

# **Old Stratford Parish Council**

## **Terms of Reference – Committees & Working Groups**

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## Introduction

Old Stratford Parish Council has a main council committee, led by the Council's (or committee) Chair and advised by a Clerk, who is there to see that business is conducted within the law. They also have committees and working groups.

Committees with delegated powers to resolve on a matter may be established, to speed decision making and process implementation without the need for full council approval. Committee meetings must be advertised and minuted with members of the public permitted to speak.

Advisory committees comprising only of members of the council are established to focus on specific areas of Council business, however they have no delegated powers. The committee meets outside of the full council meeting and takes recommendations back to the Council for resolution. Advisory Committee meetings must be advertised and minuted with members of the public permitted to speak.

Working Groups differ from advisory committees in that they may involve members of the public. They do not have delegated responsibilities. and do not have to be open to the public, however, they do have to abide by certain Parish Council Policies. Their findings and recommendations must be minuted and a report submitted to the Main Council. The Council or the Committee can send report back to the Sub-Committee / Working Group requesting more information or clarification before accepting or rejecting the report and its contents.

Old Stratford Parish Council have the following committees and working groups:

Finance Committee – advisory committee

Staffing Committee – Advisory committee with delegated authority for appraisals

Complaints Committee – committee with Delegated powers

Old Stratford in Bloom Working Group

## Full Council

### Background:

Members of the parish council meet once a month, to which members of the public are welcome to attend, to discuss all aspects of the parish and agree financial, planning and governance aspects of the Council. Meetings are run in accordance with the Parish Council's Standing Orders.

### Terms of the Committee:

The following matters shall be reserved for decision by Full Council, but the appropriate Committee(s) and Working Groups may make recommendation for the Council's consideration:

1. The Precept.
2. Borrowing money.
3. Making, amending or revoking Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Duties and Powers of Proper Officer provisions.
4. Making, amending or revoking by-laws.
5. Making of Orders under Statutory Powers.
6. Matters of principle or policy.
7. Addressing recommendations in any report from the Internal and External auditors.
8. Nomination or appointment of representatives of the Parish Council on an authority, organisation or body (except approved conferences or meetings).
9. Nomination of members of all standing committees.
10. New powers or duties.
11. Nomination or appointment of representatives of the Parish Council to any enquiry on matters affecting the parish.
12. To receive and adopt the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.
13. To receive and sign off the Annual External Audit and Return.
14. To receive reports and recommendations referred to Full Council from the various committees.
15. To set up direct reporting working groups as necessary.
16. To receive reports and recommendations and consider recommendations from all direct reporting committees and working groups set up by Full Council or indirect groups where considered appropriate by the Parish Clerk or Committee Chairs.
17. To authorise the sealing of various documents with signatures of two parish councillors.
18. To appoint representatives on outside bodies or joint bodies.
19. To confirm the schedule of meetings of Full Council and the standing committees for the ensuing year.
20. To receive petitions and deputations from members of the public or any organisations.
21. Any other matters not delegated to a standing committee or referred to Full Council by standing committees.

# Finance Committee

## Background:

The Strategy and Finance committee support the Full Council by taking responsibility for planning and managing budgets. An organisation needs to have both a strategic plan and a budget. The strategic plan lays out the direction and goals of the organisation and guidelines for actions to achieve those goals, while the budget looks at the money needed to support achieving those goals. A Parish Council has limited ability to gain income above the set precept and must act within its budget.

Undertaking all the activities that may be desired by residents will not be possible; therefore residents will need to be given information to understand the cost consequences, obligations, limitations and benefits of budget expenditure.

## Terms of the Committee:

1. To include four members and be quorate only if at least three of these are present.
2. To work within the Council's financial regulations at all times.
3. To work with the Council's responsible financial officer (the clerk) to ensure that the Committee is fully informed of the Council's financial resources and expenditure obligations.
4. Be responsible for making recommendations to the Council on budget requirements, including recommendations for the precept level to ensure the Council manages its finances to meet its short and long term goals by:
  - a. Advising the Council of the potential cost of new services
  - b. Taking into account the estimates of services identified by other committees (e.g. the Staffing Committee)
  - c. Considering forward planning and necessary earmarked reserves for the replacement of equipment, vehicles, buildings and specific items of expenditure required in the future in order to lessen the precept burden in any one year
  - d. Ensure that the budget is directly linked to the tasks identified in a 3 year strategy and the management of the Council's assets and responsibilities
5. The Finance and Strategy Committee is expected to only meet two times per year;
  1. to coordinate the outcomes of consultation, analyse feasibility, create a strategy that considers risk and benefits and identifies the budget implications and
  2. to review the progress midway through the financial year.
6. To arrange extraordinary meetings if new legislation or external impacts are considered to have financial consequences that require recommendations to full Council to significantly change the strategic plan. Extraordinary meetings will only be arranged at the request of a full Parish Council meeting or may be called by the clerk, as responsible finance officer, if they consider that matters of risk or financial security require such a meeting and should be for matters that are deemed inappropriate to be considered in an ordinary Parish Council meeting.
8. In relation to risk management, the Finance and Strategy Committee will develop a strategy and budget for the Parish Council in compliance with the Council's Risk Management Policy and its stated role contained therein.
9. To make recommendations as to any professional and/or legal advice deemed necessary by the Committee to ensure that strategic development is maximised.

