

Scheme of Delegation

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This document sets out the manner in which Warfield Parish Council has delegated its powers.
- 1.2 The legal basis of the delegation conferred by the Document is contained in the following provisions of the Local Government Act 1972:
- “s. 101 Arrangements for discharge of function by local authorities
- (1) Subject to any express provision contained in this Act or any Act passed after this Act, a local authority may arrange for the discharge of any of their functions:
 - (a) by a Committee, a sub-committee or an officer of the authority, or
 - (b) by any other local authority
 - (2) Where by virtue of this section any functions of a local authority may be discharged by a committee of theirs, then, unless the local authority otherwise direct, the committee arrange for the discharge of any of those functions of a local authority and where by virtue of this section any functions of a local authority may be discharged by a sub- committee of the authority, then, unless the local authority or the committee otherwise direct, the sub-committee may arrange for the discharge of any of those functions by an officer of the authority.
 - (3) Any arrangements made by a local authority or committee under this section for the discharge of any functions by a committee, sub- committee, officer or local authority shall not prevent the authority or committee by whom the arrangements are made from exercising those functions.
 - (4) Two or more local authorities may discharge any of their functions jointly and, where arrangements are in force for them to do so, they may also arrange for the discharge of those functions by a joint committee of theirs or by an officer of one of them and subsection (2) above shall apply in relation to those functions as it applies in relation to the functions of the individual authorities.
 - (5) A local authority’s functions with respect to issuing a precept for a rate or borrowing money shall be discharged only by the authority.”
- 1.3 It is desirable that in the interests of certainty in decision making and to avoid lengthy discussions in Council meetings, Standing Orders should discourage, so far as is legally possible, action being taken by the Council after the matter has been ‘decided’ by a Committee, or Sub-committee. If the Council feel, however, that action is necessary then normally it should refer the matter back to the Committee concerned (Standing Order 12.1 d.

1.4 The intention of the scheme of delegation is that the Council should act with all reasonable speed. Decisions should be taken at an appropriate level and that officers are given power over the day-to-day operations of the Council.

2.0 Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer

2.1 The Clerk to the Council is designated and authorised to act as Proper Officer for the purposes of all relevant sections of the Local Government Act 1972 and any other statute requiring the designation of a Proper Officer.

2.2 The Clerk to the Council is designated and authorised to act as the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) for the purposes of any statute requiring the designation of a Responsible Financial Officer. Local Government Act 1972 s151.

2.3 The Clerk to the Council, usually known as the Parish Clerk, is employed by the council under section 112 of the Local Government Act 1972 for the proper discharge of its functions.

2.4 The Clerk to the Council shall do the following;

- i. at least three clear days before a meeting of the council, a committee or sub-committee serve on councillors by delivery or post at their residences or by e-mail authenticated in such manner as the proper officer sees fit, a signed summons confirming the time, place and the agenda**
- ii. Give public notice of the time, date, venue and agenda at least 3 clear days before a meeting of the Council or a meeting of a committee or a sub-committee (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by councillors is signed by them).**
- iii. Convene a meeting of full Council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in the office, in accordance with 2.4(i) OR 2.4(ii) above.**
- iv. Receive and retain copies of byelaws made by local authorities.**
- v. Receive and retain declarations of acceptance of office from councillors.**
- vi. Make available for inspection the minutes from meetings.**
- vii. retain a copy of every councillor's register of interests and any changes to it and keep copies of the same available for inspection.
- viii. Keep proper records required before and after meetings;
- ix. process all requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Data Protection Act 2018, in accordance with and subject to the Council's procedures relating to the same.
- x. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary.
- xi. manage the organisation, storage of and access to information held by the Council in paper and electronic form.

