

**Charter between the City and County of Swansea and  
Community / Town Councils (C/TC) within its Boundaries**

**The Charter – 27 August 2013**

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The City and County of Swansea (Swansea Council) and the Community / Town Councils (C/TC) within its boundaries have agreed to enter into a Charter which sets out the way in which we aim to work together for the benefit of local communities whilst recognising our respective responsibilities as statutory bodies.
- 1.2 The Charter is designed to build on and embrace the shared principles of openness, respect for each other's opinions, honesty and our common priority of putting citizens at the centre. This Charter is based on equality of partnership. The Partners to the Charter are set out below.
- ~~1.3 The Partners to the Charter shall be all or any of the Councils set out below who have signed the Charter.~~

<b>Principal Council</b>	City and County of Swansea
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**Commented [EH1]:** These will each be a hyper link to each Council's web page

<b>Community Councils</b>	
Bishopston	Mumbles
Clydach	Penllergaer
Gowerton	Pennard
Grovesend	Penrice
Ilston	Pontlliw & Tircoed
Killay	Port Eynon
Llangennith, Llanmadoc & Cheriton	Reynoldston
Llangyfelach	Rhossili
Llanrhidian Higher	Three Crosses
Llanrhidian Lower	Upper Killay
Mawr	

<b>Town Councils</b>	
Gorseinon	Pontarddulais
Llwchwr	

**2. Amendments to the Charter**

- 2.1 Further developments of this Charter will be discussed as required by the Community / Town Councils Charter ~~Review Task and Finish~~ Group and forwarded to the appropriate bodies for consideration and the Charter updated as required.

### 3. Local Governance (LG)

- 3.1 The Partners will be clear about the expectations that they have of each other in order to facilitate a smooth working relationship. ~~In this regard, they will define the way in which they interact with each other. They will be clear about the role of councillors at all levels in the relationship and in community leadership.~~
- 3.2 There will be a Community / Town Councils Forum ~~which shall meet as required but not less than twice per annum.~~ It will be Chaired by the Swansea Council Cabinet Member that has Community / Town Councils within their Cabinet Portfolio. The Forum will be supported by the Democratic Services (Committees) Team.
- 3.3 The overarching purpose of the Forum is to discuss local government matters of mutual concern. The Forum provides comments and seeks to make recommendations to the appropriate decision making body.

	City & County of Swansea	Community / Town Councils (C/TC)
<b>LG1</b>	Will facilitate the Community / Town Councils Forum <u>not less than twice per annum and contribute proactively towards the agenda and at the meetings on a quarterly basis. Meetings will be held in the Civic Centre or Guildhall.</u>	Will contribute towards the agenda of Forum meetings and contribute proactively to the attendance and discussion.
<b>LG2</b>	Will ensure that copies of presentations will be circulated.	Will ensure that copies of presentations will be circulated.
<b>LG3</b>	<u>Swansea Council shall nominate its own Representatives.</u>	<u>The Clerk of the C/T Council and two representatives from each Community / Town Council.</u>
<b>LG4</b>	<u>Each Service Area will have a dedicated Single Point of Contact (SPOC) as outlined at <a href="http://www.swansea.gov.uk/CTCSpocs">www.swansea.gov.uk/CTCSpocs</a></u>	<u>The dedicated Single Point of Contact will be the Clerk of the C/T Council. C/T Councils to inform Swansea Council of any change to Clerks.</u>

#### ~~3.4 Representatives on the Community / Town Councils Forum~~

#### ~~3.5 City and County of Swansea Council Representatives~~

~~3.6 Swansea Council shall nominate its own Councillor Representatives together with the Chief Executive and / or Officers acting on his behalf as required.~~

~~3.7 Appendix A outlines the Contact details for the City and County of Swansea.~~

~~3.8 — Community / Town Council Representatives~~

~~3.9 — The Clerk of the C/T Council together with two representatives from each Community / Town Council within the City and County of Swansea. Community / Town Councils shall nominate their own representatives.~~

~~3.10 — Appendix B outlines the Contact details for the Clerks of the Community / Town Councils.~~

**4. Consultation (CO)**

4.1 The Partners recognise the importance of meaningful consultation and have a genuine commitment to consult on matters of mutual concern. They will agree clear, specific and time limited procedures and processes for consultation.

