



# REPORT TO EXECUTIVE

## PORTFOLIO AREA: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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**Date of Meeting:** 12th March 2012

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**Public**

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**Key Decision:** Yes

**Recorded in Forward Plan:** Yes

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### Inside Policy Framework

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**Title:** CARLISLE DISTRICT PARISH CHARTER  
**Report of:** THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT  
**Report reference:** CD25/12

**Summary:** This paper presents a proposed new Parish Charter for Carlisle and District (attached at Appendix 1).

This has been developed in partnership by a working group of Carlisle City Council and Parish Council elected representatives. The proposed new Charter is concise and aims only to outline expected behaviours and relationships - it is therefore intended to be a durable and long-lasting document.

It will be supported by a series of 'Formal Agreements' which outline specific commitments around services, roles and responsibilities. These are intended to reflect current circumstances and may be developed, amended and deleted on a much more regular basis. These will be agreed annually at one of the joint meetings of Carlisle City Council and the Parish Councils.

**Recommendations:** Carlisle City Council's Executive is requested to:

1. Consider the proposed Parish Charter and approve it on behalf of Carlisle City Council.

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**Note:** in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: None

## **1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND OPTIONS**

- 1.1 The Carlisle District Parish Charter (hereinafter referred to as 'the Charter') was published and launched in March 2007. The current Charter details a series of specific commitments for joint working in the Carlisle district between the District and Parish Councils.
- 1.2 One of the commitments contained in the Charter was that it should be reviewed no later than 2011.
- 1.3 Initial discussions on the review of the Carlisle Parish Charter were held in mid-2011 led by the Cumbria Association of Local Councils (CALC). These initial discussions focused on recognised best practice and successful parish charters from across the UK. In particular they highlighted models of charter that was accessible, concise and focused on behaviours and principles. Specifically they centred on the Parish Charter from North Lincolnshire - which has been recognised by DCLG and NALC as a leading example of a successful charter.
- 1.4 The discussions agreed that a refreshed Carlisle Parish Charter should aspire to be a more streamlined document. It should outline the agreed core principles and behaviours of partnership working between Carlisle City Council and Carlisle District Parish Councils. This would clearly be quite a broad and 'high level' document but crucially it would also be underpinned by a series of very specific 'Formal Agreements'. These would detail how specific services are provided and the how the relationship is managed. They would be separately negotiated, agreed and reviewed on an annual basis.
- 1.5 This approach was formally agreed at the Joint Meeting between Carlisle City Council and the Parish Councils in Autumn 2012. At that meeting it was also agreed that a working group comprising equal representatives from Carlisle City Council's Executive and the Carlisle Parish Council's Executive would come together to develop a draft charter based on the North Lincolnshire model. They would also be asked to consider and identify areas where 'Formal Agreements' should be developed making specific commitments on services and roles and responsibilities.
- 1.6 This working group was convened in January 2012 and comprised Cllrs Geddes, Bloxham and Bowman from Carlisle City Council and Cllrs Auld, Nicholson and Little from the CPCA. The group first met on the 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2012 and then again on the 21<sup>st</sup> February. At their first meeting they discussed proposed content of the Charter and agreed an outline list of services and functions where specific provision

is made for Parish Councils and where a Formal Agreement to support the Charter may prove useful. At the second meeting the group finalised and agreed the proposed Charter Text, reviewed the developing 'Formal Agreements' and agreed an adoption process.

- 1.7 Specifically the group resolved, that the Charter Document should be submitted for approval at both Carlisle City Council's Executive and the Carlisle Parish Council Executive. This report delivers that agreed action. At the same time the group also agreed that the development work on the supporting Formal Agreements would continue under the supervision of the relevant Lead Officers and Portfolio Holder from the City Council, and the Chair of the CPCA. A final list of fully developed Formal Agreements will be tabled and agreed at the next Joint Meeting of Carlisle City Council and the Parishes.

## **2. CONSULTATION**

### **2.1 Consultation to Date.**

As outlined above the Parish Charter development was born out of review conducted by all parties involved in the Charter. The draft document has been produced collaboratively through a working group comprised of both City Council and Parish Council representatives. The CPCA are leading a consultative approach to this final draft involving all Parishes in the district.

