

General Power of Competence Policy

1. Purpose

This policy sets out how Honeybourne Parish Council will exercise the General Power of Competence (GPC) in accordance with legislation and best practice.

The General Power of Competence enables the Council to act more flexibly and innovatively in the interests of the community, within the law.

2. Legal Framework

The General Power of Competence is conferred by:

- The **Localism Act 2011**, section 1
- The **Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012**

Honeybourne Parish Council adopted the General Power of Competence on **13th January 2026**, having confirmed that it met the prescribed eligibility criteria at that time.

3. Scope of the Power

Under the General Power of Competence, the Council may do anything that an individual may generally do, provided that it is:

- Not prohibited by law
- Carried out in the interests of the community
- Within the Council's financial and governance arrangements

The General Power of Competence does not remove the need for the Council to comply with:

- Existing legislation
- Financial regulations
- Proper decision-making processes

4. Use of the Power

When exercising the General Power of Competence, the Council will:

- Ensure decisions are **lawful, proportionate and properly minuted**
- Consider **financial implications, risk and value for money**
- Act in accordance with adopted policies and procedures
- Use the power responsibly and transparently

The Council may choose to rely on specific statutory powers where appropriate but is not required to do so where the General Power of Competence applies.

The Council will ensure that the use of the General Power of Competence is clearly identified in reports and minutes where relevant.

5. Decision-Making and Governance

- Decisions to exercise the General Power of Competence will be made by the Council, or by delegated authority where appropriate.
- All decisions will be supported by clear officer advice and recorded in the minutes.
- The Council will ensure that adequate provision is made for risk management and internal control.

6. Review of Eligibility

The Council recognises that eligibility for the General Power of Competence must be reviewed following each ordinary election.

If the Council no longer meets the prescribed conditions, it will not rely on the General Power of Competence until eligibility is restored and will continue to act within its existing statutory powers.

7. Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically by the Council to ensure it remains appropriate, effective and aligned with best practice.