilities include education, highways, libraries, rights of way, health and social services.

As of May 2015 Princes Risborough Town Council has 13 elected Councillors who are elected every four years. The Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor are elected by Councillors at the Annual Statutory Meeting in May.

The Council has 6 standing committees, each with its own remit;

Admin & HR

The administration of the Council is managed by the Town Clerk. As Head of the Administration the Clerk advises the Council on new developments in procedures, law, and local council work and covers all areas such as Employment, Health & Safety, Legal and all other matters relating to employment and council work.

The Town Clerk is also responsible for day to day line management and performance management and appraisal of any staff employed by the Town Council. This will be reported on to the Committee.

The Administration/Human Resources Committee's role is to make recommendations to Full Council on:-

All aspects of the Council's policies and strategy relating to its staff.

All staff recruitment, appointments, training and disciplinary matters.

The training and qualification policy of the Council

The provision of office accommodation .

Establishing the health, safety and welfare policies of the Council and oversee implementation and compliance

The staffing levels necessary to efficiently discharge the work required by the Council

The Committee has the delegated authority to manage issues including:-

To provide support and assistance to the Town Clerk with staffing and staff conduct matters

To review and engage with schemes for the employment of people under job creation and youth training programmes .

To ensure that all disciplinary and grievance policies are dealt with in line with the Council's procedures .

To recommend, authorise and oversee all training for employees and Councillors .

To deal with matters regarding Councillor /Staff conduct.

To approve job descriptions and review workloads periodically



Town

The Town Committee is responsible for the general maintenance of the Town, Parks and Stratton Memorial Garden. This includes lighting, litter & glass picking, dog waste collections in the parks, grass cutting, trees and flowerbeds, playground equipment maintenance, war memorials, CCTV maintenance, Market House maintenance.

Finance

The Finance Committee is the financial link between the full Town Council and the 'spending' committees, ie Administration/HR, Town, Events and Public Relations committees. The Town Council requires that those committees whose activities necessitate spending and the production of tenders should be held responsible for the development and the management of their individual budgets. This devolution of financial responsibility is intended to engender a greater feeling of ownership within the individual committees and lead to better value for money for the town.

At the start of each financial year, a council meeting is held to agree the estimated expenditure of all committees for the coming year and, from this, to establish the town's precept (the amount of money the council asks for in the council tax under 'parish'). This goes to the Finance Committee for a final check, before being passed by them to the full Town Council for formal endorsement.

The Finance Committee's membership comprises the chairmen of each of the spending committees. The Chairman of the Town Council is an ex officio member. The Chairman and Vice-chairman of the Finance Committee are council members with no other chair responsibilities. Throughout the year the Finance committee monitors expenditure to ensure probity and value for money, and to check that the rate of spend is acceptable. The composition of the committee allows free and open discussion on all financial matters and the means to respond rapidly to any unforeseen problems.

Planning

This committee has three key roles: it reviews every planning application, considers tree applications, and takes part in various district and regional consultations where they may impact on Princes Risborough.

The Town Council is a statutory consultee, and reviews all planning applications and advises WDC should they not meet local requirements and aspirations. However, it should be noted that Wycombe District Council makes the final decision on all planning applications, and does not always agree with the Town Council's comments.

Events

The Town Centre & Events Committee remit is to make the town centre a pleasant place to come to, and to put on events for residents and visitors. All events are aimed to strengthen our community, young and old; and contribute to making Princes Risborough an especially vibrant town. Many events are run in partnership with local groups and organisations. The Committee also takes responsibility for the running of Risborough in Bloom, youth projects and the promotion of the town through appropriate media.

Public Relations

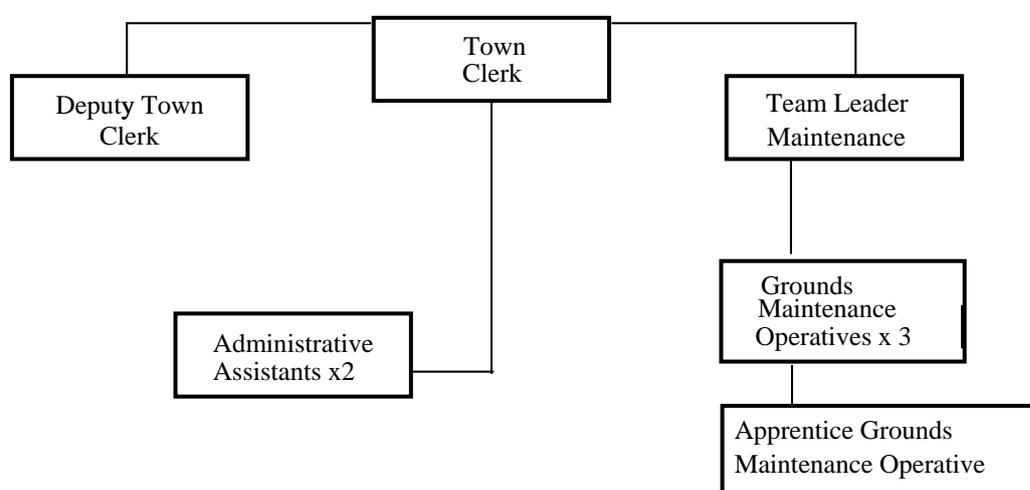
The Public Relations are responsible for the production and distribution of Crosstalk newsletter, website management, and public meetings.



