



**Church
Stretton**
Town Council

Terms of reference for Standing Committees

The Council may discharge its business through committees.

The Standing Committees of the Council are:

- Finance Committee
- Public Realm Committee
- Planning Committee
- Personnel Committee
- Strategy Committee

These terms of reference should be read in conjunction with Standing Orders.

The general terms of reference for all Standing Committees shall be:

1. The Members of Standing Committees shall be appointed at the Annual Meeting of the Council.
2. Chairs and Vice Chairs of Standing Committees shall be appointed at the first meeting of the administrative year.
3. No member of a committee shall be appointed so as to hold office later than the next Annual Meeting of the Council.
4. Unless the Council determines otherwise, a committee may appoint a sub-committee or working group whose terms of reference, members chair and vice chair shall be determined by the committee.
5. The Chair of the Council shall be an ex-officio member of each committee with voting rights.
6. A quorum shall consist of 3 members of a Standing Committee and at least two thirds on sub committees.
7. The members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the Council.
8. Meetings will operate under standing orders, meeting in public to work through a published agenda. Where items of business are likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972 the Committee may resolve to exclude the public for those items of business.
9. Any member of the Council may attend and speak in the public session of the meeting. If a member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in a matter the procedures as identified

in the Code of Conduct and Standing Orders will be observed. Voting rights are restricted to members of these Committees and may only be appointed by full Council.

10. Committees may invite individuals (from the community or with specific expertise) to attend and speak at individual meetings, **but** such individuals do not count towards a quorum or have a vote in Committee meetings.
11. Chairs of Committees do not have a casting vote. In the event of a tied vote the matter is referred to the full Council.
12. Matters referred to Standing Committees by Full Council shall stipulate whether the committee is empowered to act under delegated powers, or required to make recommendations.
13. Decisions on functions and matters discharged to a committee shall not require ratification by Full Council, but shall be reported in Committee Minutes.
14. Full Council may at any time dissolve or alter the membership of committees.

The Committees shall be constituted and have the following responsibilities and delegated powers which can only be amended by full Council.

Finance Committee	
Areas of Responsibility	To ensure financial management of the Town Council is compliant with regulations, achieves best value and allows for future budget requirements.
Tasks and Delegated Powers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lead the detailed oversight of the Council's finances and financial performance. Receive regular reports on financial performance, review performance, and report to full council with recommendations on how to proceed. 2. Oversee the council's banking and investment arrangements and receive regular information on cash flow and reconciliations. Make recommendations to the Council on the suitability of such arrangements 3. Review the internal control and audit arrangements, including the annual AGAR process, and receive reports detailing status and progress. Provide assurance to the council as required and to recommend changes or improvements to Council, and to recommend acceptance of audit reports and the AGAR return. 4. Lead on the collation of the budget and the identification of priorities in conjunction with other committees. Assess the risks inherent in the budget, particularly around income. Make recommendations to the Council on the budget expenditure and on the levels of contingency and reserves required. 5. Oversee the legal relationship with the Town's associated charities. Make recommendations to the Council as required. 6. Oversee the Council's tax affairs, including VAT compliance. Make recommendations to the Council as required.
Membership	5 Members of the Town Council
Meeting frequency	Quarterly or as required
Planning Committee	
Areas of Responsibility	

To provide a timely response to applications for planning permission within the Strettons area.

Tasks and Delegated Powers

1. Consider all planning applications within the Church Stretton Civil Parish. Draw up, approve and submit a response to each application.
2. Take advice from the Tree Warden Co-ordinator regarding those planning applications solely concerning trees. Delegate to the Tree Warden Co-ordinator the authority to respond to all such applications on behalf of the Planning Committee.
3. Refer contentious planning applications to the Council, along with recommendations as to how to respond.
4. Refer planning applications regarding major developments to the Strategy Committee. In respect of major planning applications, consult with the Strategic Planning Committee, and afterwards provide recommendations to the Council as to how to proceed.

Membership

4 Members of the Town Council.

The Chair the Town Clerk or and Vice Chair of the Council.

Lay Members with pertinent specialist knowledge as required.

Meeting frequency

Monthly

Strategy Committee

Areas of Responsibility

- To develop strategies which influence the long-term development of the Strettons for the benefit of the local community.
- To exercise the Town Council's functions relating to strategic planning and policy.

Tasks and Delegated Powers

1. Lead on policy development, as agreed by the Council, where it is deemed to impact the Strettons significantly.
2. Become a repository for data and information about the town and the community, and the town's relationship to the wider Place Plan Area and Shropshire Council.
3. Commission surveys and studies as needed to evidence and support the work of the Town Council.
4. Provide responses to requests for consultation, most typically from Shropshire Council, with whom a strong professional relationship should be developed.
5. Maintain an overview of local, regional and strategic planning and development matters. Develop submissions for planning strategy and responses to the Local Plan
6. Carry out an annual review of Shropshire Council's Plan for Church Stretton Civil Parish, and make recommendations to the Council on how this plan should be developed.
7. Take regard of any Neighbourhood or Community Led Plan for Church Stretton Civil Parish so that it informs the work of the Strategy Committee and the Full Council.
8. In liaison with the Planning Committee, review planning applications deemed to involve major developments, or which involve a significant departure from Council policy. Refer such applications to the Council with recommendations as to how to proceed.
9. Set up Task and Finish groups when appropriate to inform the development of particular strategies relating to, e.g. economic development, housing, conservation, the environment.

