



# NORTHLEACH WITH EASTINGTON TOWN COUNCIL

The Westwoods Centre, Bassett Road, Northleach, GL54 3QJ

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## Terms of Reference for Standing Committees 2020

**Approved at the Town Council meeting on 18 November 2020**

These terms of reference will be reviewed annually to ensure they remain relevant.

Next review due May 2021.

Town Council business is conducted at monthly meetings and through committees in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

The following committees are standing (permanent) committees:

- Finance and General Resources
- Property and Premises Maintenance
- Property, Planning and Transport

Membership of committees shall be established at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council held in May each year and continue until the next Annual Meeting.

**Committees shall have delegated authority to appoint one of their number as Chairman, who shall hold that position until the next Annual Meeting.**

Officers of the council may attend meetings but cannot have voting rights.

Committees shall not number more than seven councillors. Members of the council are expected to sit on at least one and not more than two committees.

A committee may decline or be unable to exercise its delegated powers, in which case the decision may be considered by a higher level of the authority.

**The standing committees have delegated powers and authority over expenditure as described in these terms of reference and within prescribed budget limits.**

Any item of expenditure greater than £5,000 must be referred to full council,

Items grouped as a single project shall be treated as a single item.

Values are gross and exclude VAT that can be reclaimed.

No individual councillor shall issue instructions or incur expenditure unless explicitly authorised by a resolution of council.

**Finance and General Resources Committee (Finance)**

1. The Chairman of the Town Council is an ex-officio member with voting rights.
2. The quorum of the committee is three councillors.
3. Non-councillors cannot be members of the Finance Committee.
4. The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) is responsible for the proper administration of the Town Council's financial affairs, and the maintenance of the documents and records necessary for this purpose.
5. **The primary purpose is to ensure that the council remains in a healthy financial position at all times and can meet its liabilities.**
6. The committee has an overview of the Council's finances and meets quarterly to monitor actual spending against budget and take any corrective action.
7. It can approve expenditure in respect of the following: Staff salaries (including national insurance and pensions), Office services (including but not limited to: telephone and internet connection, stationery and office consumables, computing equipment and software, audit and legal fees); Training (for staff and councillors), Memberships of professional bodies, and Grants.

The committee also has delegated responsibility to:

8. Ensure adequate internal systems of financial control are in place.
9. Consider and where appropriate, authorise, any requests from standing committees for supplementary expenditure, by making budget virements.
10. Consider and award applications for grants and donations to local causes.
11. Review the Financial Regulations (which must be considered by full council).
12. Help the Clerk maintain the Asset Register and review the same annually.
13. Review the Council's Risk Management Plan annually.
14. Review all insurances as required including Public Liability Insurance, Employers' Liability Insurance, Fidelity Guarantee, Buildings and Contents and any other insurances required by law or to reduce financial risk to the council.
15. Appoint an internal auditor and review the internal auditor's report.
16. Assist the Clerk with the preparation of the council's budget for the following year (for consideration by full council).
17. Make a recommendation to full council on the level of precept.
18. Ensure that the council's computer systems and software are secure and satisfactory for the purpose of carrying out the financial business of the council.
19. Receive and consider reports on employment matters, including business continuity, staffing levels, appraisals and salary review (see detail on next page).

**Personnel Responsibilities**

20. It should be noted that matters pertaining to the employment of staff are confidential, in accordance with the Public Bodies (admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as amended by the Local Government Act 1972, section 100.

The Finance Committee also has delegated responsibility to:

21. Consider and implement any changes required to comply with Employment Law, Health & Safety Law and Terms and Conditions of Service as laid down by the National Joint Council (NJC) and recommended by National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC).
22. Determine the staffing levels necessary to efficiently discharge the work required by the council, review the role profiles and workloads periodically, and make any necessary recommendations in respect thereof to the full council
23. Recruit new members of staff by assisting with preparation of the advertisement, person specification, job description and contract for approval by council, shortlist the applicants, carry out interviews and make a recommendation to full council about the preferred candidate.
24. Assess the performance of the new member of staff after completion of their probationary period, and recommend the next steps to full council.
25. Ensure that all staff have an annual performance review and salary review. Note, it is not incumbent upon the council to make any change to the employee's salary following a salary review.
26. Manage attendance, long-term sickness absence, annual leave, and other types of leave in accordance with the law and current council policies.
27. Form a panel to deal with any staff disciplinary matter or staff grievance. (Note that an appeal could then be dealt with by members not on this committee).
28. In discussion with the staff member, identify and agree training requirements, and approve expenditure requests within the training budget.
29. Assist the Clerk in preparing and maintaining a business continuity plan to mitigate the severity of potential service disruptions.
30. Be aware of sources of expert advice on employment matters and ensure that the council uses such sources when there is any doubt about good employment practice and undertake training as required to support their role.

**Property and Premises Maintenance Committee (PPMC)**

1. This committee meets at bi-monthly to oversee maintenance of the council's assets in the open air. (Note: this does not include the King George V Playing Field, which is managed separately through the Charitable Trust).
2. The quorum of the committee is three councillors.
3. The committee may appoint non-councillors as advisors or as members with voting rights.
- 4. The purpose of the committee is to ensure that the council's assets and property are maintained in a safe condition and managed to a high standard.**
5. To carry out this work, this committee can authorise and monitor expenditure under the following budget areas: "General", including Grounds Work, Water Meadow, Cemetery and churchyard, Town, Tree Works, and Allotments.

