



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 and Working Parties.

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, Full Council and its Committees have the authority to delegate any of its functions to the Town Clerk, or to Working Parties consisting of 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 any decision on this item as "Agreed". If it is not, then the minutes will show the decision as "Recommended", and it will then be brought to the Council's particular attention by the Chair 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 up to 16 Councillors; with four Councillors each being elected or co-opted to represent 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 five Standing Committees drawn from its membership, each in the charge of a Chair and a Deputy Chair and authorised to whatever extent the Council may determine respectively for the purposes of Finance, Staffing, Amenities, Planning, and Climate and Ecological Emergency.

3.5. Each of the Standing Committees shall consist of nine Councillors other than the Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee which shall consist of six Councillors. The Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee will additionally include up to six 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.

3.7. The Council may establish ad hoc Sub-Committees and Working Parties 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 Chair of each committee shall be a member 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:

- a) To approve the Annual Budget and Precept demand.

- b) To approve expenditure against General Fund/Earmarked Reserves and any virements across Committee budgets.
- c) To review and amend the Standing Orders and the functions and constitution of the Committees of the Council.
- d) To approve a schedule of meetings of the Council and its Committees.
- e) To approve the appointment or nomination by the Council of persons to fill vacancies on outside bodies.
- f) To consider recommendations of Committees or Working Parties of the Council as necessary.
- g) To review these Terms of Reference and delegated authority provided to Committees and the Town Clerk from time to time.
- h) The appointment, salary, terms and conditions and dismissal of Council employees.
- i) To approve Accounts for Payment.
- j) To authorising the sealing of legal documents, leases, contracts and licences where authority to do so is not provided elsewhere.
- k) To respond to major consultations and those outside of the scope of other Committees.
- l) To receive the Internal Audit reports and agree appropriate action as required.
- m) To receive the External Audit report and agree appropriate action as required.
- n) To agree and approve the Annual Return.
- o) To review and approve the Council’s insured risks and insurance policy.
- p) To consider any matters within the Terms of Reference of another Committee at any time.
- q) To consider all other matters outside of any other Committee’s Terms of Reference.

5. Finance Committee

The Committee shall:

- a) monitor and make recommendations in respect of all proposed:
 - i. capital expenditure including the revenue implications thereof,
 - ii. loans to local organisations.
- b) review the Clerk’s proposals for:
 - i. the annual budget forecast including the financial precept, and any change to the totality of the Council’s reserves,

- ii. any changes to the Council’s investment portfolio,
- iii. the scale of charges for the use of the Council’s facilities,

6. Amenities Committee

The Committee shall:

- a. incur expenditure on the Council’s amenities and property which is within the agreed budget for the current year.
- b. aim to ensure the prudent and efficient management of all those properties for which the Council is directly responsible,
- c. recommend such steps as it deems necessary for the regulation of the management of those properties for which the Council is the custodian trustee,
- d. monitor the amenity and safety matters within Woodbridge and press for such correction or improvement action as is deemed desirable,
- e. propose new projects for the benefit of the residents of Woodbridge, and schemes for the encouragement of local tourism, sport and cultural activities,
- f. recommend measures for the protection and improvement of the local environment,
- g. submit any expenditure proposals in the forthcoming financial year to the Finance Committee not later than the end of November in the current year.

7. Planning Committee

The Committee shall:

- a. incur expenditure on planning advice and legal fees or other planning-related costs which is within the agreed budget for the current year.
- b. 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,
- c. 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, Local and County Structure Plans,

- ii. declared Conservation Areas.
 - iii. harmonisation with the surrounding area,
 - iv. the views of neighbours and other members of the public where these relate to material planning considerations.
 - v. any known history of the buildings or land in question.
- d. assess each Application without reference to:
- i. (in a personal application) the status, reputation, or personal detail relating to 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.
- e. pass motions recommending ‘approval’, ‘no comment’, 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,
- f. In the event that the consultation time does not allow for a meeting to take place, the Committee shall empower the Clerk to make a response to a planning application following a discussion with the majority of members of the Committee. The application must be judged by the Clerk, after discussion with the Chair of the Committee to be either -
- i. trivial or of minor importance,
 - ii. determinable solely by regulations or by legal requirements,
- g. defer any Applications not considered in detail by the Committee to a subsequent meeting.
- h. 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.
- i. 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.

8. Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee

The Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee shall:

- a. incur expenditure on promoting, publicising and supporting measures designed to reduce the Town’s carbon footprint and encourage diversification of fauna

and flora, and anything deemed relevant to the Committee, within the agreed budget for the current year.

- b. make recommendations to the appropriate Council Committees as to carbon reduction and wildlife development measures within that Committee's remit.

9. Staffing Committee

The Staffing Committee shall:

- a. incur expenditure on staffing and associated costs which is within the agreed budget for the current year.
- b. monitor all staff expenditure,
- c. review and recommend changes to employee terms and conditions of employment including rates of pay.
- d. review the performance of the Council's staff and take any action that the Council may require,
- e. recommend future training needs.
- f. agree subscriptions to employer/employee organisations.
- g. recommend a selection procedure for the recruitment of paid staff and implement the Council's requirements.
- h. Appoint Sub-Committees to consider disciplinary/grievance matters and appeals.

10. Standing Orders Working Party

The Standing Orders Working Party shall review and make recommendations to Council regarding changes to these Terms of Reference and:

- a) Standing Orders
- b) Financial Regulations
- c) All other Council policies
- d) The Council's 'Scheme of Delegation'

12. Disciplinary/Grievance Sub-Committee

The Sub-Committee shall hear and determine all disciplinary and grievance issues relating to staff.

13. Appeals Sub-Committee

The Sub-Committee shall, if requested by an employee, reconsider a disciplinary or grievance issue and make a final recommendation to Full Council.

14. Highways and Transport Working Party

The Highways and Transport Working Party has the responsibility to monitor and make recommendations including:

- a expenditure on Highways and Transport issues which are within the Council's legal powers.
- b Maintenance of highways, roads, footpaths, footways, street lighting, street furniture and verges,
- c All Highways Authority Management and Service Plans as issued from time to time,
- d To propose projects for inclusion in the Town Council's work plan and budget as agreed with and implemented by the Highways Authority,
- e To liaise with a Suffolk County Council Highways Officer and host 'Joint Highways' meetings.
- f Changes to public transport routes and timetables, including accessibility and punctuality issues.

15. Youth Forum Working Party

The Youth Forum shall review and make recommendations to Council regarding:

- a) Youth facilities
- b) Encouraging engagement with youths through the schools. Support for young people

16. Property Working Party

The Property Working Party shall review and make recommendations to Council regarding (but not limited to) the following ongoing projects of the Council:

- a) The Shire Hall
- b) Theatre Street toilet site
- c) 15 Tide Mill Way (Art Club building)

d) The management of the Tide Mill basin foreshore