



## **Terms of Reference**

This document sets out the Terms of Reference, outlining the scope and delegated authority for decision making by the Council and its Committees.

### **1. General Provisions**

- 1.1. These Terms of Reference are subject to Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.
- 1.2. Subject to Council's Financial Regulations or other policies as may be applicable, all Committees have the authority to delegate any of its functions to the Town Clerk, or to Working Parties consisting the Town Clerk and one or more Members appointed by the Committee. Such authority to be given by way of recorded resolution made by the authorising Committee.
- 1.3. The Council, or any Committee within the provisions of its Terms of Reference, may nominate any of its members and/or the Town Clerk to represent the Council at external organisations.
- 1.4. All Committees may authorise expenditure within their agreed budgets (if any), in accordance with Financial Regulations, without further approval by Council.
- 1.5. Committees shall be enabled to make recommendations to Council, or any other Committee as may be appropriate, on any matters arising from the agenda that are outside of the scope of that Committee.

### **2. Delegated Powers**

- 2.1. Members will be advised by the Town Clerk whether or not a particular item under discussion is within the Committee's delegated powers.
- 2.2. The minutes will then record the decision as "RESOLVED". If it is not, then the minutes will show the decision as "RECOMMENDED", and will then be brought to the Council's particular attention by the Chairman of the Committee at the next meeting of the Council when seeking approval and adoption of the Committee's minutes. This item can be discussed in full by the Town Council.

### **3. Organisation of Woodbridge Town Council**

- 3.1. The Council is formed of 16 Councillors; with four Councillors each being elected from the four Town Wards; Farlingaye, Kyson, Seckford and Riverside
- 3.2. The business of the Council shall be conducted through meetings of the Councillors under the Chairmanship of the Town Mayor or Deputy Mayor.
- 3.3. The Council shall appoint a remunerated Clerk together with such other paid staff as it deems necessary for the sufficient execution of the Council's business.
- 3.4. The Council shall maintain **six** Standing Committees drawn from its membership, each in the charge of a Chairman and a Deputy Chairman and authorised to whatever extent the Council may determine respectively for the purposes of **Finance, Staffing**, Amenities, Planning, Climate Emergency and Highways & Transport.
- 3.5. Each of the Standing Committees shall consist of nine Councillors other than the Highways & Transport, **Staffing** and Climate **Emergency** Committees which shall consist of five Councillors. The Climate Emergency Committee will additionally include four co-opted **non-Councillor** committee members.
- 3.6. The allocation of members to Committees shall be made by political groups (as registered with the Town Clerk), who will submit their nominations in writing, observing political balance, to the Town Clerk for confirmation at the AGM of the Town Council, always providing that the Highways Committee shall consist of at least one Councillor from each ward.
- 3.7. The Council may establish ad hoc Sub-Committees for advisory purposes reporting either to itself or to a Standing Committee
- 3.8. The Town Mayor shall be a member of all Standing Committees.
- 3.9. The Chairmen shall be members of each of their reporting Sub-Committees.

### **4. Role of Woodbridge Town Council**

The role of the Town Council is to carry out all statutory functions reserved to Council, **including but not limited to the following functions:**

- 4.1. To approve the Annual Budget and Precept demand.
- 4.2. To approve expenditure against General Fund/Earmarked Reserves and any virements across Committee budgets.
- 4.3. To review and amend the Standing Orders and the functions and constitution of the Committees of the Council. NB Currently the Council

has established a Standing Orders Sub Committee to advise and make recommendations about such matters.

- 4.4. To approve a schedule of meetings of the Council and its Committees.
- 4.5. To approve the appointment or nomination by the Council of persons to fill vacancies on outside bodies.
- 4.6. To take appropriate action on the recommendations of Committees or Working Parties of the Council as necessary.
- 4.7. To review these Terms of Reference and delegated authority provided to Committees and the Town Clerk from time to time.
- 4.8. The appointment and dismissal of the Town Clerk.
- 4.9. To approve Accounts for Payment.
- 4.10. To authorise the sealing of legal documents, leases, contracts and licences where authority to do so is not provided elsewhere.
- 4.11. To respond to major consultations and those outside of the scope of other Committees.
- 4.12. To receive the External Audit report and approve the Annual Return.
- 4.13. To consider any matters within the Terms of Reference of another Committee at any time.
- 4.14. To consider all other matters outside of any other Committee's Terms of Reference.
- 4.15. As a matter of practice there will be no Committee meetings held on a Tuesday the day following a Bank Holiday unless special circumstances arise.