The committee has delegated responsibility for:

6. A review of the scope of works and tender documentation for the grass cutting contract, with the final decision on supplier to be made by full council.
7. Grass cutting across the town, including verges, to make sure the work is carried out according to the specification in the contract and to the required standard.
8. The Wills & Hamilton Meadows, their maintenance and long-term management.
9. Management of the Council's tree stock.
10. Children's playgrounds and play equipment across town, including an annual safety inspection and regular visual checks.
11. The closed churchyard and open burial ground, its policies and fees.
12. The Nangles Allotments, the tenancy agreements and fees.
13. In the Market Place, the notice boards, war memorial, flower beds and trees, Christmas tree installation and removal, and Town Sign.
14. Town Council-owned street furniture, including bus shelters, benches, traffic mirrors, litter bins and dog poo bins, and maps to show the positions of the same.

The committee will also:

15. Help the clerk maintain the Asset Register for the areas under its management.
16. Review and update the Risk Assessments for the areas under its management.
17. Submit spending proposals for the following financial year to the Finance Committee for budget purposes (by the end of November).

**Property, Planning & Highways Committee**

18. This committee meets as and when required to respond to planning matters and related policy consultations, and oversee issues relating to council buildings and property including the Westwoods Community Centre.
19. The quorum of the Committee is three councillors.
20. The committee can approve expenditure under the cost centre "Westwoods" in respect of the following: utilities (electricity and fuel), cleaning and waste management, routine maintenance, equipment purchases, bar and event stock, and marketing. These budgets cover general running costs, not capital works.

This committee also has delegated responsibility to:

21. Study and respond to any planning or licensing application consultations in the parish, unless they are for a development of three or more homes, considered controversial or are called in by a committee member, when they shall be dealt with at Full Council. A call-in request must be in writing to the Town Clerk and made at least 5 clear days before the application response deadline.
22. Ensure that the committee's observations have due regard to material planning considerations, relevant national and local policies and, in particular, the approved Northleach with Eastington Neighbourhood Plan.
23. Liaise with the Local Planning Authority on any issues relating to potential planning breaches and enforcement.
24. Study and co-ordinate the council's response to any local or national policy consultations in respect of planning and transport, including the District Local Plan and Sustainable Community Strategy, and County Local Transport Plan.
25. Work with principal authorities and their representatives to resolve current highway and transport issues, including road repairs and improvements, winter preparation, gully cleaning, car parks and parking enforcement, bus services, street lighting, and signage in or affecting the parish.
26. Work with principal authorities and their representatives to resolve current public rights of way issues and improve the provision of local walking and cycling routes.

To manage council buildings:

27. Review fees and charges (annually).
28. Review hire agreements annually or in line with any H&S issues identified.
29. Review Risk Assessments for Council buildings annually, agree any actions arising and ensure they are carried out.
30. Review day to day operations to ensure that they are effective and efficient.
31. Develop a repair and maintenance programme, and see that it is followed.
32. Identify capital projects.
33. Submit spending proposals for the following financial year to the Finance Committee for budget purposes (by the end of November).

## **ADDENDUM**

Where specific powers and responsibilities have not been delegated to a committee or subcommittee, then the item in question must be considered by full council. The council's responsibilities include but are not limited to:

### **Governance**

1. Appoint Council Chairman and Vice Chairman and standing committees (at the Annual meeting in May)
2. Review the Code of Conduct
3. Review Standing Orders and Terms of Reference for Committees
4. Review Financial Regulations - after scrutiny by Finance Committee
5. Review Financial Risk Register (Risk Management Plan)
6. Approve the Annual Governance and Accountability Report (AGAR).
7. Receive the external audit report and agree actions arising (September meeting)
8. Approve budget for following financial year before setting the precept.
9. Agree precept to be levied (January meeting)

### **Forward Planning**

10. Develop town-wide strategy, such as a Town or Neighbourhood Plan.
11. Engage in community consultations before drawing up such plans.

### **Land & Capital Projects**

12. Approve the acquisition or disposal of land; and spending for capital projects.
13. Any new initiatives likely to have a significant impact on the community or the local environment.

### **Town Clerk**

14. All decisions affecting the terms of employment of the Town Clerk.

### **Youth Activities**

15. Encourage access to recreational activities and/or entertainment for children and young people in the town.

**ADDENDUM TWO**

**King George V Playing Field, Northleach**

- 16. Northleach with Eastington Town Council is the sole charity trustee for the King George V Playing Field, Northleach Charitable Trust, registered with the Charities Commission as Charity no. 1082778.
- 17. The land was bought by the Town Council in 1940 and dedicated to King George's Fields. A new trust deed was signed on 23 May 2007.
- 18. The Trust's aim is to maintain The King George V Playing Field for the use of residents of Northleach and the surrounding villages.**
- 19. The Trust maintains independent finances and has a bank account in its own name. Trust meetings are held separately from those of the Town Council.
- 20. All councillors are trustees by virtue of their office as councillors. They are expected to act in the best interests of the charity and to ensure that the trust's decisions are made in accordance with the Trust's charitable objectives.
- 21. The area managed by the Trust is shown on the map edged blue.