- xii. arrange for legal deeds to be signed by 2 councillors and witnessed.
- xiii. record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority.
- xiv. refer planning applications received by the Council to Planning & Transport Committee.
- xv. institute and appear in any legal proceedings authorised by the Council,
- xvi. appear or make representation to any tribunal or public inquiry into any matter which the Council has an interest.
- xvii. as required, alter the date or time of a committee meeting, but before doing so, shall consult the Chairman of the committee concerned about the need for the change and about alternative dates and times.
- xviii. manage the Council's allotments.
- xix. undertake day to day management and maintenance of Council land and facilities.
- xx. prepare statements for the press where the known policy of the council exists.
- xxi. carry out the wishes of any Council, Committee or sub-committee decision.
- xxii. develop and maintain the councils I.T. capabilities, including the council website and social media activity.
- xxiii. manage the day-to-day operational management of the council.
- xxiv. action or undertake activity or responsibilities instructed by resolution or contained in standing orders.
- xxv. organise and manage events on behalf of the council including Arts Week and Summer of Fun.
- xxvi. represent the council at meetings and forums.
- xxvii. Prepare, produce and publish council publications and documents

2.5 The Clerk to the Council is authorised as follows:

- i. to arrange for the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with the Council's financial regulations.
- ii. to incur expenditure up to limit set in the Financial Regulations.
- iii. to incur expenditure on behalf of the Council which is necessary to procure services, carry out any repair, replacement or other work which is of such extreme urgency that it must be done at once, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit set in Financial Regulations. The Clerk to the Council shall report the action to the council as soon as practicable thereafter.

- iv. to authorise for payment, staff salaries and expenses in line with council policy.
- v. to prepare VAT reclaim on behalf of the council.
- vi. to take proceedings or other steps as may be necessary to enforce and recover any debt owing or other obligation due to the Council.
- vii. to issue invoices on behalf of the council.
- viii. to carry out duties in line with the responsibilities of RFO.
- ix. to carry out duties in accordance with the Financial Regulations of the parish council and the Audit and Accounting and Governance regulations.
- x. to accept bookings and to negotiate and authorise the rents and fees for persons using the facilities provided by the council, other than standard charges proscribed by the council, including free use of facilities, where required.
- xi. to let allotments, serve notices to cultivate and terminate allotment tenancies on breach of the tenancy conditions
- xii. to make recommendations on improvements, maintenance, layout, new and redundant areas, finance and any other relevant allotment matters
- xiii. to carry out annual inspection of all allotments
- xiv. to use promotions to encourage increased usage and overall income of the councils facilities or activities
- xv. to close all or parts of facilities to allow for maintenance work or in the interests of health & safety
- xvi. to keep all land and property under review and take such emergency action as may be necessary for the protection of the public or the Council's property
- xvii. to order goods, works and services as per Financial regulations
- xviii. Whilst retaining overall responsibility, the Clerk to the Council may delegate the duties listed above in 2.4 and 2.5 to other staff members with the exception of those marked in bold.

2.6 The Clerk to the Council is given delegated powers to act as line manager to all the Council staff in accordance with the Council's policies, procedures and budget, including:-

- i. the monitoring and management of staff performance
- ii. the management of discipline and grievance matters up to and including final written warning in line with council policy
- iii. the arrangement of staff training
- iv. the approval and authorisation of reasonable overtime as required
- v. the approval and authorisation of annual leave entitlement and other absence as appropriate

- 2.7 The Clerk to the Council is authorised to act on behalf of the Council in cases of urgency or emergency. Any such action is to be reported to the next meeting of the Council and the relevant committee or sub-committee. The Chairman of the Council or Chairman of the appropriate Committee shall be informed as soon as practically possible of any action taken by the Clerk to the Council.

3.0 Committees

- 3.1 Committees are delegated powers to act within their Terms of Reference. This means that on all matters not reserved for consideration by another Committee, or by the full Council, Committees can RESOLVE and thereafter action can normally be taken by officers, however certain matters cannot legally be delegated and others, such as deciding major policy are reserved by the Council to itself. On such matters, committees can only RECOMMEND a course of action and, in these cases, officers cannot normally carry out the instructions of the committees until the recommendation has been approved by the Council.
- 3.2 Should members wish to raise any question concerning the exercise of delegated or other powers, then they should contact the appropriate committee chairman or the Clerk to the Council, and if necessary the matter can be raised subsequently at committee.
- 3.3 Members are entitled to attend all committees and sub-committees whether or not they are members of the committee, although no voting rights or right to participate in discussions or proceedings are granted.

