

ST STEPHEN PARISH COUNCIL
COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Delegated actions of the committees shall be in accordance with Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and the Scheme of Delegation and with directions given by the Full Council from time to time.

(a) FINANCE

Purpose

To oversee the work of the Parish Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer in matters relating to Finance and Audit. To provide guidance and assistance to the Clerk / RFO and make decisions on financial matters, save those that are the responsibility of the Full Council.

Membership

Committee shall consist of Nine Parish Councillors, including the Chair. Vice Chair is ex-officio and Chairs of Committees. All Councillors may attend and speak at a Finance meeting. The Committee will elect the Chair, and a temporary chair for the meeting in the absence of the Chair. Membership shall be reviewed at the Annual Full Council Meeting in May. The committee quorum is Three Councillors with voting powers. The committee shall meet quarterly or as required.

Functions

- To oversee and monitor the Council's Income and Expenditure.
- To review the estimates and budgets put forward by staff and committees and propose a budget and precept to Full Council based on the figures provided and other financial commitments of the Council for the next financial year.
- To review the Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Internal Controls and the Financial Risk Management annually.
- To consider and determine expenditure under Section 137, and applications for financial assistance in accordance with the Council Grants and Discounts Policy.
- To review any subscriptions, honorariums, contracts with suppliers and providers with a view to their continued necessity, suitability, and value for money.
- To consider and approve hire rates for Council Centres, sports, grounds and allotment rents.
- To renew, monitor and oversee the creation of current and new leases, agreements and licences.
- To review and approve the Councils quarterly bank reconciliation and budget reports and ensure compliance of regulations.

- To be responsible for ensuring the asset register is updated annually. To ensure that no tangible moveable property shall be purchased, acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the committee/Full Council, save where the estimated value of any one item of tangible moveable property does not exceed £500.
- To oversee, where appropriate, alternative and external funding to deliver Council projects, on request by a committee or Council.
- Establish and manage the Council's Investment Strategy for approval by Full Council.
- Any other matters delegated to the Committee or deemed relevant to these terms of reference.

Responsibilities

- The RFO will provide detailed estimates of all income and expenditure on base activities for the year. These figures will form the basis of preparing the draft Budget.
- The payments schedule will be presented with supporting invoices to the Committee members. Two members of the committee will be responsible for checking these and electronically authorising payments /signing cheques.

(b) HUMAN RESOURCES

Purpose

The purpose of the HR Committee is to oversee the organisation, employment, management and terms and conditions of employment of the Council and to make appropriate recommendations to the Council for ratification.

Membership

The Committee shall comprise six Councillors including the Chair and Vice Chair. The Committee will elect the Chair, and a temporary chair for the meeting in the absence of the Chair. Membership shall be reviewed at the Annual Full Council Meeting in May. The committee quorum is Three Councillors with voting powers. The committee shall meet quarterly or as required.

Functions

The Committee will be responsible, in conjunction with the Clerk to the Council or other professional advisers, for:-

- developing HR strategy
- developing and reviewing of HR policies and procedures
- staffing levels and structure

- job descriptions/person specifications
- overseeing staff recruitment, selection and appointment
- staff vetting
- staff retention
- determining or reviewing staff conditions of service and general terms of employment
- salary grading and pay including annual staff review and other remuneration matters
- leave entitlements including annual holiday, sickness, statutory entitlements and special leave
- special conditions relating to a specific post or individual
- allowances, expenses and subsistence
- working hours
- pension arrangements
- sickness absence management
- trade union membership recognition
- staff performance review/appraisals
- operation of the Council disciplinary, grievance, capability, grading and appeal procedures and equal opportunities policy
- health, safety and welfare of staff
- any other matters delegated to the Committee or deemed relevant to these terms of reference.

Specific Sub-committees or Panels

Smaller and specifically focussed Sub-committees should be set up to deal with confidential personnel matters such as capability, discipline or grievances as provided for in the relevant Council procedures.

A Recruitment and Selection Panel should also be set up for example to appoint a Clerk comprising of the interview panel (of perhaps three Councillors and a professional adviser if required) who are involved throughout the recruitment and then the selection process.

Confidentiality

The meetings of this Committee will be confidential to the members of the HR Committee and exclude the press and the public.

(c) COMMUNITY & LEISURE

Reviewed Full Council 19 May 22

Purpose

The purpose of the Community and Leisure Committee is to work to better understand, engage with and involve members of the Parish community in Parish Council business and deliver projects to promote wellbeing, sustainability, and inclusivity.