	City & County of Swansea	Community / Town Councils (C/TC)
<b>CO1</b>	<p>Will aim to give C/TC the opportunity to comment <b>before</b> making a decision that affects non routine and / or significant matters within their local community.</p> <p><del>Details of Council, Cabinet &amp; Committee Agendas &amp; Reports are available at <a href="http://www.swansea.gov.uk/democracy">www.swansea.gov.uk/democracy</a> furtherance of this, Swansea Council will make available a copy of its public reports to Cabinet, Panels, Committees etc.; Will advise all C/TC Clerks of the dates of its public meetings; and make copies of its agendas available on the Councils website as soon as possible.</del></p>	<p>C/TC will respond to consultation opportunities in a timely manner, addressing the key issues in the consultation document.</p> <p><del>Will make full use of the papers available to them to inform local decision-making.</del></p>
<b>CO2</b>	<p>Officers of Swansea Council will <del>liaise with and / or attend meetings with C/TC meetings (or groups of Councils) at a mutually agreed time</del> to discuss matters of common interest when requested to do so and given sufficient notice <u>at mutually agreed times</u>.</p>	<p>Swansea Council <del>Councillors and Officers</del> will be given an opportunity to speak at Community and Town Council meetings on matters of mutual interest <u>as invited</u>.</p>
<b>CO3</b>	<p>Swansea Council Scrutiny Committee(s) to liaise with C/TC on relevant local issues.</p>	<p>Will respond to requests from Scrutiny Committee(s).</p>

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## 5. Information and Communication (IC)

- 5.1 The need for timely, clear, relevant information and communication in fostering good relationships and better joint working for the benefit of local people.

	City & County of Swansea	Community / Town Councils (C/TC)
IC1	<del>Each Service Area will have a dedicated Single Point of Contact (SPOC) as outlined at <a href="http://www.swansea.gov.uk/CTCSpocs">www.swansea.gov.uk/CTCSpocs</a>. Will provide a contact point(s) within each Directorate for the Clerks of the Community / Town Councils should liaise with these SPOC's as required to liaise with.</del>	The Clerk of each <del>of the</del> C/TC shall be the contact point for Swansea Council. The Chair of the C/TC shall act as Deputy SPOC but only in the absence of the Clerk and following a notification from the Clerk to that effect prior to the period of absence.
IC2	Swansea Council prefers to be contacted by the Clerk electronically but accepts all means of communication.	Acknowledges that Swansea Council prefers to be contacted electronically but notes that it accepts all means of communication.
IC3	Will reply to communication from Clerks <del>as appropriate but</del> within <b>10</b> working days.	Will reply to communication from Swansea Council <del>as appropriate but</del> within <b>20</b> working days.
IC4	No acknowledgement letter will be provided if a response can be provided within <b>10</b> working days.	No acknowledgement letter will be provided if a response can be provided within <b>10</b> working days.
IC5	If this is not possible, an acknowledgment will be sent within <b>5</b> working days. The acknowledgement will outline the timescale that the response will be given within and may be electronic or in writing.	If this is not possible, an acknowledgment will be sent within <b>5</b> working days. The acknowledgement will outline the timescale that the response will be given within and may be electronic or in writing.
IC6	Will inform the Clerk of non-routine and / or significant matters affecting their locality providing it impacts on the community. Will also consider any requests from a Clerk seeking specific information on general Council matters.	Will inform the Swansea Council contact point(s) of any non-routine and / or significant matters affecting their locality providing it impacts on the community. The Swansea Council contact point(s) would then draw it to the attention of the relevant Directorate.
IC7	<del>Swansea Council and C/TC will work jointly to implement the Welsh Government's e-government initiative in the</del>	<del>Swansea Council and C/TC will work jointly to implement the Welsh Government's e-government initiative in the</del>

<del>interests of sustainability and the better delivery of public services.</del>	<del>interests of sustainability and the better delivery of public services.</del>
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## 6. Joint Working and Engagement (JW)

6.1 The Charter is intended to encourage working together ~~towards a common set of goals~~, based on equality in terms of ownership, decision-making and recognition of each party's distinctive contribution.