10. Address any other matters which have strategic implications for Church Stretton or the wider Place Plan Area by reason of their scale, nature, location or impact.
Membership 4 members of the Town Council (to include the Chair of the Planning Committee). Lay Members with pertinent specialist knowledge as required
Meetings As required, and at least quarterly
Public Realm Committee
Areas of Responsibility To ensure all property, facilities and land under the Council's ownership and control are managed effectively to provide a pleasant and safe environment for residents and visitors to the town. To promote green initiatives in all we do and within the community, taking regard of biodiversity, sustainability, climate change, litter, trees and wildlife areas.
Tasks and Delegated Powers <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitor, review and oversee the maintenance and management of amenities and report to full council. 2. Carry out an annual review of fees and services and make recommendations to full council. 3. Identify future budget costs, including, maintenance and replacement schedules for operational equipment. 4. Coordinate public events promoted by the Council such as the Christmas Lights and recruit task and finish groups to run them. 5. Oversee Shropshire Council Contracts and Service Agreements in liaison with Finance Committee 6. Review the strategic direction of Council's outdoor, amenities staff and volunteers and, if needed, report to full council. 7. Develop and oversee one-off projects as necessary and set up task and finish groups for this purpose.
Membership 6 Members of the Town Council
Meetings As business requires but at least 6 meetings a year.
Personnel Committee
Areas of Responsibility All aspects of staff, Councillor and volunteer well-being, HR and personnel issues, including conditions of service, staffing structure, recruitment and appointment, salary competitiveness, remuneration, training, appraisal, disciplinary and grievance procedures. To ensure the Council behaves as a good and efficient employer.
Tasks and Delegated Powers <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determine and regularly review the staffing structure, staff remuneration and pension arrangements. 2. Monitor and review all HR policies and make recommendations to the Council. 3. Monitor and review staff working conditions and matters of health and safety. 4. Determine and regularly review the performance management system, ensuring that annual appraisals are undertaken and that recommendations are implemented and monitored.

5. Ensure that staff and Councillor training needs are met and authorise attendance as relevant.
6. Implement and carry through the appointment of Staff.
7. Line-manage the Town Clerk on behalf of Council and undertake annual appraisal.
8. Handle disciplinary and grievance issues as dictated by the Council's procedures.
9. Consider any other personnel matters.

Membership

4 Members of the Town Council plus the Chair of the Council as ex officio

Meetings

Quarterly and as required

All meetings will be minuted by the Town Clerk, or by a member of the committee in their absence.

The Council may establish working groups to undertake specific tasks, these are not normally clerked.

1. Working groups will update and consult with the Town Clerk on proposed activity likely to impact on staffing.
2. Working groups will report regularly to Full Council.

Communications Working Group

Areas of Responsibility

To ensure effective engagement with residents, partners, employees and stakeholders.

Tasks and Delegated Powers

1. The Chair of the Council, the chair and vice chair of the working group, and the Town Clerk are authorised to communicate as 'Church Stretton Town Council', following guidelines laid down in our Communications Policy.
2. Draft the Town Council Communications Policy for recommendation to Council.
3. Create content to be disseminated as 'Church Stretton Town Council'.
4. With the Clerk, ensure Council meets public information and transparency requirements, including publication of agendas, minutes, Governance disclosures, AGAR, annual accounts, budgets etc.
5. With the Clerk, ensure website and content complies with minimum compliance standards.
6. Develop new branding and, with the Town Clerk, manage and have quality control function over surveys, consultation and public meetings.
7. Identify channels Council should use for dissemination and interaction with stakeholders.
8. Identify which channels are most effective for interaction with each stakeholder group.

Membership

4 Councillors, and in addition the working group can invite non-councillor members to join who have expertise in a relevant discipline

Meetings

As business needs dictate but a minimum of 3 meetings a year.

Emergency Plan Working Group

Area of Responsibility

To ensure effective Emergency Plan for the Strettons is in place.

Tasks and Delegated Powers

To examine the existing Community Emergency Plan, in consultation with interested parties, and to revise or draft an alternative plan to be taken to Full Council for approval. To monitor and review the effectiveness of the plan and make recommendations for updates.

Membership

4 Members of the Town Council

Meetings

As required at least annually.

Visitor Economy Working Group

Area of Responsibility

To make Church Stretton an exemplar of sustainable tourism to the benefit of the local economy in ways that are compatible with the interests of residents.

To develop and adapt the means to achieving that goal.

Tasks and Delegated Powers

1. To consult with local traders, accommodation providers, visitor attractions and event promoters and to promote sustainable practices.
2. To analyse the survey information available on visitors to Church Stretton in recent years and further develop that information to better inform marketing.
3. To learn from the approaches of other similar market towns and to explore the scope for collaborative marketing with other neighbouring towns.
4. To ensure that the promotion of the town is compatible with the approaches of Shropshire Council, the National Trust, the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the local Traffic and Parking Working Group.
5. To make representations, as necessary, to the Council's Strategy Committee and Public Realm Committee on matters pertinent to visitors.
6. To encourage cultural events that will boost both the day and night-time economies.
7. To keep under review the number of holiday lets in the town and the provision for visitors in the town centre.
8. Working through the Tourism Communications Sub-Group:
 - a) to take full advantage of Visit Shropshire Gold Membership and the Visit Church Stretton website;
 - b) to review the current digital and written materials promoting the town;
 - c) to update and add to these materials, including commissioning an annual promotional booklet, within a budget agreed by full Council.

Membership

3 Members of the Town Council

Representatives from: Visitor Information Centre, Visit Church Stretton committee member, a trader and an accommodation provider.

Meetings

As required at least 6 times per year

Approved May 2023

Review May 2024