

POLICY, GOVERNANCE & FINANCE COMMITTEE

Date: Monday, 19 June 2023

Title: Committee Terms of Reference

Contact Officer: Deputy Town Clerk - Adam Clapton

Purpose of the Report

To resolve whether the current terms of reference for this town council committee should remain as they are or be updated.

Background

The terms of reference set out the remit of the Committee and are closely tied to its visions and objectives. They are reviewed annually in May (or at any other point as requested) and help structure the Council's democratic process regarding day-to-day matters which require a Council resolution or longer-term projects and aspirations.

Current Situation

The current terms of reference for the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee are:

The overall purpose of this committee is to ensure that the council's finances, staffing, and its statutory obligations are conducted in accordance with good practice.

- a) To advise on, and consider, matters of Council administration and policy;
- b) To effectively conduct the Council's budgetary, financial and precepting responsibilities in accordance with statutory requirements, and to keep the smooth functioning of the Council's work under review.
- c) To consider and keep under review:
 - 1. the main objectives of the Council.
 - 2. all major issues of policy affecting the town council's area.
 - 3. the development of existing, and introduction of new, services.
 - 4. the order of priorities between services or projects, and to advise other committees accordingly.
 - 5. relationships with West Oxfordshire District and Oxfordshire County Councils, other public bodies, and outside Organisations.
- d) To consider the resources available to meet the Council's objectives in terms of land, property, finance, and manpower and to advise other committees and the Council as required;
- e) To consider the financial implications of the Council's plans and to recommend to the Council levels of expenditure in connection therewith;
- f) To regulate and control the finance of the Council;

- g) To consider estimates of this committee and of other committees of income and expenditure on continuing services and payments on capital account for the next and future fiscal years;
- h) To review all charges and fees made or proposed by all committees;
- i) To submit to the Council estimates of income and expenditure of the Council on continuing services and of payments on capital account for the next fiscal year and make a recommendation as to the Council's Precept;
- j) To consider and approve as appropriate matters referred from other committees to incur expenditure greater than already approved by the Council, within the requirements of Standing Orders; and to consider any such requirement in respect of its own expenditure;
- k) To have charge of the financial and accounting arrangements of the Council;
- l) To receive reports from the internal and external auditors;
- m) To approve the Financial Statements and Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR);
- n) To consider and decide upon recommendations from service committees for variations in staffing – via the Personnel Sub-Committee;
- o) To hold overall responsibility for employment matters - via the Personnel Sub-Committee;
- p) To review Standing Orders, terms of reference of committees, terms of delegation to officers and Financial Regulations and recommend amendments to the Council;
- q) To review from time-to-time existing Council Policies as well as agree and implement new Policies accordingly when the need arises – or to enact new government legislation and recommend to the Council;
- r) To be responsible to the Council for and review the effectiveness and efficiency of all services;
- s) To consider all matters arising in relation to the boundaries of the town, the number of Town Councillors and elections of any kind within the town and make recommendations to the Council;
- t) To consider any matters affecting members, including members' allowances (if appropriate) and the Council's Calendar of Meetings;
- u) To be responsible for the Council's assets, records, and archives;
- v) To be responsible for council's investment properties and other premises owned or leased to the council (save for council properties reserved to other committees according to their responsibilities);
- w) To consider applications for grants and to approve any such grants;
- x) The Membership of the Committee shall consist of 6 Members plus the Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor ex officio;
- y) The quorum of the Committee shall be 4 Members.

It should be noted that any Sub-Committees or Working Parties which may be created and are responsible to this Committee will have their own terms of reference presented at their first meeting.

New Councillors may like to refer to the Committee Structure provided in their induction packs for information relating to this and the other Committees of the Council.

Environmental impact

Having declared a Climate Change Emergency, Councillors should have due regard to the environmental impact of any decisions they make with regard to its facilities and services it operates.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

Financial implications

There are no financial implications pertaining to the report. The budgets for each of the areas listed in the terms are covered in cost codes and centres in the accompanying report of the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and consider the following:

1. To amend or agree the Committee Terms of Reference if agreed appropriate.