

Lawhitton Parish Council Constitution

1. The Parish Council is the body corporate which represents the first tier of Local Government for the Parish of Lawhitton, Cornwall.
2. Powers and activities have been increased by many Acts of Parliament and are now governed by the Local Government Act 1972 together with the Localism Act 2011. The business of Lawhitton Parish Council is regulated by the Local Government Act 1972.
3. Lawhitton Parish Council consists of six unpaid Parish Councillors democratically elected by the registered voters who reside within the Lawhitton Parish. Elections take place every four years in May. All Councillors must have their main residence within the boundary of the Parish of Lawhitton.
4. Councillors agree to follow the Parish Councils' Code of Conduct.
5. A minimum of three Councillors need to be present to hold a meeting and form a quorum, voting is by a show of hands or a written ballot if requested. A majority vote by Councillors is required to pass a motion put before the Council always providing that at least three Councillors are in agreement with the motion.
6. Parish Council meetings are held every other month throughout the year. The time and venue of these meetings are publicly advertised in advance and are open to members of the public to observe and listen to the proceedings. Members of the public who attend any meeting will be asked at the start of the meeting, by the Chairman, if they wish to raise any matter for the Parish Council to discuss. The Chairman will decide the amount of time allocated to any such matter. Thereafter, members of the public will not participate in the Council's proceedings unless invited to do so by the Chairman. The Council operates a freedom of information policy, official Parish Council business is available to members of the public, in the main this is covered by the published minutes of the meetings.
7. The Council may set up committees as and when required, to deal with specific matters that require either more extensive consideration of a matter or more dedicated on-going support of an established local facility/amenity. At least one nominated Councillor must be a member of such committees but all other members may be persons from the local community who have a relevant interest in the activities of the committee. Regular reports on the progress and activities of such committees must be given at the routine Parish Council meetings.
8. The purpose of Lawhitton Parish Council is to work within its statutory powers to maintain and enhance the public amenities within the village and to help the people of Lawhitton improve their quality of life by working in partnership with Launceston Town Council and Cornwall County Council.
9. The Parish Council will exercise all its powers and duties in accordance with the law without favour or prejudice and utilise its limited funding to achieve the greatest good for the community. The funding being obtained by levying a precept on the Council Tax paid by residents of the Parish, the amount being controlled by Cornwall County Council.
10. The Council's financial and administrative affairs are dealt with by the Parish Clerk, who is a part time employee of the Parish Council. Accounting statements are prepared in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations. All expenditures require signatures from both the Chairman or Vice Chairman and the Parish Clerk, expenditure of £100 or more should be submitted at council meetings for approval before payment. The Annual accounts are subject to an audit in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. The public have rights to inspect the accounts in accordance with Section 25 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.
11. From the 1st April 2016, the Parish Council must be compliant with the Smaller Authorities Transparency Code. Requiring the online publication of certain information which the Government requests.