6.2 ~~It is recognised that an equal and effective partnership brings benefits and responsibilities to all those involved.~~ Local Government at both tiers **must** work together to promote the wellbeing and economic, social, environmental wellbeing of the residents of our area. If doing things differently achieves a better service, we will ~~seriously~~ examine these methods.

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~~6.3 Issues that are passed to Swansea Council from C/T Councils will be shared with all Swansea Council Councillors within the area of the C/T Council. This may on occasion lead to a joint meeting between Swansea Council, Local Councillors and representatives from C/T Councils.~~

	City & County of Swansea	Community / Town Councils (C/TC)
<b>JW1</b>	Will provide opportunities for Clerks <u>or Representatives</u> of Community / Town Councils to meet to discuss common concerns	Will encourage participation by Clerks in opportunities to network and share common concerns.
<b>JW2</b>	Will be clear about how devolved services can be discussed and agreed.	Will use the agreed procedures if there is a wish to progress devolved services.
<b>JW3</b>	Will give due consideration to devolving services that would provide better value for money and/or enhanced / <u>maintained</u> services.	Will be clear about how any devolvement of services will provide better value for money and/or enhanced / <u>maintained</u> services.
<b>JW4</b>	<del>Will expect accountability for all C/TC acquired activities from Swansea Council.</del>	<del>Will take responsibility for aspects of joint working that are signed up to.</del>

## 7. Land Use Planning (LU)

7.1 Community and Town Councils (C/TC) know and understand their local area and must be able to comment effectively on planning matters. Swansea Council is able to take an overview of the needs of the whole local area and make decisions, taking local views into account. Meetings of the Planning Committee are open to the public to attend.

	City & County of Swansea	Community / Town Councils (C/TC)
LU1	Will uphold its statutory duty to consult C/TC on all planning applications in their communities.	Make <del>appropriate</del> responses to Swansea Council recognising the parameters imposed by planning law and agreed planning policy.
LU2	Swansea Council <del>shall encourage C/TC to accept</del> consult <del>electronically via e-mail, to</del> . C/TC's may inspect plans online, <del>and respond via a password protected web facility.</del>	Where <del>possible</del> <del>appropriate</del> C/TC will <del>respond to</del> <del>accept</del> consultations <del>electronically, C/TC's via e-mail;</del> will inspect plans online, <del>and respond via a password protected web facility.</del>
LU3	Ensure that <u>Swansea</u> Councillors receive training on planning issues and have a sound understanding of how planning law works.	Ensure that <u>C/TC</u> Councillors receive training on planning issues and have a sound understanding of how planning law works. <u>The C/TC Forum will contain an annual standing item on Planning in order to inform C/TC's of Planning Procedure / Legislative changes.</u>
LU4	<del>Will include C/TC on the weekly email list of decisions made. The Officer report may be accessed online and will provide an assessment of all comments received. Inform a C/TC in writing for the decision made with respect to a planning application in its area within 7 working days of the decision being made, and, if necessary explain why the decision is different from the point of view put forward by the C/TC.</del>	Maintain an objective and professional approach to planning matters at all times.
LU5	<del>Give C/TC information about relevant Development Management and Control (Planning) Committee meetings so that they may attend as observers.</del>	<del>Councillors to take up the opportunity to attend Development Management and Control (Planning) Committee meetings at Swansea Council.</del>

**8. Practical Support (PS)**

8.1 In order to be effective, ~~Councillorselected members~~ and Officers must be well-trained and have the support they need to carry out their roles.

	City & County of Swansea	Community / Town Councils (C/TC)
<b>PS1</b>	Swansea Council will, where practical, offer C/TC access to support services, to enable them to take advantage of facilities such as printing, IT, purchasing at a mutually agreed price.	Will follow procedures set out to access Swansea Council support services, but also have opportunity to make own arrangements.

**9. TrainingExpertise (TREX)**

9.1 The Partners encourage continuous development and training of Officers and Councillors in both Swansea Council and C/TC, either in their individual groupings or together. Improved training and development~~expertise~~ leads to professionalism and more effective joint working.

