

West Rainton & Leamside Parish Council - 16 May 2019

Item 15: Local Council Award Scheme - Foundation Level

Report of G Keedy, Project Officer

Introduction

The Local Council Award Scheme exists to celebrate the successes of the very best local councils, and to provide a framework to support all local councils to meet their full potential. All local councils want to serve their local communities and make a real difference to the lives of the people that live there. The scheme offers councils the opportunity to show that they meet the standards set by the sector, assessed by their peers, and to put in place the conditions for continued improvement.

The Award Scheme is designed to provide the tools and encouragement to these councils at the beginning of their improvement journeys as well as promoting and recognising councils that are at the cutting edge of the sector.

The scheme was created in 2014 and is managed on behalf of local councils by the Improvement and Development Board (IDB).

Councils can apply for an award at three levels: Foundation, Quality and Gold.

Parish Council has previously resolved (2016) to seek accreditation to Foundation Level of the Local Council Awards Scheme.

The scheme sets out criteria to meet at each level covering selected aspects of the council's work. These are governance, community and development.

Foundation Level Award Criteria - Achievement Action Plan

To achieve a Foundation Award a council demonstrates that it has the minimum documentation and information in place for operating lawfully and according to standard practice, but also has policies for training for its Councillors and officers and building a foundation for improvement and development.

Through natural evolution and adoption of good practices, it is considered that Parish Council has made solid progress in working towards meeting the scheme requirements.

Documentation and information requirements to achieve the Award, together with an assessment of whether or not the council currently meets these criteria is detailed in Appendix A. This also details further action planned to achieve full compliance and ensure standards once achieved, continue to be maintained.

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In summary, aspects which require development are:

- * Publication scheme.
- * Complaints procedure
- * Formalisation of staff contractual arrangements
- * Annual Action Plan of Council objectives
- * Disciplinary and grievance procedures
- * Learning and Development policy for staff and Councillors
(See draft policy for consideration - agenda item 16)
- * Training records for staff and Councillors to be developed, including Clerk's CPD

Once the above are implemented, the Council will then be required to confirm by resolution that all the required documentation and information is in place.

Further information on the accredited process will be provided at that time.

Action required

Parish Council is requested to note the contents of this progress report;

And,

Task Chairman, Parish Clerk and Project Officer to progress those aspects outstanding as indicated in the Action Plan at Appendix A.