The supporting Formal Agreements are also being developed collaboratively, with Lead Officers from Carlisle City Council, relevant Portfolio Holders and representatives of the CPCA all being fully consulted on their development.

## **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **3.1 Carlisle City Council's Executive is requested to:**

- a. Consider the proposed Parish Charter and approve it on behalf of Carlisle City Council.

## **4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 The proposed Parish Charter has been subject to rigorous negotiations between a working group of Parish Councillors and representatives from Carlisle City Council's Executive.

- 4.2 Representatives from both sides have contributed fully to and endorsed the resulting draft. It is a relatively 'light-touch' document which is intended to outline relationships and behaviours (and therefore be a longer-term and lasting document). In contrast the supporting 'Formal Agreements' will be more detailed and intended to reflect current circumstances. They should be updated on a regular basis as circumstances dictate.
- 4.3 It is therefore recommended that Executive consider and approve the Charter on behalf of the City Council, while supporting Formal Agreements are negotiated and developed by Officers (in liaison with the relevant Portfolio Holder). These 'Formal Agreements' would be reviewed and ratified annually at the Joint Meeting of Carlisle City Council and the Parish Councils.

## **5. IMPLICATIONS**

- Staffing/Resources – N/A
- Financial – There are no financial implications arising from the adoption of this Parish Charter. Any costs associated with the production of more formal agreements would need to be met from within existing base budgets.
- Legal – The proposed Parish Charter is not intended to be a legally binding agreement between the parties. Rather, it is more of an operational protocol. If there is a need for a legal agreement then this will be one of the documents referred to as one of the supporting 'formal agreements'.
- Corporate – The Parish Charter supports key objectives 1 and 2 in Carlisle
- City Council's Corporate Plan
- Risk Management –
- Environmental –
- Crime and Disorder –
- Impact on Customers –
- Equality and Diversity –

## Impact assessments

Does the change have an impact on the following?

Equality Impact Screening	Impact Yes/No?	Is the impact positive or negative?
Does the policy/service impact on the following?		
Age	No	
Disability	No	
Race	No	
Gender/ Transgender	No	
Sexual Orientation	No	
Religion or belief	No	
Human Rights	No	
Health inequalities	No	
Rurality	Yes	Positive

If you consider there is either no impact or no negative impact, please give reasons:

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If an equality Impact is necessary, please contact the P&P team.

## **The Carlisle District Parish and Town Charter**

*This Charter supports and informs partnership working between Carlisle City Council (“The District Council”) and Parish Councils and Meetings (“The Parish Councils”).*

Successful partnership working can only be achieved if both Partners understand and respect each other’s roles and work to compliment each other. It is recognised in this Charter that both the District and Parish Councils are important partners in representing the communities and groups that they serve.

*This Charter sets out shared principles and expected behaviors in general terms but these constitute only the broadest of expectations. The Charter is supported by a series of “Formal Agreements” which define specific commitments on services, mutual support and interaction.*

### **Shared principles**

- We will commit ourselves to working in partnership, bringing together the strengths that each of us have for the good of communities throughout the Carlisle.
- We will respect and promote the role of both the District and Parish Councils.
- We will maintain appropriate and effective channels of communication and consultation between our Councils on new initiatives and in the provision of local services.
- We will recognise the importance of issues and ideas raised at all levels of local government and from within communities themselves.

### **Shared purpose**

We recognise that the District and Parish Councils share objectives to further the interests of the people of the Carlisle District. This charter and its supporting Formal Agreements aim to provide a clear and mutual understanding of roles and responsibilities. They will build on the good working relationships between us and promote co-operation and partnership within and beyond the statutory frameworks.

### **Co-operation**

Both the District and Parish Councils recognise that each may have views on proposed changes in service provision, and will make reasonable efforts to consult each other on such proposals.

Both the District and Parish Councils will explore mutually acceptable ways of devolving responsibility for some services or of entering into agency agreements for the delivery of these. Both the District and Parish Councils will have regard to the effect of such arrangements on service delivery locally and elsewhere, and also on the need to provide the best value for money for all the residents of Carlisle District.

