

The Benefits of Quality Status

Quality parish and town councils are not only in a position to show their local communities that they are performing above national minimum standards but they are in a better position to influence the decision making process and/or take on additional services and areas of responsibility, from their principal local authorities.

Who benefits?

The benefits of this scheme affect three groups:

1. the community
2. the parish or town council itself
3. the principal local authority

1) Community benefits:

- local people will know that the council will be well led and is accountable, visible and representative
- more responsive services - the Quality council will be capable of solving local problems with greater authority and have real ownership and control over services and decisions that effects local lives
- real contact and discussions with their Quality council
- a local access point providing information on services

2) Benefits to the parish or town council itself:

- greater credibility in the eyes of the local community, voluntary and private sectors and principal local authorities
- greater civic pride
- more representative of the local community
- better ability to articulate the needs and wishes of the local community
- it will achieve more by working in partnership with other organisations
- able to demonstrate that it is effectively and properly managed which will install greater confidence in the community
- delivery of more local services - if the council wishes to
- greater involvement by the voluntary and community sector and principal local authorities, e.g. developing parish plans, market town health checks etc
- a better informed community
- a well trained clerk, through the Certificate in Local Council Administration (or University of Gloucestershire qualification in Local Policy)
- Possible more powers and funding in the future.

3) Principal Authority benefits

- reassurance that the Quality council has been independently assessed and is therefore capable of working with the principal authority and can deliver services on their behalf or in partnership
- reliable evidence of the competence of the Quality council, through the four year re-assessment process
- proof that the Quality council is willing and able to be fully involved in local issues (this will be particularly valuable when implementing new initiatives)
- stronger partnership working, with the town or parish council bringing their local perspective and experience to the table. Quality councils should be more innovative and pro-active, and will want to share their ideas and experiences
- increased confidence that the quality council is representative, competent, well managed and therefore capable of taking on and sustaining an enhanced role

"In achieving Quality Status, we have demonstrated to our principal authority that we are an active, professional, and competent body to work with. We have also raised our profile within the local community which we serve, showing that the status of the town council is higher than ever before, and a belief that we provide value for money in an open, transparent and honest manner."

John Green, Clerk to Halewood Town Council

"Quality Status immediately tells the local community that the Council has attained a standard worthy of recognition, and this is important in terms of public perception. My members also consider it important that the parish sector engage positively in the Quality initiative and thereby send a clear message to government that there is a real desire to be a key player in their long term vision for local government with a commitment to improving standards and modernisation where appropriate."

Chris Rolley, Clerk to East Grinstead Town Council

