



# BUSINESS CHARTER

Consultation Draft  
Summer 2024



## ENTERPRISING HORSHAM

Creating Sustainable  
Prosperity Across  
Horsham District



Horsham  
District  
Council



# WHY A CHARTER?

We are living in ever changing and uncertain times characterised by a range of global events and trends that impact on local economies and places, all of which demands the better use of finite resources within and between the public sector and businesses.

We have a unique offer across Horsham District. As well as Horsham town, the District has a collection of market towns and villages each with their own history and personality, set amongst beautiful countryside.

This Business Charter has been designed to strengthen the working relationship between Horsham District Council and all sectors of the local economy. In doing so, this Business Charter will contribute to securing prosperity for all that uplifts, diversifies and modernises Horsham as an exemplar for 21<sup>st</sup> Century living.

# OUR COMMITMENT THROUGH THIS CHARTER

- Promote and support local businesses
- Endeavour to deliver the highest possible quality of service for businesses
- Strive to provide value for money
- Seek the views of businesses to help plan services
- Deal with businesses honestly and with integrity

This commitment will be delivered through joint working arrangements including:

- A business support group (made up of council officers from across all services) to deal with issues raised by businesses to ensure that the Charter remains fit for purpose
- An external Economic Development Group (made up of representatives from the Council and businesses to help shape and review the Charter)

This stronger relationship with businesses will be facilitated by the Council's economic development service. The table opposite lists the key functions of the council and how they support the local economy along with what we expect from business as part of the service delivery.

## COUNCIL ROLE

Policy maker  
and shaper

Regulator

Landowner  
and landlord

Service  
provider

## HOW WE SUPPORT BUSINESSES

- Identification of land for employment and housing.
- Making the Council business friendly.
- To map an ambitious pathway for Horsham District Council to achieve net zero emissions by 2050 and to adapt to the changing climate.
- Influencing county and national policy.
- Promoting and nurturing the local economy.

- Improve the links to and support from the Planning service.
- Planning Advice on planning and building regulations, community safety and licensing matters.
- Consideration of applications (i.e. planning, building control and licensing).
- Enforcement against illegal activity.
- Advice on Environmental Health including food safety and health and safety at work.

- Maintain and improve public spaces and make the District an attractive place to live and do business.
- Make best use of assets to support businesses.
- Provision of land and premises for business.
- Provision of venues to hire for events.
- Work in partnership with landowners and local agents to deliver allocated sites.

- Waste collection and recycling.
- Car parking.
- Maintaining public spaces.
- Provision of quality sports facilities, activities and events.
- Support for individuals on low income.
- Provide business support.

## WHAT WE ASK OF BUSINESSES

- Respond to consultations regarding policy, projects and funding bids which may affect local businesses.

- Take up the Pre-application Planning Advice Service to help improve the quality of planning applications and reduce delays.
- Follow our advice and guidance to avoid the need for any formal enforcement action.
- Report areas of concern such as fly tipping and graffiti.
- Recognise and acknowledge the pressures and constraints within which regulatory services have to operate.

- Inform and support development proposals.
- Show patience when improvement works are underway.
- Inform the Council of your land and accommodation needs.
- Seek to maintain and improve the appearance of buildings and spaces in your ownership.
- Recognise and acknowledge the commercial requirements and pressures facing the Council with regards to managing land and property.

- Keep us informed of any change in contact details.
- Treat our staff with courtesy.
- Encourage staff with housing needs to contact the Council.
- Respond to consultations on how we review and reorganize our services.
- Promote and make use of Council leisure and cultural facilities.



## COUNCIL ROLE

Buyer of goods  
and services

Employer

Community  
leader



Business rate  
recovery and  
support

## HOW WE SUPPORT BUSINESSES

- Provide opportunities for local business to bid to supply goods and services to the Council.
  - Pay bills promptly.
  - Promote campaigns to “Buy Local”.
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- Supporter of training and development within the local workforce.
  - Support the local labour markets through taking on apprentices and offering work experience and traineeships.

- Voice for business on strategic partnerships.
- Support businesses through emergencies.
- Listening and acting on views of local business.
- Seek to secure investment into business infrastructure.
- Developing partnerships and deliver agreed actions.
- Signpost to business services provided by other public bodies and independent providers.
- Convening education providers to help inform the skills and training provision to support the local economy.

- Collection of rates and support for those facing difficulties.

## WHAT WE ASK OF BUSINESSES

- Recognise that the Council looks to secure value for money for its customers.
  - Attend training and follow guidance to understand how to bid to supply goods and services to the Council.
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- Tell the Council how you think it could support your business needs.
  - Consider taking on apprentices.
  - Consider offering work experience and traineeships.

- Make the Council aware of the needs of the business community.
- Put in place business plans to keep your business functioning in the event of an emergency or crisis (bad weather, power cuts, damage to buildings, pandemic).
- Participate and promote events and activities aimed at supporting businesses.

- Speak to the Council as early as possible regarding any payment or account problems.