### ***Agreed Expectations***

#### **Parish Councils can expect the following from the District Council:**

- Comprehensive and relevant information on issues about which they are asked to form views.
- Realistic time periods for consultation.
- Real and meaningful processes for Parish Council views to be represented and taken into account when decisions which may affect them are to be taken.
- Prompt notification of decisions taken, together with written explanations of decisions at variance from their views, where this is requested.
- The availability of appropriate officers or members to assist them in discussions on significant issues.
- A shared commitment to hosting and attending biannual joint meetings between the District Council's Executive and the Parish Councils.
- A willingness to seek mutually satisfactory solutions in areas of difficulty.
- A willingness to engage Parish Councillors in training and development opportunities provided by the District Council and to explore joint training needs and opportunities.

#### ***The District Council can expect the following from Parish Councils:***

- An appropriate response to the matter being considered, taking into account relevant statutory and policy considerations.
- A considered and timely response during the consultation period.
- Sharing of information on issues of common interest.
- Opportunities for local District Councillors to attend their meetings and to receive minutes, agendas and any other relevant information.
- A shared commitment to hosting and attending biannual joint meetings between the District Council's Executive and the Parish Councils.
- A willingness to seek a mutually satisfactory solution in areas of difficulty.
- A willingness to participate in training and development opportunities provided by the District Council and to explore joint training needs and opportunities.

### ***Managing the Charter***

This Charter (and any amendments to it) will be approved at the respective Executives of both the District Council and the Carlisle Parish Council Association.

Its effectiveness will be reviewed annually as a standing agenda item at one of the joint meetings of the District Council's Executive and the Parish Councils.

While working to the headings and principles agreed in this document, the Charter will be supported by the adoption of jointly developed Formal Agreements.

These Formal Agreements will make specific commitments from both sides with regard to service delivery, support and interaction. They will be developed in partnership and agreed at one of the joint meetings of the District Council's Executive and the Parish Councils. They will be reviewed at least annually at one of these joint meetings and any subsequent revisions will also be approved at this forum.

Parish Councils may at any time raise any issue in connection with the operation of the Charter with their local District Councillor or with the relevant Director at the District Council.

The District Council may at any time raise any issue in connection with the operation of the Charter with the Chair of Carlisle Parish Council Association; or if the matter relates to an individual Parish Council with the clerk or Chairman of the parish.

### **Undertaking**

We the undersigned declare our commitment to the Carlisle District Parish Council Charter and in so doing, embrace the spirit of the agreement and assent to its principles.

Leader, Carlisle City Council

Chairman, Carlisle Parish Councils Association (Note: signing on behalf of CPCA member Parish Councils and Parish Meetings)

Chairman, ..... Parish Council/ Parish Meeting (Note: those non CALC member Parish Councils/ Parish Meetings who want to sign up to the Charter)



