

Finance and General Purposes Committee

– Terms of Reference

Finance and General Purposes Terms of Reference were adopted by the Council at its Meeting held on **7 August 2023**.

The Council's Standing Orders and Code of Conduct shall apply to this Committee and its Members.

Nothing in these Terms of Reference shall prevent the Council from dealing with a matter that might otherwise be dealt with by this Committee.

1. Committee

The Finance and General Purposes (F&GP) Committee is constituted as a Standing Committee of Saughall and Shotwick Park Parish Council.

2. Membership

The Committee consists of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council and 5 other Councillors.

The quorum of the Committee shall be 4 Members.

3. Chairman

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman are to be elected annually by the Committee at their first Meeting.

4. Voting

Only the above may vote and participate at a meeting. In the case of an equal vote the Chairman shall have a second or casting vote.

5. Interests

If a Member has a personal interest as defined by the Code of Conduct adopted by the Parish Council, then he/she shall declare such interest as soon as it becomes apparent, disclosing the nature and extent of the interest as required.

N.B. If a Member who has declared an interest, then considers the interest to be prejudicial, he/she must withdraw from the room during consideration of the agenda item to which the interest relates

6. Meetings

The Schedule of Meetings shall be confirmed at the Annual Meeting of Saughall and Shotwick Park Parish Council.

The Parish Clerk or the Chairman of the F&GP Committee may call additional Committee meetings as and when necessary.

Minutes of all meetings will be recorded by the Parish Clerk and posted on the Parish Council's website.

7. Responsibilities

Overall responsibility for the management of the Council's financial affairs in accordance with legislative requirements, regulations and guidelines These will include:

- (a) The opening and closing of Bank Accounts and the transfer of funds between accounts.
- (b) The provision of accounts, end of year balance sheets and supporting documentation.
- (c) The setting up accounting practices and systems.
- (d) The preparation of the Committee's annual estimates.
- (e) The monitoring the overall position of the Council's finances to make appropriate recommendations to Council.
- (f) Recommending a precept to Council.
- (g) Applying Best Value Principles to the Council's affairs, even though there is no legal requirement to undertake this and recommend accordingly.
- (h) Considering forward planning and provide earmarked reserves for the replacement of equipment, vehicles, buildings and specific items of expenditure required in the future to lessen the precept burden in any one year.
- (i) Undertaking an annual review of all fees, charges and allowances.

- (j) Considering all aspects of the Council's service delivery and recommend accordingly.
- (k) Seeking grant aid and appropriate support in respect to the responsibilities of the Council.
- (l) Ensuring the Council is adequately insured, that this is reviewed annually and recommend accordingly. To instigate insurance claims being made.
- (m) Submitting claims for the recovery of VAT.
- (n) Authorising subscriptions to organisations that are involved in local and national issues, which affect the work of the Council.
- (o) Monitoring all income and expenditure during the financial year and where appropriate recommending action to be taken.
- (p) Recording expenditure under Section 137 of the Local Government Act and recording this in end of year balance sheets.
- (q) Recommending the borrowing of funds and making the appropriate Loan Sanction Applications.

8. Financial Regulations

To review as necessary and update the Financial Regulations, ensuring they are observed and make appropriate recommendations to Full Council.

9. Annual Budget

To prepare and submit the Council's annual budget for approval to the relevant Full Council Meeting.

10. Reserves

To ensure that all reserves are managed in line with the Council's Financial Regulations.

11. Internal and External Audits

To receive and review both Internal and External Audit Reports and arrange for implementation of any recommendations. The Internal Auditor carries out annual Audits and is appointed by the Council. The External Auditor carries out an annual Audit of the Annual Return and is appointed through legislation.

12. Grants and Donations

To consider all applications for grants (to charities) and donations (to other organisations or individuals, usually operating within the Parish) and make recommendations to the Council, in line with the Council's Policy.

13. Legal Matters

To oversee all legal matters pertaining to leases, mortgage, insurance claims, easements, tenancies, contracts, loans, insurance cover, damage to property, vehicle insurance specification of work and debt recovery and make recommendations to the Council.

14. Finance

In line with Financial Regulations, the Committee shall have a remit to commit/spend up to £1000 of the un-budgeted expenditure. Any amount over that value will be reported to the Parish Council meeting for its approval.

15. Standing Orders

To prepare, review, monitor and amend the Council's Standing Orders and recommend accordingly.

16. Business Planning

To regularly review and revise the Parish Council's Business Plan and Action Plan.

17. Council Matters

- (a) To deal with persistent absences of Members and Member's conduct and recommend accordingly.
- (b) To make recommendations on appropriate training for Members, Chairmen and Vice Chairmen.

18. Parish Matters

To consider and make recommendations on the Council's Committee and Working Group structure. To plan and arrange for Parish and Public Meetings and exhibitions when necessary.

19. Parish Ward(s)

To deal with all issues related to boundary reviews, warding arrangements and electoral matters affecting the Parish. To consider proposals and legislation relating to changes within Local Government and recommend accordingly.

20. Legislation

To consider all legislative matters, regulations and guidance and refer matters to the appropriate Working Group of the Council. To consider new and proposed legislation, including consultation documents and views expressed by individuals or organisations and to respond accordingly. To make representations to amend or abolish existing legislation, if necessary, to undertake consultation on such matters.

21. Liaison

To liaise with national organisations, local organisations, Government Departments, charities, individuals and any other body responsible for activities or functions affecting residents and the work of the Council.

22. Council Policies

To be responsible for the production and amendment of all general Parish Council Policies.

23. Staffing Matters and Consultants/Advisers

- (a) To be responsible for the appointment and termination of contracts for consultants and or advisors to assist the Council in undertake the work of the Council.
- (b) To be responsible for considering the workload of staff, consultants and advisers.
- (c) To set, when necessary, priorities of work and workload controls.

24. Publicity Matters

- (a) To comply with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in making as much information as possible freely available to the public as set out in the Council's Publication Scheme.
- (b) To submit and regularly revise the Council Publication Scheme.

- (c) To deal with all press enquiries and the issue of press statements.
- (d) To respond to items that appear in newspapers and journals when necessary.
- (e) To provide general and specific information for residents.

25. Historic Records

To maintain and expand the Council's historic records.

26. Law and Order

To liaise with the Police and other appropriate bodies on specific and general matters effecting residents. Consider ways of increasing public awareness to police issues, dumping, vandalism, drug abuse, highway offences and other law and order matters.

27. Health and Safety

To be responsible for health, safety and welfare under the Health and Safety legislation, regulations and guidance as well as any other legislative safety requirements to ensure the safety of employees, contractors and the public on Council land or in Council buildings, including those rented or leased, or individuals and organisations using Council's facilities:

- (a) Recommending the provision of financial resources.
- (b) The preparation and review of risk assessments arising from work activities and public safety responsibilities, including contractors and tenants.
- (c) Undertaking regular safety inspections and as a result taking appropriate action when necessary.
- (d) The preparation of procedures and safe practices and their review.
- (e) Keeping records.
- (f) Obtaining advice when necessary.
- (g) Ensuring contractors, agents, or anyone given permission to be on Council land, for a specific reason, comply with safety requirements.

28. Discrimination

- (a) To ensure that the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy is applied to all aspects of the Council's work and functions.
- (b) To monitor and review this policy

Review

These terms of reference are to be reviewed annually at the first meeting after the Annual Meeting of Council.