The Town Council Management Structure

The administration of the Town Council is carried out by the qualified Town Clerk who is appointed by the Town Council. The Town Clerk is required to carry out all the functions required by law as the Town Council's proper officer and to issue all statutory notifications. The Town Clerk is also the Responsible Financial Officer.

The Town Council is supported by a team of 9 members of staff as detailed in the below management structure diagram.



Council Assets and Areas of Responsibility

Assets

Wades Park
King George V Park
Crescent Park
Earle Mitchell Park
St Dunstan's Park
Stratton Memorial Garden
Market House
Dovecote
Rag Pit

Grounds Maintenance - Areas of Responsibility

Planters and Hanging Baskets
Provision of Litter & Dog Bins (not emptying)
Bus Shelters
Footway Lighting
Play Equipment in Parks



Your Views Matter - Reviewing Our Business Plan

The Business Plan will be a regular item on the agenda for the Forward Policy Panel to ensure the Council formally reviews its progress and objectives.

The Business Plan will be reviewed annually in August to enable any changes to be considered during the Precept planning for the following year.

We want to know what you think about this plan and its contents

Our Business Plan shall form one of the main ways the Council will inform the public about what we are doing to meet the needs of the community. We welcome any comments on our Business Plan and would appreciate views on its content and format. If you require any further information that would help you understand what we are trying to achieve, please let us know.

More information about the Council, including an electronic version of this Plan, is available on our website www.princesrisborough.com

How to Contact us:

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Budget	Current Year	Next Year	Year 2	Year 3
Personnel Costs	£ 125,158.00	£ 132,047.00	£ 136,000.00	£ 140,100.00
Office & Administration	£ 13,920.00	£ 14,704.00	£ 15,145.00	£ 15,600.00
Councillor & Mayoral Costs	£ 2,600.00	£ 2,850.00	£ 2,850.00	£ 2,850.00
Audit Fee	£ 1,150.00	£ 1,150.00	£ 1,185.00	£ 1,220.00
Insurance	£ 4,100.00	£ 4,100.00	£ 4,223.00	£ 4,350.00
Community Grants	£ 19,710.00	£ 11,485.00	£ 11,500.00	£ 11,500.00
Parks incld grass cutting & loan	£ 39,260.00	£ 21,888.00	£ 22,545.00	£ 22,770.00
Sport Pitches Income	-£ 1,500.00	-£ 2,000.00	-£ 2,000.00	-£ 2,000.00
Total	£ 37,760	£ 19,888.00	£ 20,545.00	£ 20,770.00
Town incld CCTV	£ 83,754.00	£ 69,300.00	£ 70,000.00	£ 70,200.00
Maintenance of Town & Open Spaces	£ 16,980.00	£ 16,930.00	£ 17,437.00	£ 17,960.00
Stratton Memorial Garden & Vases	£ 19,320.00	£ 19,220.00	£ 19,320.00	£ 19,220.00
Burial Income	-£ 5,000.00	-£ 10,323.00	-£ 10,500.00	-£ 10,500.00
Total	£ 14,320.00	£ 8,897.00	£ 8,820.00	£ 8,720.00
Devolved Services	£ 35,821.00	£ 39,015.00	£ 61,685.00	£ 48,446.00
Devolved Services income	-£ 42,748.00	-£ 34,201.00	-£ 35,500.00	-£ 35,500.00
Total	-£ 6,927.00	£ 4,814.00	£ 26,185.00	£ 12,946.00
Public Relations	£ 11,500.00	£ 8,600.00	£ 8,700.00	£ 8,800.00
Events	£ 7713	£ 9,640.00	£ 10,000.00	£ 10,500.00
Events Income	£ - 7713	-£ 200		
Total	£ - 0	£ 9,440.00	£ 10,000.00	£ 10,500.00
Subscriptions	£ 1,535.00	£ 1,390.00	£ 1,400.00	£ 1,415.00
Capital Projects	£ 151,356.00	£ 154,027.00	£ 85,000.00	£ 87,500.00
Description	Sum			Financial Years
Area Action Plan	£5000			2015 onwards
Trailer & Mower	£13,000			2015/2016
Storage Facilities	£15,000			2015/2016
Dovecote	£11,000			2015/2016

Market House -paid over 8 years	£134,648	2016 onwards
LED lighting	£70,000	2016 onwards
Telephone Box/Defibrillator	£6,000	2016/2017
Crescent Play Equipment	£20,000	2016/2017
One Way System	£53,636	2017 onwards
Gang Mower	£25,000	2017/2018
Accounting Package	£2500	2017/2018

Election Expenses	£ 10,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00
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Ground Rent/Wayleaves	-£ 1,350.00	-£ 1,350.00	-£ 1,350.00	-£ 1,350.00
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Market Stalls rental income	-£ 2,400.00	-£ 1,900.00	-£ 1,957.00	-£ 2,015.00
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Interest Received	-£ 1,270.00	-£ 1,000.00	-£ 1,000.00	-£ 1,200.00
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