



Ashburton Town Council

Terms of Reference for Committees and Subcommittees

Date Adopted	12 May 2026
Review date	2027 - 2028

Signed by Town Mayor:

Date:



ASHBURTON TOWN COUNCIL TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR COMMITTEES AND SUBCOMMITTEES.

The Council has appointed a number of Committees to carry out some of its functions. Committee members shall be appointed at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council.

Committees have the power to appoint sub-committees, working parties or advisory groups for specific purposes to report back to the Committee.

Each Committee has its own Terms of Reference. Each Committee is able to take decisions within the limits given to it. Anything falling beyond those limits must be referred to Full Council.

In general, Committees are responsible for advising on, monitoring and reviewing their areas of responsibility, and working up proposals for the future.

The Clerk or an appointed officer will attend all sub-committee meetings and will be able to advise Councillors generally, including on whether a decision can be taken by the Committee or whether it needs to be referred to the full Council.

In order for each committee to satisfy itself of the continuing relevance of its Terms of Reference the report that each committee at its first meeting of the municipal year will be asked to review and re-adopt their respective terms of reference.

All Committee terms of reference to be approved by the Full Council.



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FINANCE AND TOWN HALL BUILDINGS COMMITTEE

APPOINTMENT: - a minimum of four committee members shall be appointed at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council.

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS: - The Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor are appointed to this Committee ex-officio.

CHAIRMAN: - The Chairman is elected annually at the first meeting of the Committee following the annual meeting of the Council. The Chairman shall serve in this position until the next annual meeting of the Council unless the Chairman resigns from the position, resigns from the Council or becomes disqualified from being a member of the Council.

VICE CHAIRMAN: - The Vice-Chairman is elected annually at the first meeting of the Committee following the annual meeting of the Council following the election of the Chairman. The Vice Chairman will serve in this position until the next annual meeting of the Council unless the Vice Chairman resigns from the position, resigns from the Council or becomes disqualified from being a member of the Council. In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice Chairman shall deputise.

QUORUM: - The quorum of this Committee shall be four or 1/3 of members whichever is larger.

TERMS OF REFERENCE REVIEW: - The Council shall review and determine the terms of reference at the annual meeting of the Council.

Decisions made by this Committee serve as recommendations to Council save the following exceptions:

- a) Payment of invoices for work, services and other liabilities either previously confirmed by Council or where delegated within financial regulations to the Clerk and RFO and/or Finance Committee.
- b) The Council may consider from time-to-time delegating specific responsibilities to this Committee (within the scope of the LGA 1972 s101) but excluding any powers that cannot be delegated by the Council e.g. issuing a precept for the rate (s67 LG & FA 1992).
- c) Any such delegation of responsibility shall be clearly minuted within the Council minutes.
- d) To set up and administer sub-committees and working parties to facilitate the work of this Committee and for no other purpose.

The Committee shall determine the terms of reference and protocols for the sub-committees that shall report to this committee. No sub-committee or working party shall be formed or operated without terms of reference and protocols. Where matters have been delegated to this Committee for approval, it shall comply with all Council's policies, protocols, systems and procedures including Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and any other statute within legislation. Specific Responsibilities – Under the direction, leadership and guidance of the Committee Chairman, shall be accountable and responsible for the following areas of Council activity:

Ashburton Town Council Terms Of Reference For Committees And Subcommittees.



Oversight, responsibility for the Council finances and maintenance of Council property including buildings, land holdings and assets within the ownership or responsibility of the Town Council.

1. To present and include the Asset and Maintenance Development Plan within the papers for the precept meetings and to identify sources of finance to implement the plan. This will be produced within the confines of Financial Regulations and also the Council Business Risk Management Plan with reference to currently owned council capital projects. Compilation and presentation of income and expenditure forecasts for the following fiscal year.
2. Oversight of appropriate maintenance programmes for the above where appropriate and within budgetary and financial constraints. To implement the programmes in line with best practice and with due regard to standing orders and financial regulations. To receive the report from the Operations Manager.
3. To review responses from the Council internal and external auditors and make any recommendations. To lead on and undertake the Council systems of internal controls.
4. Monitor and recommend to Council all expenditure within s137 of the LGA 1972 (as amended) is within budgetary constraints and consider requests and make recommendations to Council.
5. Together with the Clerk & RFO to review council insurance and other procedures that could result in an impact on Council finances and make recommendations to Council.
6. Oversight and responsibility of relevant recording protocols both statutory and as required by this Council in relation to health and safety, maintenance and any other requirements.
7. Together with the Clerk & RFO to review the Budget Variance and the appropriateness of current budgets that have not been delegated to other Committees/Officers.
8. Responsible for condition report of all fixed assets that shall be presented to the Council for consideration from time to time but at least annually.
9. Responsible for ensuring adequate IT equipment, website and services are provided.
10. To consult with the Clerk and RFO where appropriate, on areas that have been delegated to the Clerk and RFO within financial regulations, standing orders or any other policies and protocols approved by the Council that impact on this Committees term of reference.