4.0 General arrangements for delegation of powers

- 4.1 Applicable to all committees of the Council
- a. The Council had delegated to every committee of the Council full powers to act in all matters covered by the committee's Terms of Reference subject to:
- i the provisions of any Standing Order or Financial Regulation for the time being in force, except where such Order or Regulation has been specifically waived by resolution of the Council.
 - ii. prior Council approval of annual capital and revenue estimates
 - iii. any scheme requiring application for consent to borrow having first been approved by Council, and loan sanction secured.
 - iv. when matters of major policy are involved, the existence of a policy approved by the Council. In the absence of such policy, Committees and Sub-committees may consider the matter and make recommendations to the Council.
- Major policy will arise either:
- a. on matters of major importance which have not previously been before the Council; or

- b. matters which have arisen in other Committees or Sub- committees but which cannot be resolved by them in the absence of settled Council policy; or
- c. in cases of doubt where a major policy is involved, the Chairman of the Council or the Chairman of any other Committee or Sub-committee, or in their absence the appropriate Vice-Chairman may, before a decision is taken by the committee or sub-committee, state that a matter of major policy is involved.

v. prior Council approval to recommendations for the allocation of duties, powers and guidelines to committees.

- b. the exercise by committees of the above powers shall be without derogation to the powers of the Council to call for a report on any committee decision.
- c. every committee shall have power to authorise an officer, after consultation with the Chairman of the Committee, to take decisions on specific urgent matters falling within its own Terms of Reference as it sees fit.
- d. every committee shall have the power to create and operate a working group as necessary.
- e. Notwithstanding the powers delegated to committees, the Council retain the right to exercise such powers when necessary.

4.2 The following matters that are reserved for the full Council and may not be delegated to a committee:

- the adoption of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations
- the appointment of permanent representatives to outside bodies
- the making of by-laws
- the dismissal of officers
- the setting of the annual budget and precept
- the approval of final accounts and statutory return
- the noting the report of the Internal Auditor

5.0 Terms of reference and delegated authority – Finance & General Purposes Committee

5.1 The committee shall comprise of six members of the parish council.

5.2 The quorum of the committee shall be three members.

5.3 All committee members will be expected to become signatories to the principal bank account. The committee will nominate signatories for other accounts.

5.4 Members will participate in the councils internal checks process.

5.5 The key responsibilities of the committee are to:

- a. ensure that the council's finances and resources are managed in a responsible and prudent manner in accordance with the adopted Financial Regulations and advising the council on all aspects of finance and financial policy, including the management of banking and any investments.
- b. assess and control financial, contractual and organisational risk.
- c. assess the impact of longer term Parish growth and development on the parish council's revenue needs, reserves and on any other financial ,legal or operational matter.
- d. provide the parish council's services at a cost that gives consistent good value to the parish community, commensurate with full and effective fulfilment of the council's operational role and policy aims.
- e. oversee the staffing of the council through the staffing committee

5.6 Operational responsibilities include:

- a. considering the annual budget proposals from the Parish Clerk and other committees and to agree an overall budget, reserves policy and precept requirement, including recommendations for grants and submitting this to Full Council for approval.
- b. monitoring the income and expenditure of the parish council and its committees throughout the year, ensuring that the amounts concerned are consistent with approved budgets and that any income shortfalls or expenditure in excess of budgets is properly authorised and will not adversely affect the council's overall financial position.
- c. reviewing the year end accounts and annual return and to make recommendations to council for approval prior to submission to the external auditor.
- d. ensuring that the parish council maintains adequate levels of insurance cover, reviewing the schedule of cover annually on renewal.
- e. examining the reports of internal and external auditors, ensuring that any recommendations are complied with and that any shortcomings highlighted in the reports are addressed and reported to council.
- f. ensuring that the parish council's standing orders and financial regulations are reviewed as per the required schedule, submitting any amendments to council for approval.
- g. ensuring that the council has in place the necessary written policies.
- h. ensuring that proper records are kept of the parish council's properties and significant assets.
- i. reviewing annually the effectiveness of the council's internal control and internal audit.