# Carlisle District Ward Map

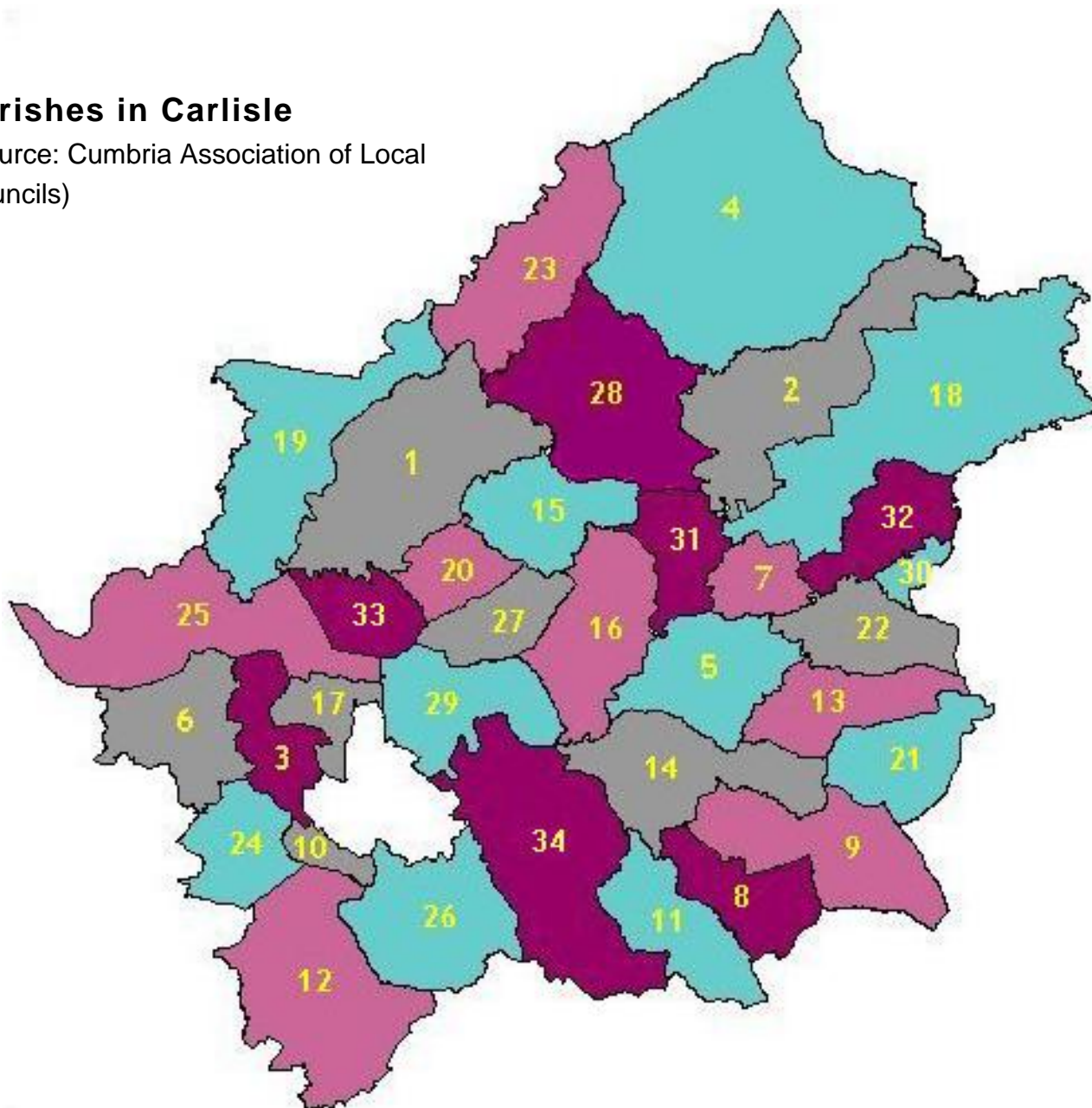
## Carlisle Urban Wards

- 1 Belah
- 2 Belle Vue
- 3 Botcherby
- 4 Castle
- 5 Currock
- 6 Denton Holme
- 7 Harraby
- 8 Morton
- 9 St Aidans
- 10 Stanwix Urban
- 11 Upperby
- 12 Yewdale



## Parishes in Carlisle

(Source: Cumbria Association of Local Councils)



- 01 Arthuret
- 02 Askerton
- 03 Beaumont
- 04 Bewcastle
- 05 Brampton
- 06 Burgh-by-Sands
- 07 Burtholme
- 08 Carlatton & Cumrew
- 09 Castle Carrock & Geltsdale
- 10 Cummersdale
- 11 Cumwhitton
- 12 Dalston
- 13 Farlam
- 14 Hayton
- 15 Hetherscill

- 18 Kingwater
- 19 Kirkandrews-on-Esk
- 20 Kirklington Middle
- 21 Midgeholme
- 22 Nether Denton
- 23 Nicholforest
- 24 Orton
- 25 Rockcliffe
- 26 St. Cuthbert Without
- 27 Scaleby
- 28 Solport and Stapleton
- 29 Stanwix Rural
- 30 Upper Denton
- 31 Walton
- 32 Waterhead