



WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE AND SCHEME OF DELEGATION

Document Control

Date	Version	Author	Origin of change e.g. change in legislation	Changed by
9 th June 2025	V2	Democratic Services Manager	<p>Note to 1.4 Personnel Cttee</p> <p>Removal of 3.5 Anti-Racism CCG</p> <p>Removal of Blakehay Business Review S&FG</p> <p>Addition of City of Sanctuary S&FG</p>	Democratic Services Manager
May 2026	V3	Democratic Services Manager	<p>Review of CTOR Against Draft Standing Orders (Jan 2026)</p> <p>Inclusive of the reviewed:</p> <p>Personnel Committee TOR (Jul 2025)</p> <p>Devolution S&FG TOR (Feb 2026)</p> <p>Removal of 4.1 Old Town Quarry S&FG</p> <p>Removal of 4.2 Council of Sanctuary S&FG</p>	Democratic Services Manager

This policy applies to Weston-super-Mare Town Council

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PART 1 – GENERAL GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

1. Purpose of this Document

This document sets out:

- the Committee structure of Weston-super-Mare Town Council;
- the Terms of Reference of Committees, Sub-Committees, Working Groups and Consultative Groups;
- the powers delegated to officers;
- governance arrangements relating to decision-making;
- and the constitutional relationship between Councillors and Officers.

This document should be read alongside:

- Standing Orders;
- Financial Regulations;
- Procurement Procedures;
- Councillor Code of Conduct;
- Staff Policies;
- and all adopted Council Policies.

2. Governance Principles

In exercising its functions, all Committees, Sub-Committees, Working Groups, Consultative Groups and Officers shall:

1. Support delivery of the Council's Strategic Plan and corporate priorities.
2. Operate lawfully, transparently and proportionately.
3. Maintain appropriate separation between Councillor strategic oversight and Officer operational management.
4. Ensure value for money and proper stewardship of public funds.
5. Have due regard to:
 - equality and inclusion;
 - environmental sustainability;
 - biodiversity;
 - carbon reduction;
 - health and wellbeing;
 - and community cohesion.
6. Operate in accordance with:
 - Standing Orders;
 - Financial Regulations;
 - Procurement Act 2023;
 - Data Protection legislation;
 - Freedom of Information legislation;
 - Health & Safety legislation;
 - and all statutory requirements.
7. Have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010.
8. Operate in accordance with the Council's adopted Member/Officer Protocol.

3. Committee Structure

Standing Committees

1. Finance and General Purposes Committee
2. Planning and Environment Committee
3. Amenities, Culture and Leisure Committee
4. Personnel Committee

Sub-Committees

1. Grants and Governance Sub-Committee
2. Grievance and Appeals Sub-Committee
3. Complaints Sub-Committee
4. Complaints Appeals Sub-Committee

Advisory / Consultative Groups

1. Civic Matters Consultative Group
2. Allotments Community Consultative Group
3. Heritage and Culture Community Consultative Group
4. Youth Council

Start and Finish / Working Groups

1. Devolution Start and Finish Group
2. Blue Plaques Start and Finish Group

4. General Rules Applying to All Committees

4.1 Delegated Authority

Committees may only exercise powers:

- expressly delegated by Full Council;
- contained within these Terms of Reference;
- and within approved budgets.

4.2 Committee and Sub-Committee Quorum

No Committee or Sub-Committee quorum shall be less than three Members unless amended by legislation or resolution of Full Council in accordance with Standing Orders.

4.3 Substitute Members

Substitute Members may attend and vote at Committee and Sub-Committee meetings in accordance with Standing Orders and any substitute member arrangements approved by Full Council.

4.4 Interpretation of Committee Functions

Unless expressly stated otherwise, Committee responsibilities relate to strategic oversight, policy direction, budget monitoring and performance review. Day-to-day operational delivery remains delegated to Officers.

4.5 Risk Management

All Committees shall:

Identify, monitor and review strategic and operational risks within the Committee's remit and ensure appropriate mitigation measures are in place.

4.6 Procurement

All procurement activity shall comply with:

- Financial Regulations;
- Procurement Procedures;
- Procurement Act 2023;
- Procurement Regulations 2024;
- and associated statutory guidance.

4.7 Reporting of Delegated Decisions

All delegated decisions taken by officers shall be reported to the next ordinary meeting of the relevant Committee for information.

4.8 Public Participation

Public participation at meetings shall be governed by the Council's Standing Orders.

4.9 Review of Terms of Reference

All Committee Terms of Reference shall be reviewed annually.

PART 2 – COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Membership

Up to 10 Councillors appointed annually by Full Council in accordance with Standing Orders and political proportionality arrangements where applicable.

Quorum

5 Councillors

Role of the Committee

The purpose of this Committee is to oversee:

- corporate governance;
- finance;
- policy;
- democratic services;
- strategic planning;
- corporate risk;
- audit;
- procurement;
- communications;
- asset management;
- and organisational resources.

The Committee shall ensure that the Council's resources and statutory obligations are managed effectively, lawfully and efficiently.

