Briefing Note

Local Council Awards Scheme LCAS

1.0   Background

1.1   The Local Council Award Scheme has been designed to both provide the tools and encouragement to councils who wish to improve their governance and management, and provide a form of external scrutiny that will assess its progress. The award is also used to promote and recognise councils that are at the cutting edge of the sector as well as promoting its good practice to residents and stakeholders. The scheme was created in 2014 and is managed on behalf of local councils by the Improvement and Development Board (IDB) of the Society of Local Council Clerks, and administered locally by CALC (Cornwall Association of Local Councils).

1.2   The scheme complements the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) that your clerk was awarded in 2019. The difference between the two schemes is that the LCAS is awarded to the council (and is not transferable), whilst the CiLCA is awarded to the clerk.

2.0   The LCAS schemes

2.1   Councils can apply for an award at one of three levels:

The Foundation Award demonstrates that a council meets the requirements for operating lawfully and according to standard practice. This council successfully achieved this award in 2018.

The Quality Award demonstrates that a council achieves good practice in governance, community engagement and council improvement.

The Quality Gold Award demonstrates that a council is at the forefront of best practice and achieves excellence in governance, community leadership and council development.

The scheme sets out criteria to meet at each level covering selected aspects of the council's work. Councils can seek to progress through the tiers over time thereby raising standards. Councils of any size can aspire to an award appropriate for their budget and level of activity.

Currently, Cornwall has four parishes with LCAS Foundation accreditation (Camborne, Penzance, St Ives, St Mewan) one LCAS Quality (Camelford). These awards have been made within the past four years.

3.0   How does it work?

3.1   To support transparency, every award level has a requirement for certain information to be published online (plus some information that does not need to be published). In all instances the council confirms that the required documents, information and conditions are in place (whether published or not) by resolution in public at a full council meeting. For Quality Gold, councils also provide statements for submission to the panel demonstrating

excellence in their activities. The panel may ask for additional information to check the accuracy of claims.

3.2   The parish council is well placed to achieve Quality status. There are two steps to submitting an application:

Policies and documents that were submitted as part of the Foundation Award in 2018 need to be reviewed and refreshed. Of the 26 documents that were used for the council's assessment then, 5 will need updating.

For the Quality Award, 17 policies and evidence of practice are needed, and of these, this council currently satisfies 9 of them.

This work can be accommodated within the regular council timetable and programme.

4.0   What is the cost?
4.1   Because of the limited amount of work required to refresh Foundation level, there will be a low indirect cost (equivalent to a maximum of 10 hours of clerk's time).

4.2   To achieve Quality level, indirect costs will be higher because of the additional time that would be required. Much of this can be incorporated in the Clerk's day to day work, and any additional work would be covered by the council's budget for overtime payments.

4.3   There is a Registration Fee of £50 due at the time of signing up. The Accreditation Fee, payable on assessment, is based on the council's annual income. This council would pay a fee of £80.

5.0   The options
5.1   If councillors agree to make application for the Quality Standard, they should make an appropriate resolution at their public meeting.

5.2   Refresh the policy documents required for Foundation level before April 2024.

5.2   Include additional work for Quality status in the council's workplan for 2024/25 and submit our application in the next financial year.

6.0   Appendix 1
Criteria for Foundation & Quality Award showing progress and evidence of achievement.

Author: John Hesketh, Parish Clerk
Date: 25 August 2023

Council Name: Menheniot Parish Council
Date of application:
Award level applied for: Quality

Foundation Award (awarded 2018)

The Council confirms by resolution that all documentation and information is in place for a specified award	Does the council meet this requirement?	Hyperlink to council resolution:
Criteria	**Do you meet these criteria?**	**Where are these published online?**
1 Its standing orders	Yes Jul 2022	https://www.menheniotparish.org.uk/data/uploads/1893_201964922.pdf
2 Its financial regulations	Yes Jan 2016	https://www.menheniotparish.org.uk/data/uploads/1633_1909880922.pdf
3 Its Code of Conduct and a link to councillors' registers of interests	Yes Sep 2021	https://www.menheniotparish.org.uk/data/uploads/1629_1644800098.pdf
4 Its publication scheme	Yes but need updating Jan 2016	
5 Its last annual return	All docs Jun 2023	https://www.menheniotparish.org.uk/finance.php
6 Transparent information about council payments	Yes	https://www.menheniotparish.org.uk/data/uploads/2044_1339856160.pdf
7 A calendar of all meetings including the annual meeting of electors	Yes	https://www.menheniotparish.org.uk/data/uploads/1916_1563360426.pdf
8 Minutes for at least one year of full council meetings and (if relevant) all committee and sub-committee meetings	Yes and all archive access included	https://www.menheniotparish.org.uk/meetings.php
9 Current agendas	Yes and all archive access included	https://www.menheniotparish.org.uk/meetings.php
10 The budget and precept information for the current or next financial year	Yes Nov 2022	https://www.menheniotparish.org.uk/data/uploads/2068_1427621459.pdf
11 Its complaints procedure	Yes Oct 2020	https://www.menheniotparish.org.uk/data/uploads/