The Finance and Town Hall Building Committee meeting shall be held on the third Tuesday of each month commencing at 7.30 pm. The months of August and December may be excluded at the discretion of the Committee Chair.

Working groups of the Finance Committee

- Ashburton Climate Emergency
- Town Team



Staffing and Human Resources subcommittee

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Human Resources sub-committee is a sub-committee of the Finance Committee of Ashburton Town Council.
- 1.2 The purpose of this sub-committee is to meet legislative requirements to provide human resource management in respect of employment of staff by the Council and to ensure good governance and health and safety of staff; and to consider the training needs of Councillors and staff.

2. Membership

- 2.1 The committee shall comprise of at least four Councillors appointed at a Council meeting. The quorum shall be three.
- 2.2 The Deputy Town Mayor is invited to attend as Ex-Officio
- 2.3. At the first meeting of the HR sub-committee, a Chair will be elected by the members and the proposed terms of reference agreed.
- 2.4. If a vacancy occurs during the year, then a replacement must be approved by council at the next available Full Council meeting.
- 2.5. The Terms of Reference must be approved by Full Council.

3. Roles

- 3.1. The Human Resources sub-committee is a sub-committee of the Finance Committee of Ashburton Town Council.
- 3.2. The purpose of this sub-committee is to meet legislative requirements to provide human resource management in respect of employment of staff by the Parish Council and to ensure good governance and health and safety of staff; and to consider the training needs of Councillors and staff.

4. Meetings

- 4.1. Meetings to be convened on a scheduled basis and/or a needs basis, both within the requirements of the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12, para 10 and the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960, para 1
- 4.2. Meetings will not commence until the decision is taken to exclude the press and public.
- 4.3. At the discretion of the Chair of the committee, specialist HR advisors may be requested to attend. These advisors shall have no voting rights.
- 4.4. The committee may seek guidance and advice from appropriate organisations such as Devon Association of Local Councils, National Association of Local Councils, Society of Local Council Clerks, ACAS, Employment Solicitors etc., if in attendance these advisors shall have no voting rights.
- 4.5. The committee will comply with and have due regard to policies and guidance relating to staffing matters, which include (but are not limited to):
 - Code of Conduct and attendant regulations.
 - Standing Orders.
 - Financial Regulations.
 - Staff contracts which reference Terms and Conditions of Employment.
 - ACAS Guidelines and procedures for grievances or disciplinary matters.
 - National Joint Council (NJC) 'Green Book' pertaining to employment of local authority staff.



5. Recording the Meetings and Decisions

- 5.1. The Chair of the committee shall insure that an accurate record of the meeting is taken, including all decisions in line with the Standing Orders.
- 5.2. The committee will ensure that a copy of the minutes is provided to the next full council meeting (with due regards to confidentiality)
- 5.3. If requested, the Clerk may be required to attend the meeting to take minutes.

6. Restrictions

- 6.1. The Chair of the Town Council is not to be a member of the committee in order that they can chair a meeting of the Town Council as an appeal body, should that be required.
- 6.2. Only members of the Town Council may be members of the committee.
- 6.3. Only members of the committee may attend meetings unless specifically summoned.
- 6.4. A member of the Council will not sit as a member of the HR Committee if that member is involved in any matter under discussion.