## **5. FINANCE ~~AND STAFFING~~ COMMITTEE**

The Committee shall:

- 5.1. monitor and make recommendations in respect of all proposed:
  - 5.1.1. capital expenditure including the revenue implications thereof,
  - 5.1.2. loans to local organisations.
- 5.2. review the Clerk's proposals for:
  - 5.2.1. the annual budget forecast including the financial precept, and any change to the totality of the Council's reserves,
  - 5.2.2. any changes to the Council's investment portfolio,
  - 5.2.3. the insurance of the Council's properties

- 5.3. propose and review the scale of charges for the use of the Council's facilities,
- 5.4. ensure the Council's land and property assets are protected from loss, damage, encroachment of similar issues
- 5.5. review the quarterly and annual internal audit reports and act upon recommendations by reviewing the internal audit action plan
- 5.6. ensure the Council's obligations as land and property owners are fulfilled
- 5.7. review comments and recommendations of annual external audit
- 5.8. make recommendations to Council regarding policy and strategic matters relating to all of the above.

## 6. AMENITIES COMMITTEE

The Committee shall:

- 6.1. promote the prudent and efficient management of all those properties for which the Council is directly responsible,
- 6.2. recommend such steps as it deems necessary for the regulation of the management of those properties for which the Council is the custodian trustee,
- 6.3. monitor all the amenity and safety matters within or in the neighbourhood of Woodbridge and press for such correction or improvement action as is deemed desirable,
- 6.4. propose new projects for the benefit of the inhabitants of Woodbridge,
- 6.5. recommend measures for the protection and improvement of the local environment,
- 6.6. propose schemes for the encouragement of local tourism, sport and cultural activities,
- 6.7. submit any expenditure proposals in the forthcoming financial year to the Finance and Staffing Committee not later than the end of November in the current year.

Delegated authority of the Amenities Committee:

- I. Expenditure against the Town Council Budget, sections:

- i. General Amenity
- ii. Elmhurst Park
- iii. Kingston Field
- iv. Other Amenity Areas
- v. Shire Hall - internal only

To include virements within the budget sections detailed above.

- II. To recommend annual budget estimates for the Amenities Budget sections identified above to the Council's Finance & Staffing Committee.
- III. To monitor the financial performance, quality and effectiveness of service provision.
- IV. To make recommendations to Council regarding policy and strategic matters relating to all of the above.

## **7. PLANNING COMMITTEE**

The Committee shall:

7.1. receive from the Clerk a summary of every Planning Application submitted, the name of the Applicant, the address of the project described in the Application and any information relating to the Listed Building or Conservation Area status of the proposals

7.2. assess each application with reference to

- i. existing legislation including the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) together with General Development and Classes Orders,
- ii. Local and County Structure Plans,
- iii. declared Conservation Areas
- iv. harmonisation with the surrounding area,
- v. the views of neighbours and other members of the public
- vi. any known history of the buildings or land in question.

7.3. assess each Application without reference to:

- i. (in a personal application) the status, reputation or personal detail relating to the the Applicant
- ii. aspects automatically determined by regulations and legal requirements

- iii. any information concerning the likely implementation of the subject matter of the Application.
- 7.4. pass motions recommending 'approval', 'no objection', or 'refusal', qualified by any additional comments of the Committee's choosing, allowing however that the Committee shall refer major proposals to the Council for decision,
- 7.5. empower the Chairman to make a response to a planning application following a discussion with the majority of members of the Committee in the event that the consultation time does not allow for a meeting to take place if the application is judged by the Regular Chairman to be,
  - i. trivial or of minor importance,
  - ii. determinable solely by regulations or by legal requirements,
- 7.6. defer any Applications not considered in detail by the Committee to a subsequent meeting.
- 7.7. respond to invitations to comment on the details of any planning projects received, even if located outside Woodbridge, and refer them to the Council if of major importance.
- 7.8. monitor all strategic highway and road safety matters within or in the neighbourhood of Woodbridge and press for such correction or improvement action as is deemed desirable.
- 7.9. make recommendations to Council regarding policy and strategic matters relating to all of the above.