Council Name: Menheniot Parish Council
Date of application:
Award level applied for: Quality

			1636_451689455.pdf
12 Its accessibility statement	Yes		https://www.menheniotparish.org.uk/accessibility-statement.php
13 Its privacy notice	Yes Oct 2018		https://www.menheniotparish.org.uk/data/uploads/1869_1542831350.pdf
14 Council contact details and councillor information in line with the Transparency Code	Yes		https://www.menheniotparish.org.uk/members.php
15 Its action plan for the current year	No		
16 Evidence of consulting the community	Yes – can produce evidence		
17 Publicity advertising council activities	Yes – can produce evidence		
18 Evidence of participating in town and country planning	Yes – can produce evidence		

19 A risk management scheme	Yes Jan 2021		https://www.menheniotparish.org.uk/data/uploads/1632_578975829.pdf
20 A register of assets	Yes Jun 2023		https://www.menheniotparish.org.uk/data/uploads/2045_2142315525.pdf
21 Contracts for all members of staff	Yes		https://www.menheniotparish.org.uk/index.php
22 up-to-date insurance policies that mitigate risks to public money	Yes		
23 Disciplinary and grievance procedures	Yes Oct 2020 Yes Oct 2020		https://www.menheniotparish.org.uk/data/uploads/1637_496258040.pdf https://www.menheniotparish.org.uk/data/uploads/1638_642817453.pdf
24 A policy for training and training and development of and councillors	Yes Jan 2021		https://www.menheniotparish.org.uk/data/uploads/1639_378257202.pdf

Council Name: Menheniot Parish Council
Date of application:
Award level applied for: Quality

25 A record of all training undertaken by staff and councillors in the last year	Yes	
26 A clerk who has achieved 12 CPD points in the last year	Yes	

Council Name: Menheniot Parish Council
Date of application:
Award level applied for: Quality

Quality Award (for submission 2024)

The Council confirms by resolution that all documentation and information is in place for a specified award	Does the council meet this requirement?	Hyperlink to council resolution:
Criteria	**Do you meet these criteria?**	**Where are these published online?**
1 Draft minutes of all council and committee meetings within four weeks of the last meeting	Yes Chair signs minutes that show publication date	https://www.menheniotparish.org.uk/meetings.php
2 A Health and Safety policy	No	
3 Its policy on equality	NO	
4 Councillor profiles	Yes and can be improved	https://www.menheniotparish.org.uk/members.php
5 A community engagement policy involving two-way communication between council and community	Yes Sep 2019 and can be updated	https://www.menheniotparish.org.uk/data/uploads/1640_1335417287.pdf
6 A grant awarding policy	Sep 2021	https://www.menheniotparish.org.uk/grants.php
7 Evidence showing how electors contribute to the Annual Parish or Town Meeting	Yes and can evidence	
8 An action plan and related budget responding to community engagement and setting out a timetable for action and review	No	
9 Evidence of community engagement, council activities and the promotion of democratic processes in an annual report, online material and regular news bulletins	Yes and needs to be enhanced next year	
10 Evidence of helping the community plan for its future	Yes Apr 2022	https://democracy.cornwall.gov.uk/documents/s152885/Menheniot%20Neighbourhood%20Development%20Plan%20Plan%20Proposal%20Decision%20-%20Post%20Examination%20Report%20Modificat.pdf
11 a scheme of delegation (where relevant)	No but we have the basis in standing	

Council Name: Menheniot Parish Council
Date of application:
Award level applied for: Quality

	orders	
12 at least two-thirds of its councillors who stood for election	Yes Link to CC elections page	
13 an annual report that is actively shared with the community	No	
14 Evidence of a customer service in how the council handles correspondence with the public	??	
15 a qualified clerk	Yes copy of my certificate	
16 a formal appraisal process for all staff	No	
17 a training policy and record for all staff and councillors	Yes and can create record from database	https://www.menheniotparish.org.uk/data/uploads/1639_378257202.pdf