7. The Committee's Responsibilities and Powers

- 7.1. The committee has the power under the Local Government Act 1972 to undertake all matters for the management of the Clerk and for assisting the Clerk with direction on management of other staff. The appraisal for the Clerk will be all the members of the HR sub-committee.
- 7.2. Under the above Act the committee has the responsibility of agreeing employment policies, procedures and documentation including Dignity at work/bullying and harassment policy, disciplinary and grievance policy, equal opportunity policy, appraisal policy and the health and safety policy, for recommendation to the Town Council.
- 7.3. The sub-committee has the power under the Local Government Act 1972 sections 101 and 112(2) to negotiate and agree with employees to confirm or amend terms and conditions as well as any proposed salary awards which will be reported to Full Council for decision.
- 7.4. The sub-committee is responsible Grievance & Disciplinary issues and Appeals.
- 7.5. The sub-committee will ensure an effective system of performance management is maintained for Council staff and will carry out the performance management system for the Clerk.
- 7.6. The sub-committee should consider training and professional development for Councillors and take these to Full Council for agreement and consider training and professional development for staff.
- 7.7. The committee will consider strategies and future direction for the committee and its responsibilities and appropriate actions.



Ashburton Information Centre subcommittee

Terms of reference: -

1. The Committee will be made up of 2 councillors and 4 volunteers.
2. The Chair and Deputy Chair of the council are ex officio.
3. The Clerk or appointed officer will be in attendance.
4. They will meet quarterly.
5. All decisions will be referred to the Finance committee.
6. Chair will be elected at the first meeting and must be a councillor.
7. The day-to-day running will be managed by the Clerk and a Volunteer Manager who will report back to the committee.
8. The committee will have responsibility for developing the information centre and setting up targets, projects and reviewing the success and development of the information centre.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Planning Committee meeting shall be held on the fourth Wednesday of each month commencing at 7.00 pm. The months of August and December may be excluded at the discretion of the Committee Chair.

THE PLANNING COMMITTEE:

- a) The Planning Committee is to be formed at the Annual Meeting which shall consist of at least 3 Councillors.
- b) The Chair or the Deputy Chair shall be empowered to cancel any committee meeting when there are no Planning Applications to be considered.
- c) The decisions of the Planning Committee, as taken at their published meetings, shall be given to the Planning Officer as the 'Official Recommendations' of Ashburton Town Council upon the Planning Applications concerned. Decisions taken in this manner shall be reported at the next full meeting of the Town Council, and not voted upon individually.
- d) The Chair or the Deputy Chair on their own shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of establishing a meeting of the Planning Committee.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- a) The Clerk shall, as soon as it is received, circulate and save electronically the following particulars of every planning application notified to the Councillors: -
 - i) the date on which it was received.
 - ii) the name of the applicant.
 - iii) the place to which it relates.
 - iv) a summary of the nature of the application.
- a) The Clerk shall refer every planning application to the Chair of the Planning Committee or in the Chair's absence to the Vice-Chair within 48 hours of receiving it.



GENERAL PURPOSE COMMITTEE

The General Purpose Committee meeting shall be held on the fourth Wednesday of each month commencing at 7.30 pm. The months of August and December may be excluded at the discretion of the Committee Chair.

Terms of Reference:

1. Will consist of a minimum of 5 councillors.
2. The Chair and deputy Chair will be elected at the first meeting after the AGM (the Chair will serve no more than two years as per standing orders.)
3. The committee will meet monthly on the fourth Wednesday after The Planning Committee.
4. The Chair and Deputy Chair of the council are ex officio members.
5. The Clerk or appointed officer will be in attendance.
6. The committee will review all areas of the community not investigated by the Finance and planning committees for example but not exclusive to:
 - I. Parking in the town
 - II. Road closures
 - III. Issues to be raised with the District and County Councils
 - IV. Projects to further develop the community and the residents.
 - V. Review reports from the neighbourhood plan sub committee

General Purpose Neighbourhood Plan Sub-Committee.

Terms of reference: -

- The sub-committee will be known as the Neighbourhood Plan Sub-Committee (NPSC)
- This will be a sub-committee of the General Purposes Committee reporting directly to that committee which, will in turn report to the Full Town Council.
- The sub-committee shall elect a Chair and deputy Chair from within its membership.
- The NPSC will elect a secretary from its membership.
- The NPSC will establish what amendments shall be made to the neighbourhood plan and process accordingly.
- Once amendments are established a report will be made to the GP Committee by one of the Town Council representatives on the committee.
- The NPSC. will be empowered to call upon advice from outside the committee



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membership and make use of the facilities of the clerk's Office.

- Any financial implications relating to the production of the Neighbourhood Plan shall be placed before the Finance & Town Hall Buildings Committee.

Working groups of the General Purpose Committee Town

Furniture

Land Management