	City & County of Swansea	Community / Town Councils (C/TC)
<b><u>TREX1</u></b>	Will offer Councillor <u>Code of Conduct induction</u> training to C/T Councillors <u>and access to the Authority's training suite at a costenable them to understand the role and function of Swansea Council.</u>	Will <u>ensure that C/T Councillors receive the training and development required for them</u> <del>provide an induction to newly elected Councillors to enable them to</del> undertake their role effectively.

**10. Ethics (ET)**

10.1 The Partners will provide an ethical service to local people, following the appropriate Standards and Codes of Conduct. They will encourage links between C/TC Clerks and Swansea Council's Standards Committee.

	City & County of Swansea	Community / Town Councils (C/TC)
ET1	Swansea Council's <del>will, through the Monitoring Officer (MO), shall</del> support C/TC's in <del>the timely consideration and provision of advice in</del> relation to the application of the Councillors Code of Conduct.	C/T Councillors shall <u>take advice from the MO, Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) and One Voice Wales</u> in matters <u>relating to the Code of Conduct</u> . <del>not make vexatious complaints under the Code and will provide all such information as required by the MO to enable MO to carry out function effectively.</del>

## 11. Delegating Responsibility for Service Provision (DR)

11.1 Services should be delivered in the most appropriate manner, with regard to value for money and added value for local people.

	City & County of Swansea	Community / Town Councils (C/TC)
DR1	Swansea Council will consider all <del>reasonable</del> <u>reasonable</u> <del>ely argued</del> <u>cases</u> <del>requests</del> for the delegation of service delivery to C/TC's, <del>basing its consideration primarily on the improvement of service delivery for citizens whilst ensuring value for money is retained or enhanced.</del>	C/TC <u>may seek to make reasonable requests to Swansea Council for the delegation of service delivery</u> . <del>will recognise that there are certain instances where it is not appropriate or desirable for Swansea Council to delegate service delivery.</del>
DR2	<del>Where it is not appropriate or desirable to delegate service delivery, Swansea Council will seek ways in which local information from communities might be used to enhance service delivery to better meet citizen needs.</del>	<del>C/TC will engage with citizens in their communities to understand their needs and convey them in a coherent and constructive manner to Swansea Council, such that they can be taken account of in service design and delivery.</del>

## 12. Sustainability (SU)

12.1 The Partners will work in accordance with the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015's Sustainable Development Principle. This means acting "in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, ways that are sustainable, reconciling the long-term needs with those of the present and protecting and improving the quality of life of current generations without compromising the quality of life of future generations.

	City & County of Swansea	Community / Town Councils (C/TC)
SU1	Will apply the Sustainable Development Principle's 5 ways of working (Involvement, Integration, Long Term, Prevention & Collaboration) to maximise contribution to the national well-being goals, assist C/TC with information on sustainable practices.	Will apply the Sustainable Development Principle's 5 ways of working (Involvement, Integration, Long Term, Prevention & Collaboration) to maximise contribution to the national well-being goals. Will proactively assess the sustainability of current practices and processes.
SU2	Will provide an annual presentation to C/TC Forum on applying the Sustainable Development Principle. Will outline how Swansea Council is actively pursuing sustainable development.	Will strive to apply the Sustainable Development Principle, investigate projects which contribute to sustainability where beneficial to the community.

### 13. Local Well-being Single-Integrated Plan (SLP)

13.1 The Partners recognise the strategic importance of the Single Integrated Local Well-being Plan as the overarching strategic vision and priorities for the local area. Furthermore, they recognise that the Single Integrated Local Well-being Plan will only be fully effective if it is informed by the grass roots experiences from within communities.

	City & County of Swansea	Community / Town Councils (C/TC)
<u>LWSP1</u>	The C/TC Forum shall nominate a Community / Town Councillor (who is not also a Swansea Council Councillor) from its membership to engage as an "Other Partner" in the work of the <del>sit on the</del> Swansea <u>Local</u> Public Service Board (PSLB).	The C/T <del>ommunity / Town</del> Councillor representing the C/TC's shall feedback <u>directly to the C/TC Forum on a 6 monthly basis.</u>  –This C/T Councillor shall:  <b>1)</b> Proactively represent the sector, raising matters of general concern appropriate to