## **Staffing Committee**

### **Background:**

This Committee is appointed to make decisions on all staffing matters subject to budget and expenditure limits decided by Old Stratford Parish Council.

### **Terms of the Committee:**

1. Membership of the Staffing Committee will be four and its quorum will be three
2. The Committee will be mindful:
  - a. Of the legal framework for and good practice in employment matters
  - b. Of the confidential nature of Employer-Employee matters and that many of the items for consideration will require that the Public and Press be excluded by resolution of the Committee.
  - c. Of the nationally negotiated model of contract, benchmarking and terms and conditions for the employment of the Clerk to the Council.
  - d. Of relevant Council protocols and Policies.

### **Matters for recommendation to the Council:**

The Committee will receive reports from the Clerk and make recommendations to the Council regarding

- i. Staffing and office requirements including budget allocations.
- ii. All Policy issues relating to Staff.
- iii. Any issues that arise from the monthly management report.

### **Matters for delegation to the Staffing Committee:**

#### **The Committee will receive reports from the Clerk and will:**

- i. Be responsible for Staff recruitment.
- ii. Confirm individual Contracts of Employment and all terms and conditions.
- iii. Appoint two members to carry out the Clerk's annual appraisal.
- iv. Make arrangements for regular objective review of the Clerk's performance by this Committee and take necessary action thereon.
- v. Review annual salary awards and conditions of service of existing Employees and make recommendations to full Council prior to budget setting, giving due regard to staff development and NALC / CALC guidelines.
- vi. Recommend to full Council each year the necessary budget for staff training after consideration of staff training needs in consultation with the Clerk.
- vii. Appoint a member of the committee to seek advice for the committee in the event of a dispute between the Council and the Clerk.
- viii. Consider matters arising from the application of the Council's Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures and take all necessary action thereon.
- ix. As and when required under the Councils Disciplinary and Grievance procedures appoint an Appeals Panel, whose members will not be members

- of the Staffing Committee and appoint the Chairperson of the Appeals Panel who will initiate an Appeals Panel Meeting.
- x. Consider recommendations from the Appeals Panel and take necessary actions thereon.
  - xi. Review any changes, which are required to comply with Employment Law, Health & Safety Law and Terms and Conditions of Service as laid down by the National Joint Council (NJC Green Book) and recommended by National Association of Local Councils (NALC and the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) including the Staff Handbook.
  - xii. Approving requests within the training budget for personal development training and Health & Safety Requirements.
  - xiii. Undertaking training identified from time to time to support their role as the Councils Staffing Committee.
  - xiv. Periodically review of staff policies in consultation with the Clerk.
  - xv. Ensure that the Clerk has adequate resources for managing other staff and offering support when required.

## **Complaints Committee**

### **Background:**

This Committee is appointed to review formal complaints made against the Parish Council or the Clerk which cannot be dealt with by the usual complaints procedure. Meetings will only be convened in these circumstances. Complaints against individual members of the Parish Council shall not be considered by this Committee. Complaints of this nature should be made directly to the West Northamptonshire Council Monitoring Officer.

### **Terms of the Group:**

1. The Committee will comprise four parish councillors.
2. The Committee will have full delegated authority to deal with complaints about the Parish Council or the Clerk, in accordance with the Complaints Policy.
3. The quorum shall be three members.
4. Meetings will be convened as and when required to review a formal complaint.
5. Notice to complainants shall be in accordance with the adopted Complaints Policy.
6. Meetings shall be open to the public unless the Committee decides that the press and public should be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that the information to be discussed is of a confidential nature and the public interest would not be served in disclosing the information.
7. Voting shall be in accordance with the Parish Council's Standing Orders.
8. A record of each meeting will be made and the findings of Committee made known at the next appropriate Parish Council meeting



## **Working Group Terms of Reference – Old Stratford in Bloom**

### **Purpose:**

The Parish Council will establish a working group to co-ordinate the Old Stratford in Bloom Community Group Activities, which include improving the local environment and displays within the Parish and encouraging community participation.

### **Membership:**

The Constitution of the working group shall be of a Parish Council nominee and will include at least 2 volunteer members of the community.

A leader will be appointed for the working party and the leader will be the point of contact with the Parish Council and members of the Public. Any member of the Parish Council may participate in the activities of the working group, whether appointed to it or not.

### **Powers:**

Working Groups cannot make decisions or spend any money on behalf of the Parish Council, and any recommendations made by working parties will be subject to approval by the Full Council. The OSIB Working Group is not a public meeting so does not have to be advertised

### **Responsibilities:**

1. to maintain the planting schemes and highlight the opportunities for further visual improvement around the Parish
2. produce a plan of future improvements to be submitted to the Council for consideration as part of their annual budget
3. recommend expenditure and sources of income to improve the displays in and around the Parish,
4. to ensure that all expenditure has been approved by the Council Full Committee prior to being incurred
5. for expenditure over £100, 3 quotes should be obtained in accordance with clause 11.1 (h) of the Old Stratford Parish Council Financial Regulations.
6. all requests should be made via the nominated Parish Council nominee
7. To report back to the Council Full Committee at least twice a year on the progress of the working group
8. To publish news and events of the working group, via the newsletter, Facebook etc