## **8. HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT COMMITTEE**

The **Highways and Transport** Committee has the responsibility to monitor and make recommendations including:

- 8.1. Maintenance of highways, roads, footpaths, street lighting, street furniture and verges
- 8.2. All Highways Authority Management and Service Plans as issued from time to time
- 8.3. To propose projects for inclusion in the Town Council's work plan and budget as agreed with the and implemented by the Highways Authority
- 8.4. To coordinate with the Planning Committee on strategic highway and road safety matters

- 8.5. To liaise with a Suffolk County Council Officer and East Suffolk Council Officer who will be in attendance at a Joint Highways meeting
- 8.6. To monitor and encourage the use of public transport and active transport (walking and cycling) in the town
- 8.7. To raise issues relating to public transport, walking and cycling with the County Joint Highways Committee. Request Joint Highways Committee to liaise with public transport operators relating to services which affect the Town
- 8.8. To make recommendations to Council regarding policy and strategic matters relating to all of the above.

## **9. CLIMATE EMERGENCY COMMITTEE**

The Committee has the responsibility to consider and make recommendations to the Town Council **on** initiatives related to the reduction of the Town's carbon footprint. Such initiatives may include:

- 9.1. Declare a Climate Emergency which requires urgent action
- 9.2. Make the Council's activities net-zero carbon by 2030
- 9.3. Ensure that all strategic decisions, budgets and approaches to planning decisions are in line with a shift to zero carbon by 2030
- 9.4. Promote new projects for the benefit and well-being of the inhabitants of Woodbridge
- 9.5. Work with, influence and inspire partners and suppliers across the District and County to reduce the carbon footprint generated by the services which they supply to the Town
- 9.6. Endeavour to work with all the Council's Committees to make their decision in alignment with the objectives of the Climate Emergency Committee
- 9.7. To make recommendations to Council regarding policy and strategic matters relating to all of the above.

## **10. STAFFING COMMITTEE**

This committee is appointed to make decisions about all staffing matters, subject to budget and expenditure limits decided by the finance committee. The committee shall:

- 10.1. establish and keep under review the staffing structure in consultation with the Finance Committee.
- 10.2. draft, implement, review, monitor and revise policies for staff.

- 10.3. establish and review salary pay-scales for all categories of staff and to be responsible for their administration and review.
- 10.4. oversee the recruitment and appointment of staff.
- 10.5. arrange execution of new employment contracts and changes to contracts.
- 10.6. establish and review performance management (including annual appraisals) and staff training programmes for staff.
- 10.7. oversee any process leading to dismissal of staff (including redundancy).
- 10.8. keep under review staff working conditions, and health and safety matters.
- 10.9. monitor and address regular or sustained staff absence.
- 10.10. make recommendations on staffing-related expenditure to the Finance Committee.
- 10.11. consider any appeal against a decision in respect of pay.
- 10.12. To consider a grievance or disciplinary matter (and any appeal).
- 10.13. To supervise and performance-manage the Clerk's work, to administer his/her leave requests, record and monitor his/her absence, and handle grievance and disciplinary matters and pay disputes.

**Delegated authority of the Staffing Committee:**

- I. Expenditure against the Town Council Budget, section 'Legal fees'

## **11. STAFFING SUBCOMMITTEE**

This sub-committee is appointed to consider grievance or disciplinary matters (not including an appeal therefrom) referred from the staffing committee, and to manage the Clerk. The sub-committee shall:

- 11.1. consider grievance or disciplinary matters in accordance with the council's grievance or disciplinary policies.
- 11.2. manage, supervise and appraise the Clerk, administer leave requests, record and monitor absences from work.



11.3. consider any appeal by the Clerk against a decision on pay.

Delegated authority of the Staffing Subcommittee:

I. Expenditure against the Town Council Budget, section 'Legal fees'

## 12. STANDING ORDERS SUB COMMITTEE

The role of the Standing Orders Sub Committee is set out in Paragraph 4.3 of these Terms of Reference. It shall:

12.1. advise and make recommendations to Council about Standing Orders generally, including reviewing and amending them, and advising Council about the functions and constitution of the Committees of the Council.

NB The Standing Orders Sub Committee will be comprised of five Councillors plus the Mayor as Chairman of the Council.

## 13. YOUTH FORUM

This is a Sub Committee of the Town Council. Membership consists of three Town Councillors and representatives from local schools and youth organisations. Council members to be appointed at the Annual Town Council meeting. The Chairman is to be appointed by the schools and youth organisations on a rotation basis. The number of meetings per year will be agreed in consultation with schools and youth organisations.

*Key responsibilities:*

- The young people who attend the Youth Forum agree their own agenda, supported by their associates and the Town Council. The Town Council will provide administrative support and a venue for the meetings.
- To make recommendations to the Town Council on the use of any funding available in the Youth Forum budget for projects and activities for young people in Woodbridge.