	<p><del>in recognition of the local knowledge and experience this will bring.</del></p> <p><del>The Swansea PSB Local Service Board (LSB) shall determine the manner in which it engages C/TC in the preparation, implementation and delivery of the work of the Board. The PSB will seek advice and otherwise involve C/TC in the ways and to the extent it considers appropriate, whether or not to add the C/T Councillor to its membership.</del></p>	<p>the agenda of the <u>Swansea PLSB</u>.</p> <p><b>2) Report back on an <u>annual -6 monthly</u> basis <u>or sooner if required</u> to the C/TC Forum in order to update on the work of the <u>Swansea PLSB</u>.</b></p>
<b>LWSP2</b>	<p>Will <del>consult</del> <u>involve</u> C/TC in the development of the <u>Assessment of Local Well-being and Local Well-being Plan, Single Integrated Plan.</u></p>	<p>Will contribute to the <u>Assessment of Local Well-being and Local Well-being Plan, development of the Single Integrated Plan in its development stage.</u></p>
<b>LWSP3</b>	<p>Will <del>engage</del> <u>involve</u> C/TC in the implementation of the <u>Local Well-being Single Integrated Plan.</u></p>	<p>Will (if subject to the duty in <u>Section 40 (1) of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015</u> take all reasonable steps to meet the <u>Local Well-being Objectives</u> and participate in monitoring and reporting the implementation of the <u>Local Well-being Plan.</u></p> <p><u>Can voluntarily contribute to meeting the Local Well-being Objectives. All C/TC are encouraged to consider how they can contribute to meeting the Local Objectives, regardless of whether they are under a duty to do so, respond actively and fully to consultation of the draft Single Integrated Plan and participate in monitoring the implementation of the Single Integrated Plan.</u></p>

## 14. Local Elections (LE)

14.1 Fair and open elections are the bedrock of local democracy. The Partners will ensure that elections are freely and fairly contested, and encourage local people to become involved in local democracy.

	City & County of Swansea	Community / Town Councils (C/TC)
LE1	Swansea Council will always consult C/TC in Swansea Council driven electoral reviews affecting their area.	Will encourage participation in the local election process by members of the local community.
LE2	Will involve C/TC in any awareness raising / publicity to encourage nominations for candidacy at local elections.	Will ensure wide publicity of vacancies on C/TC to maximise community representation.
LE3	Will help to publicise forthcoming local elections on behalf of C/TC.	Will facilitate public participation at all relevant meetings of the C/TC and its Committees to encourage community involvement.
LE4	Will <del>assist</del> brief C/TC Clerks on the nomination process so that they are equipped to assist any potential candidates who come forward for local elections. <u>Further information on the process may be viewed at <a href="http://www.swansea.gov.uk/elections">www.swansea.gov.uk/elections</a></u>	-
LE5	Will provide help and assistance with the local election legal and administrative processes and procedures.	-
LE6	For all out C/TC elections, Swansea Council will recharge in the financial year <u>of following</u> the election.  Swansea Council will advise C/TC of these election costs in advance of the need for a C/TC to set its precept.	C/TC will pay these recharges within the terms stated on the invoice.
LE7	For C/TC by-elections, Swansea Council will recharge <u>within 6 months to a year of the election that financial year (wherever possible)</u> .	C/TC will pay these recharges within the terms stated on the invoice.
LE8	-	<u>C/TC acknowledge the requirement for them to inform</u>

		<p><del>the Monitoring Officer of all co-options.</del></p> <p>In addition to this, each May the C/TC shall inform Swansea Council (Electoral Services) of the names of the membership of their Council. Ensure the names of all C/T Councillors are published on their websites.</p>
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**15. Monitoring and Review (MR)**

15.1 The Charter will be reviewed annually or more often if required. The Community / Town Councils Forum shall conduct this review.

	<b>City &amp; County of Swansea</b>	<b>Community / Town Councils (C/TC)</b>
<b>MR1</b>	Will arrange for the Charter to be reviewed <del>every 3 years or sooner if required annually (January or February)</del> by the C/TC <del>Charter Review Group Task and Finish Group.</del>	Will actively contribute to the review of the Charter.

**16. Conclusion**

16.1 The undersigned City and County of Swansea and Community / Town Councils (C/TC) are committed to the principles and statements with the charter, for the benefit of local people.

16.2 Any of the Partners to this Charter may withdraw having given 28 days prior written notice to the Chair of the C/TC Forum.