
Agenda Item:	Terms of Reference
Meeting Date:	Monday, 2 June 2025
Contact Officer:	Deputy Town Clerk

The purpose of this report is for Members to review and recommend terms of reference for the Committee for the forthcoming municipal year.

Background

At the Annual Council Meeting held on 7th May 2025, it was resolved that terms of reference for each Committee would be reviewed at each meeting in the current meeting cycle.

Current Situation

The current terms of reference for this Committee are:

- a) To recognise the value and benefit of voluntary groups and endeavours within our community, including provision of youth services, supporting and helping to facilitate where possible;
- b) To maintain infrastructure in the Town Council's ownership such as trees, floral displays, town centre street furniture (seats, litter bins), bus shelters, CCTV, noticeboards and Christmas Lights displays;
- c) To organise special events such as Freedom Parades, Remembrance Sunday and other Civic events within the programme and the budget agreed by the Council;
- d) To work in collaboration with other partnerships on town wide events such as the Christmas Lights switch-on and others that may arise from time to time;
- e) To oversee the Council's communication and publications – such as the website and quarterly newsletter;
- f) To oversee the local Schools in Bloom competition and the Council's entry into the regional In Bloom Competition;
- g) The Membership of the Committee shall consist of 6 Members plus the Town Mayor and The Leader of the Council ex officio with voting rights
- h) The quorum of the Committee shall be 4 Members.

The Committee is asked if it would like to make any amendments to the terms for the forthcoming municipal year. The Committee may like to consider the following changes/additions:

- (a) To acknowledge and promote the value and contributions of voluntary groups, local organisations, and community interest companies that deliver social value to our community—supporting and facilitating services, whether through partnerships or ad hoc arrangements, in accordance with relevant policies and legislation;
- (b) To oversee and maintain the infrastructure owned by the Town Council, including street furniture in the town centre (e.g. seating, litter bins, and salt bins), bus shelters, CCTV, noticeboards, and Christmas light displays.*;
- (c) To organise and deliver civic events, such as Remembrance, in line with the approved programme and within the budget set by the Council;
- To co-ordinate national commemorations, special community events, and initiatives in accordance with the Council's agreed programme and budget;
- To oversee the Council's communications and publications, including the website, newsletter, and social media platforms.

And,

- To recognise the importance of inclusivity by ensuring all voices in the community are heard and represented, advocating for underrepresented groups in line with equality legislation;
- To oversee community engagement with all residents of Witney, relevant stake holders and businesses, including, but not limited to conducting an annual resident satisfaction survey to gauge feedback;
- To engage proactively with young people, supporting and promoting youth services where possible, and to oversee the operations of the Witney Youth Council;
- To administer the Children & Young People Grant funds, considering applications and/or funding on an annual basis and making recommendations to the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee;
- Within all its decision making ensure that the green environment and biodiversity is protected and enhanced in line with the Council's Climate Emergency aspirations.

*NB: trees, floral displays and hanging baskets are proposed to be under the remit of the new Climate & Biodiversity Committee.

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Equality – By explicitly incorporating inclusivity into its Terms of Reference, the Council would show its commitment to ensuring that all individuals feel valued, heard, and represented. It affirms that inclusivity is not an afterthought, but a guiding principle embedded in the Council’s decision-making.
- b) Biodiversity – see text above.
- c) Crime & Disorder – The Council’s work to provide a voice and positive activities for young people plays a crucial role in its efforts to prevent crime and disorder within the community. By engaging with youth through supportive services and initiatives—such as the Witney Youth Council—the Council offers meaningful alternatives to antisocial behaviour and helps build a sense of purpose and belonging. These efforts contribute to early intervention, promote positive peer relationships, and encourage young people to become active, responsible members of the community, thereby strengthening local safety and cohesion.
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency – see text above.

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.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

The Council holds a unique position as a leading local organisation with the ability to fund and publicly support initiatives that deliver social value across all demographics of the community. It also has the capacity to lead in advocating for inclusivity and equality—both of which foster a stronger sense of belonging among residents.

Financial Implications

There are no direct implications from this report. Financial support and budgets for assistance will be considered on a case-by case basis if not already approved in the year.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and,

1. Review the terms of reference; and
2. Consider any changes to the terms of reference; and
3. Recommend such changes be made to Full Council on 23rd June 2025.