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Committee Terms of Reference

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| Policy Ref. | C13 | |
| Date Last Adopted | May 2025 | |
| Date of Next Review | May 2026 | |
| Possible Prompts for Earlier Review | * Change in national guidance or legislation that impacts the terms of reference * Specific delegations agreed by Full Council or committees requiring inclusion in the policy | |
| Previous Adoption Dates \* | May 2022\*  May 2021  March 2020  May 2019  May 2018  May 2017  May 2016 | June 2015  May 2014  May 2013  May 2012  May 2011 |
| Author | HR & Governance Manager | |

\* previously part of the Scheme of Delegation policy document

Committee Terms of Reference

The Town Council’s Scheme of Committee Terms of Reference is an essential policy to enable the Town Council to function efficiently and effectively. Without this, every decision would have to be taken by the Full Council.

Under the Local Government Act 1972 s101, the Town Council may appoint committees to undertake any of its functions not required by law to be dealt with by Full Council.

Decision making powers are given to both committees and officers to enable the Town Council to react to circumstances and operate effectively. This policy document sets out the delegations to committees – there is a separate Scheme of Delegation policy document that covers delegations to officers and other individuals.

There will be times when one-off / temporary delegations are agreed by Full Council or a committee – they will not be recorded in this document. Additional permanent delegations will be added to this document at the next available review.

Section 4 of the Town Council’s Standing Orders confirms the status and arrangements of committees, sub-committees and working groups. Powers cannot legally be delegated to individual councillors or working groups.

Working groups are ordinarily established to investigate and/or review a particular matter then report back to the relevant committee or Full Council with its findings, which may include recommendations. Working group terms of reference do not form part of this policy document.

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# Full Council Functions

Membership: all councillors

Quorum: minimum of 7 councillors

Frequency: quarterly plus annual meeting

The following matters are to be dealt with by the Full Council:

* 1. Approval of budget and setting the precept
  2. Approval of the Annual Return and Audit of Accounts
  3. Authorisation of borrowing
  4. Adopting or changing all Town Council policies
  5. Making of Orders under any statutory powers
  6. Making, amending or revoking byelaws
  7. Appointment of standing committees
  8. Appointing Town Council representatives to outside bodies
  9. Appointment, or dismissal, of the Proper Officer
  10. Assigning the duties of Responsible Financial Officer within the staff structure
  11. Considering an external auditor’s report made in the public interest
  12. Confirming (by resolution) that it has satisfied the statutory criteria to exercise the General Power of Competence
  13. Considering and approving the acquisition or disposal of land or assets (including entering into leases) in accordance with the Town Council’s Financial Regulations
  14. All other matters which must, by law or by Town Council policy, be reserved to the Full Council

# Delegation to Committees

The following matters are delegated to the Town Council’s Committees to make decisions on behalf of the Town Council.

Please note:

* Committees are delegated plenary decision making powers in respect of matters delegated. They must be exercised in accordance with the law, the Town Council’s Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, and any approved policy framework and budget
* Full Council may at any time, following resolution, revoke any delegated authority
* Committees may decide not to exercise delegated responsibilities and may instead make a recommendation to Full Council. Similarly, where a committee has no delegated power to make a decision, it makes a recommendation to Full Council
* The Mayor of the Council (or Deputy Mayor in their absence) is an ex-officio member of all committees and entitled to vote
* Decisions on Town Council business cannot be delegated to individual councillors
* All correspondence for the Town Council and its committees shall be conducted through the Town Clerk

All Committees

1. Consideration of first draft of the committee budget
2. Monitor income and expenditure within the committee budget
3. Expenditure decisions within the committee budget
4. Conduct the first review of policy documents within the committee’s areas of remit, and recommendation to Full Council
5. Conduct the first review of leases and other similar disposals of land within the committee’s areas of remit, and recommendation to Full Council
6. Creation and appointment of sub-committees and setting of terms of reference
7. Creation and appointment of working groups and setting of terms of reference

Assets & Facilities Committee

Membership: 10 councillors

Quorum: minimum of 4 councillors

Frequency: quarterly

Delegated powers:

All matters (except those retained by Full Council or delegated to officers) relating to:

1. Beach Huts
2. Bus Shelters
3. CCTV
4. Concessions & Street Trading
5. Esplanade Car Park
6. Events (Town Council events – not civic events - and external events on Town Council land)
7. Hurdis House
8. Martello Café
9. Martello Tower
10. Memorials (including benches, trees and The Shoal)
11. Old Town Hall
12. Public Toilets
13. Street Furniture (including bins, noticeboards, lighting and non-memorial benches)
14. Sutton Park War Memorial
15. The Crypt
16. The View
17. Other assets & facilities as per the Town Council’s Fixed Asset Register and not within the remit of the Golf, Open Spaces & Climate Action Committee

Finance & General Purposes Committee

Membership: 10 councillors

Quorum: minimum of 4 councillors

Frequency: quarterly

Delegated powers:

All matters (except those retained by Full Councilor delegated to officers) relating to:

1. Approval and award of grants and donations
2. Civic & ceremonial activities
3. Consideration of annual budget request of all standing committees for recommendation to Full Council
4. Considering and agreeing action to all Internal Audit reports
5. Electoral matters
6. Oversight of external funding performance
7. Review of Full Council budget position
8. Risk management strategy
9. Town Council leases
10. Town Council litigation
11. Town Council offices (37 Church Street)
12. Town Council policy programme
13. Write off of debts in accordance with the Town Council’s Bad Debt Policy

Golf, Open Spaces & Climate Action Committee

Membership: 10 councillors

Quorum: minimum of 4 councillors

Frequency: quarterly

Delegated powers:

All matters (except those retained by Full Council or delegated to officers) relating to:

1. Allotments
2. Blatchington Pond
3. Grass Verges (those urban verges delegated from East Sussex County Council)
4. Grounds Maintenance Contract
5. High & Over
6. Martello Fields (including pump field and Cliff Gardens)
7. Oversight of Town Council’s Climate Action workstreams and performance
8. Seaford Head Estate (including Nature Reserve, South Hill Barn, Southdown Corner, South Hill farmland and Hope Gap Steps)
9. Seaford Head Golf Course (including the Golf Professional service and matters relating to Seaford Head Golf Club and members)
10. Seafront (not assets like beach huts or concession units)
11. The Crouch (including all onsite facilities and properties)
12. The Salts (including all onsite facilities and properties)
13. Trees (including Trees for Seaford)
14. Other open spaces as per the Town Council’s Fixed Asset Register

Personnel Committee

Membership: 6 councillors

Quorum: minimum of 3 councillors

Frequency: quarterly

Delegated powers:

All matters (except those retained by Full Council or delegated to officers) relating to:

* + 1. Consider recommendations from officers in relation to staff matters that cannot be determined by officers
    2. Review and approve the annual salaries budget being recommended to the Finance & General Purposes Committee for inclusion in the draft budgets
    3. Review and approve the template terms and conditions of employment
    4. Authorise permanent changes to the staff structure to reflect the Town Council’s performance needs, so long as within budget. Any changes requiring additional budget require Full Council approval
    5. Oversee the recruitment of the Town Clerk, except the appointment of the permanent Town Clerk which must be approved by Full Council
    6. Ensure annual appraisals are carried out for all staff, including the Town Clerk
    7. Authorise adjustments to employees Terms & Conditions of employment, including permanent increases to employees contracted hours of work; subject to the Committee being presented with a fully costed business case for any changes. Any changes requiring additional budget require Full Council approval
    8. Consideration and resolution of recommendations from the Grievance / Disciplinary Panel in terms of resolving grievance or disciplinary matters. Where there is a financial resolution, this can be authorised by the Personnel Committee if within budget or, if it is higher or an unbudgeted expenditure, this will have to be authorised by Full Council

2.5.a Grievance / Disciplinary Panel

Membership: 3 councillors from Personnel Committee

Quorum: minimum of 3 councillors

Frequency: as and when required

Delegated powers:

As a panel, this group will have no delegated powers and will instead make recommendations to the Personnel Committee for consideration, as follows:

* + 1. Consideration of all staff grievances unable to be dealt with by officers in accordance with the Grievance Policy and making recommendations to the Personnel Committee of the suggested outcome
    2. Consideration of all staff disciplinary matters unable to be dealt with by officers in accordance with the Disciplinary Policy and making recommendations to the Personnel Committee of the suggested outcome

Planning & Highways Committee

Membership: 10 councillors

Quorum: minimum of 4 councillors

Frequency: monthly

Delegated powers:

All matters (except those retained by Full Council or delegated to officers) relating to:

* + 1. Consider and provide consultee responses to planning applications, road closure applications, tree works applications and tree preservation orders
    2. Consider and provide consultee responses to national and local planning matters
    3. Consider and provide consultee responses to highways, transport and traffic matters, stopping up orders, and rights of way, bridleway and footpath matters
    4. Consider and agree responses to any proposals with respect to street naming
    5. Oversee the review of the Seaford Neighbourhood Plan in preparation for subsequent Full Council approval, reporting back to Full Council as required during the process
    6. Any other planning or highways matter the Town Council is consulted on

Appeals Committee

Membership: 5 councillors

Quorum: minimum of 3 councillors

Frequency: as and when required

Delegated powers:

All matters (except those retained by Full Council or delegated to officers) relating to:

* + 1. Consideration and resolution of all staff appeals concerning grievance or disciplinary matters.
    2. Consideration and resolution of all Freedom of Information Act appeals.
    3. Consideration and resolution of appeals to decisions relating to a complaint, where this is unable to be dealt with by officers.
    4. Consideration of all appeals against decisions where this is available within a policy.

*Note: the Committee cannot consider an appeal against a decision taken by the Full Council.*