Membership

The committee shall comprise five Councillors, Chair or Vice Chair are ex-officio. Up to four Co-opted members of the public may join during the year if authorised by the Committee/Council. These persons may have voting rights on non-financial decisions. All Councillors may attend and speak at a Community & Leisure meeting. The Committee will elect the Chair, and a temporary chair for the meeting in the absence of the Chair. Membership shall be reviewed at the Annual Full Council Meeting. Meetings are held bi-monthly

Functions

- To oversee the Council's commitment to support the community within its area of benefit and influence.
- To facilitate effective community engagement that encourage and enable local residents to contribute to the development of the Parish, including residents surveys etc.
- To be responsible for the deployment of the Committees' delegated budget and demonstrate best value.
- To help guide the development, accessibility and improvement of the leisure and sports facilities within the Parish and make recommendations to Council regarding future investment in facilities.
- To promote the usage of the Parish community facilities.
- To develop projects to improve, replace or provide additional facilities
- Identify and specify projects within the remit of the Committee suitable for funding by Section 106 or other grants.
- To work in partnership with local groups and organisations, encourage the running of community events and provide help and resources from the Facilitation Budget where appropriate.
- Through delegation to the Annual Events Working Party, organise the Parish Annual Remembrance Day Service and any other community events the Full Council has agreed to directly organise. Including appointing Task and Finish Groups to take on the detailed organisation if required.
- Support projects and events for young people and Community groups.
- Any other matters delegated to the Committee or deemed relevant to these terms of reference.

(d) FIXED ASSETS

Purpose

Reviewed Full Council 19 May 22

To oversee the management of the Council's fixed assets, providing value for money and improving sustainability.

Membership

The Committee shall comprise six Councillors. The Chair and Vice Chair are ex-officio. The Committee quorum is three and the Committee shall meet bi-monthly or as required. The Committee will elect the Chair, and a temporary chair for the meeting in the absence of the Chair. Membership shall be reviewed at the Annual Full Council Meeting in May. All Councillors may attend and speak at a Fixed Assets committee meeting

Functions:

- Arrange and monitor ongoing maintenance schedules for the following:
 - a. All Buildings and land in Parish ownership or responsibility
 - b. Parish Play Areas – with reference to the Annual Independent Inspection Reports
 - c. Woodland and Open Spaces
 - d. Bus Shelters
 - e. Benches and any other structures that are the responsibility of the Parish
 - f. Parish allotment sites

- Manage the maintenance, suitability and replacement provision of equipment, with the exclusion of routine maintenance
- Assess assets in respect of all Health and Safety Legislation and ensure regular inspections in accordance with current requirements. (Inc Elec, water & Gas)
- Assess compliance with DDA requirements and implement works if within budgets or make recommendations to Full Council for enabling works as required.
- Monitor Energy Usage and make recommendations to Full Council for improvements.
- Develop a strategy for the Parish's fixed assets and make recommendations to Full Council regarding viability and future of assets based on
 - a. Long & short-term maintenance costs
 - b. Running costs
 - c. Community benefit and accessibility
- Oversee and monitor work contracts on any assets
- Identify and specify projects suitable for funding from S106 or other Grant Funding.
- Any other matters delegated to the Committee or deemed relevant to these terms of reference.

(e) PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT

Purpose

Reviewed Full Council 19 May 22

To make recommendations to the Planning Authority (St Albans District Council) on planning applications, appeals etc that relate to the Parish area. Commenting on emerging planning policies. To work to improve biodiversity throughout the Parish area.

Membership

The Committee shall comprise six Councillors. The Chair and Vice Chair are ex-officio. The Committee quorum is three and the Committee shall meet bi-monthly or as required. The Committee will elect the Chair, and a temporary chair for the meeting in the absence of the Chair. Membership shall be reviewed at the Annual Full Council Meeting in May. All Councillors may attend and speak at a Planning and Environment meeting

Functions

- To make comment to the relevant Planning authority (usually District Council) on any Planning Application, appeal within or potentially affecting the Parish, that has been referred to the Committee by any Councillor or member of the public. All councillors to be circulated with weekly list of applications and members of the committee will be expected to have looked at the list of applications in their area and decided if any warrant discussion at committee.
- To make request to any District Councillor to call in any application that the Parish believes would benefit from a hearing at Committee.
- On request, to take representations from members of the public or applicants regarding any application. Where multiple applications are received supporters/objectors will be asked to appoint a single spokesperson. 3 minutes will be allowed to present a case.
- Upon request, consider any request by a prospective developer to put a case to the Council prior to the start of any meeting. Such meetings are at the discretion of the Committee and will not make any judgement on the merits of the proposal.
- Consider and respond to any Planning processes and legislation it considers appropriate (New Planning Policies, Local Plans, district & County consultations etc.)
- Facilitate a Neighbourhood Plan Steering and Monitoring Group, consisting of Councillors and Residents, receive reports and present to Full Council.
- To develop management plans for all Parish Council open spaces and facilitate environmental improvements, including tree planting, woodland management, wild flower meadow, wetland areas and make recommendations to Fixed Assets committee regarding maintenance programmes.

- Support environmental improvements and management of other areas in the Parish (eg. Bricket wood Common, Park Street Pits etc).
- Identify and specify environmental enhancement projects suitable for funding from S106 or other Grant Funding.