- j. ensuring the council is meeting its obligations to HM Revenue and Customs.
- k. overseeing the running of the Parish Office.
- l. to deal on behalf of the parish council with any matters of policy which do not fall within the responsibilities of any other committee or where there is conflict between committees.
- m. in addition to all of the above, the committee shall put in place whatever internal controls or recommend any action it considers necessary to ensure that the council's resources are properly managed and that rules and regulations are complied with.

5.7 The committee shall take whatever advice and action it deems necessary to ensure that the Council is fully aware of its legal rights and obligations.

5.8 The committee shall have the power to authorise expenditure up to the amounts in the approved budget as per financial regulations.

5.9 The Clerk to the Council may vire between cost centres within a budget heading covered by the Committee.

6.0 Terms of reference and delegated authority – Planning & Transport Committee

6.1 The committee shall comprise of six members of the parish council.

6.2 The quorum of the committee shall be three members.

6.3 The committee will act on behalf of the parish council in respect of all planning, transport and other infrastructure issues which directly or indirectly may affect the Parish and to monitor s106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions. The committee will act on behalf of the council in respect of any licencing applications received by the council.

6.4 Operational responsibilities include:

- a. To study relevant plans, visit relevant sites and consider any comments from members of the public before submitting responses. These may be recommend approval, recommend refusal, observations or consider no objection.
- b. To take note of decision notices and respond to BFC so as to promote the best interests of the parish and its residents.
- c. To submit comments and recommendations regarding tree applications to the Bracknell Forest Council and to take note of decision notices in respect of tree applications received from the Bracknell Forest Council.
- d. To ensure that any objections or recommendations are based solely on planning criteria.

- e. To consider consultations and correspondence regarding planning issues including the infrastructure of the parish and beyond, which may have an impact on planning at local, regional or national level, and to respond on the Parish Council's behalf as appropriate.
 - f. To take note of any new legislation or regulations, changes in policy or other developments affecting the planning process, and any briefings received, and to participate in any relevant training.
 - g. To liaise with the Bracknell Forest Council, and Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead, other town and parish councils and any other groups, sub groups or organisations regarding planning issues and other issues, including the infrastructure of the parish and environmental improvement schemes, which might have an impact on planning and transport.
 - h. to consider and respond to any street licencing requests received by the council.
 - i. to oversee the SpeedWatch programme within the parish.
- 6.5 The committee is delegated to make decisions on planning and street licencing applications and other appropriate matters directly to the relevant planning or licencing authority.
- 6.6 The committee shall take whatever advice and action it deems necessary to ensure that the Council is fully aware of its legal rights and obligations.
- 6.7 The committee shall have the power to authorise expenditure up to the amounts in the approved budget as per financial regulations.

7.0 Terms of reference and delegated authority – Amenities Committee

- 7.1 The committee shall comprise of six members.
- 7.2 The quorum of the committee shall be three members is required.
- 7.3 The committee shall meet at least six times per year.
- 7.4 The purpose of the committee is promote, maintain and enhance the land, buildings and facilities of the council and for the planning of the councils events and activities. The committee will oversee the councils environmental activity.
- 7.5 The main responsibilities of the committee are;
- a. to provide a good range of facilities, capable of giving benefit to people of all ages
 - b. to oversee and review the management of the Brownlow Hall, Whitegrove Community Centre, Frost Folly Car Park, Quelm Allotments, Parish Office and the councils play areas.
 - c. to ensure amenities are well maintained and that the necessary checks and inspections are carried out and where necessary to ensure that steps are taken to remedy any shortcomings, defects or problems arising.
 - d. To set develop and set policy and to confirm compliance.

