

General Power of Competence

The General Power of Competence (GPC) is a power of first resort enabling parish and town councils who have adopted it to do anything that individuals generally may do, that is, very broadly, anything that is not otherwise prohibited by law.

Restrictions in law which apply to the use of the GPC include the duties on councils to act to prevent crime and disorder, to respect human rights, to consider biodiversity and to protect personal data.

Witney Town Council adopted the GPC at its meeting held on 23 March 2016. This power remains with the Town Council until the Annual Meeting following each ordinary election; it can then be readopted at that Annual Meeting if the council is still eligible. In order to be eligible for the GPC there are two criteria that must be fulfilled

- At the time when the GPC is adopted, at least two thirds of the total seats on the council must be held by members who stood at the last ordinary election or a subsequent by-election, i.e. council members who have been elected (even if unopposed) rather than co-opted or appointed.
- The Clerk must hold either the Certificate in Local Council Administration or an equivalent qualification.

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