- e. to review and oversee the five year maintenance programme.
 - f. to consider proposals for asset transfers to the council and make recommendations.
 - g. to have oversight of the greenspaces in the parish, to maintain trees and vegetation on council land.
 - h. monitor, protect and promote the footpaths and rights of way within the parish.
 - i. to promote environmental sustainability in the parish and oversee the councils Climate Change Action Plan.
 - j. to review contracts and tenders.
 - k. to organise and promote events and activities.
- 7.6 The committee will be responsible for monitoring and setting the amenities budget and for approving expenditure against the approved budget.
- 7.7 The committee shall have the power to authorise expenditure up to the amounts in the approved budget as per financial regulations.
- 7.8 The Clerk to the Council may vire between cost centres within a budget heading covered by the Amenities Committee.

8.0 Terms of reference and delegated authority – Staffing Committee

- 8.1 The Staffing committee will be a standalone committee of the council. It can respond to the needs and requirements of the full council and its committees. The committee shall comprise of four members. These shall be ~~the chairman of the council~~, the chairman of the Finance & General Purposes committee and ~~two~~ three other members, who should not be committee chairs and at least one, who is not a member of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.
- 8.2 The quorum of the committee shall be three members.
- 8.3 The committee shall meet at least twice per year and at other times as required. The meetings of the committee will be closed to the press and the public and papers and minutes will be confidential.
- 8.4 The purpose of the committee is:
- a. To review staffing structures and levels and make recommendations to the council.
 - b. To agree and review annually contracts of employment, job descriptions, person specifications for staff and to review the Clerk/RFO performance.
 - c. To review staff salaries and terms of conditions and make recommendations to council.
 - d. To appoint a recruitment panel when necessary and recommend appointments to council. Recruitment panels will normally include at least two members plus the Clerk, unless the recruitment is for a new Clerk.
 - e. To appoint, members to act as a disciplinary panel and as an appeals panel in the case of any appeal against disciplinary action.

- f. To appoint members to hear any formal grievance.
- g. To review health and safety at work for all Council employees.
- h. To oversee the annual appraisal process, including overall objective setting and oversee performance management matters and report to council accordingly.

8.5 The committee will have delegated authority to use and allocate funds relating to salaries and employee costs.

9.0 Terms of reference – Working groups

9.1 The council or a committee (the creating body) may form or disband a working group who will carry out tasks as defined by the creating body. Specific terms of reference, including if necessary delegated powers, will be prepared by the Clerk for ratification at the next creating body meeting following the working group being established.

9.2 The Role of a working group will be:

- To tackle issues as directed by the creating body
- To be task specific and time limited
- To examine an issue in detail, read reports and related materials, examine options, get advice for the creating body
- To act as experts and/or liaise with experts
- To make recommendations to creating body
- To answer questions from the creating body

No funding or monies to be spent or committed without delegated authority or prior full council endorsement.

9.3 The creating body must direct the working group and set clear terms of reference for them regarding objectives, scope and outcome. The role of full council is to question and challenge the recommendations, in order to be satisfied of the correct decision.

The working group must facilitate the creating body with as much information as it requires to ensure it can make a properly informed decision on its recommendation.

9.4 The operation of the working group:

- A Working group will not have a budget.
- The number of councillors on a working group shall be no less than three and no more than five members.
- The leader of the working group to be appointed by the creating body full council at the time of the working group members are appointed.
- The quorate of a working group will be a minimum of three councillors at each meeting.
- Work priorities and co-option of named experts to be approved by the creating body.
- The working group will prepare notes of meetings for the creating body to report on any activity and progress.
- A working group will not meet in public, therefore Standing Orders are not applicable, although the Code of Conduct still applies.

- The working group will examine options and make recommendations to the creating body.

Version control

- 1.0 Version approved May 2021
- 1.1 Amendment made to the membership of the Staffing Committee until May 2023
(temporary removal of chair of the council)