Terms of Reference

Finance and Corporate Governance

1. To prepare and recommend the annual budget and precept.
2. To oversee the Council's:
 - Revenue Budget;
 - Capital Programme;
 - Medium Term Financial Planning;
 - Reserves Strategy;
 - Treasury Management;
 - and Investment Strategy.
3. To monitor income and expenditure throughout the financial year.
4. To oversee:
 - banking arrangements;
 - loans;
 - investments;
 - insurances;
 - and financial administration.
5. To approve expenditure within delegated authority limits.
6. To oversee internal and external audit arrangements.
7. To receive audit reports and monitor implementation of recommendations.
8. To oversee:
 - risk management;
 - internal controls;
 - cyber security;
 - business continuity;
 - information governance;
 - and data protection compliance.
9. To oversee all procurement activity above officer delegated limits.
10. To approve tenders in accordance with Financial Regulations.
11. To oversee:
 - asset management;
 - property investment;
 - leases;
 - and corporate property strategy.
12. To oversee grant funding, Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy receipts.
13. To oversee corporate communications including:
 - website;
 - social media;
 - publications;
 - public relations;
 - and consultation.
14. To review and recommend amendments to:
 - Standing Orders;
 - Financial Regulations;
 - Committee Terms of Reference;
 - Procurement Procedures;
 - and governance documents.
15. To oversee relationships with:

- North Somerset Council;
 - government bodies;
 - partner organisations;
 - and outside bodies.
16. To authorise legal proceedings on behalf of the Council.
 17. Any execution of deeds or sealing of legal documents shall comply with Standing Orders.
 18. To consider matters not delegated elsewhere.
 19. To identify opportunities for:
 - service improvement;
 - asset acquisition;
 - devolution;
 - and strategic growth.
 20. To oversee health and safety governance.
 21. To review the effectiveness of the Council's governance arrangements annually.
 22. To approve and monitor an annual work programme for the Committee.

2. PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Membership

Up to 10 Councillors appointed annually by Full Council in accordance with Standing Orders and political proportionality arrangements where applicable.

Quorum

5 Councillors

Role of the Committee

The purpose of this Committee is:

- to consider planning and licensing consultations;
- influence strategic development;
- oversee environmental and climate initiatives;
- and represent local planning, transport and environmental interests.

Terms of Reference

Planning

1. To consider all planning applications referred to the Town Council.
2. To submit representations to the Local Planning Authority.
3. To consider:
 - planning appeals;
 - strategic planning documents;
 - transport proposals;
 - highways matters;
 - public rights of way;
 - licensing consultations;
 - and street naming consultations.
4. To oversee:
 - Neighbourhood Plan implementation;
 - planning policy responses;

- and strategic growth matters.
- 5. To liaise with relevant authorities and agencies.
- 6. To monitor implementation of relevant planning policies.
- 7. To respond to local, regional and national consultations.
- 8. To approve and monitor an annual work programme for the Committee.

Environment

- 9. To oversee delivery of the Council's Climate Emergency commitments.
- 10. To promote:
 - carbon reduction;
 - biodiversity enhancement;
 - sustainability;
 - environmental resilience;
 - and active travel.
- 11. To monitor environmental initiatives and projects.
- 12. To make recommendations relating to environmental expenditure.
- 13. To engage with environmental stakeholders and community groups.

Planning Delegation Protocol

The Chief Executive Officer/Town Clerk or nominated officer may respond to:

- minor;
- non-contentious;
- or routine planning applications

under delegated authority.

Applications shall NOT be delegated where:

1. A written objection has been received.
2. The application is strategically significant.
3. The proposal exceeds 5 dwellings.
4. Retail or employment development is proposed.
5. A Member of the Planning and Environment Committee requests Committee determination.
6. The application materially affects Council land or interests.

All delegated planning responses shall be reported to the next Committee meeting.

3. AMENITIES, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

Membership

Up to 10 Councillors appointed annually by Full Council in accordance with Standing Orders and political proportionality arrangements where applicable.

Quorum

5 Councillors

Role of the Committee

The purpose of this Committee is to oversee the provision, maintenance and strategic development of:

- community facilities;
- parks and open spaces;
- recreation and leisure facilities;

- cultural assets;
- tourism initiatives;
- allotments;
- cemeteries;
- public conveniences;
- and community events.

Terms of Reference

1. To oversee the strategic management and development of:
 - parks;
 - open spaces;
 - play areas;
 - sports facilities;
 - allotments;
 - cemeteries;
 - public conveniences;
 - theatres;
 - museums;
 - and heritage facilities.
2. To oversee lifecycle planning and long-term maintenance requirements.
3. To monitor performance, usage and sustainability of Council-managed assets.
4. To oversee community events and cultural programmes.
5. To oversee tourism initiatives and visitor services.
6. To oversee markets and associated activities.
7. To oversee Christmas lights and seasonal initiatives.
8. To oversee street furniture including:
 - benches;
 - litter bins;
 - dog bins;
 - shelters;
 - and signage.
9. To consider anti-social behaviour and community safety issues relating to Council-managed land.
10. To oversee grant-funded leisure and cultural projects.
11. To oversee service level agreements relevant to the Committee.
12. To monitor environmental sustainability within Council facilities.
13. To oversee public consultation relating to Committee services.
14. To recommend budgets and fees and charges.
15. To monitor expenditure within approved budgets.
16. To approve and monitor an annual work programme for the Committee.

4. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Membership

Up to 10 Councillors appointed annually by Full Council in accordance with Standing Orders and political proportionality arrangements where applicable.

Quorum

5 Councillors

Role of the Committee

The purpose of this Committee is to discharge the Council's responsibilities as an employer and oversee strategic staffing, organisational structure and employment governance.

Confidentiality Clause

The Committee shall exclude the public and press where confidential staffing matters are considered in accordance with Standing Orders and the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

Terms of Reference

1. To oversee staffing structures and organisational development.
2. To review staffing establishments annually.
3. To oversee succession planning for key officers.
4. To oversee recruitment arrangements for senior officers.
5. To oversee:
 - staff wellbeing;
 - long-term sickness absence;
 - performance management;
 - and organisational culture.
6. To approve staffing policies and procedures.
7. To oversee job evaluation arrangements.
8. To oversee pay structures and conditions of service.
9. To oversee pension arrangements.
10. To oversee apprenticeship and training initiatives.
11. To undertake appraisal of the Chief Executive Officer/Town Clerk.
12. To appoint recruitment panels.
13. To oversee disciplinary and grievance matters.
14. To consider staffing budget implications.
15. To oversee health and safety matters relating to staffing.
16. To distinguish between:
 - Councillor strategic oversight;
 - and Officer operational management responsibilities.
17. To approve and monitor an annual work programme for the Committee.

PART 3 – SUB-COMMITTEES

1. GRANTS AND GOVERNANCE SUB-COMMITTEE

Membership

7 Councillors

Quorum

4 Councillors

Reports to

Finance and General Purposes Committee

Terms of Reference

1. To determine grant applications within approved budgets.
2. To monitor Service Level Agreements.
3. To review grant criteria.
4. To monitor delivery of funded outcomes.
5. To recommend governance improvements.

2. GRIEVANCE AND APPEALS SUB-COMMITTEE**Membership**

3 Councillors drawn from Personnel Committee

Quorum

3 Councillors

Terms of Reference

1. To hear grievance matters.
2. To hear disciplinary appeals.
3. To determine appeals in accordance with Council procedures.
4. To ensure procedural fairness.
5. No Councillor involved in the original matter, investigation or informal stage shall participate in any appeal hearing.
6. To report outcomes where appropriate.

3. COMPLAINTS SUB-COMMITTEE**Membership**

3 Councillors

Quorum

3 Councillors

Terms of Reference

1. To consider complaints relating to Council administration or service delivery received under the Council's Complaints Procedure, excluding complaints relating to the Councillor Code of Conduct or employment matters.
2. To determine complaints in accordance with Council policy.
3. To report recommendations to Full Council where appropriate.

4. COMPLAINTS APPEALS SUB-COMMITTEE**Membership**

3 Councillors not involved in the original complaint hearing.

Quorum

Terms of Reference

1. To hear appeals relating to complaints.
 2. To ensure independence of appeal arrangements.
 3. To determine appeals in accordance with Council policy.
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PART 4 – ADVISORY GROUPS AND START AND FINISH GROUPS

Status of Consultative Groups and Working Groups

Consultative Groups and Start and Finish Groups are advisory bodies only and are not Committees or Sub-Committees for the purposes of the Local Government Act 1972 unless expressly resolved otherwise by Full Council.

Such groups:

- have no delegated powers;
- may include non-Councillors;
- are not required to comply with Committee public access provisions unless specifically determined by Council;
- and may operate informally for consultation and project development purposes.

Recommendations of such groups shall be referred to the relevant Committee or Full Council for determination.

Meetings of Working Groups and Consultative Groups shall be conducted in accordance with any arrangements approved by Full Council and are not formal meetings of the Council unless expressly designated as such.

1. YOUTH COUNCIL

Membership

Youth Councillors together with nominated Town Councillor representatives.

Role

To provide a representative voice for young people within Weston-super-Mare and to promote youth engagement in local democracy and community matters.

Terms of Reference

1. To represent the interests and views of young people within the town.
2. To identify issues affecting young people and make recommendations to Council and Committees.
3. To promote participation in civic and democratic activities.
4. To support and develop projects and initiatives benefiting young people.
5. To work collaboratively with schools, community organisations and partner agencies where appropriate.
6. To operate in accordance with any Youth Council constitution or procedures approved by Full Council.

7. To operate as an advisory body to the Council.
-

2. DEVOLUTION START AND FINISH GROUP

Membership

9 Councillors

Quorum

4 Councillors

Role

To oversee the Council's devolution programme and review opportunities for transfer of services and assets.

Terms of Reference

1. To review devolution opportunities.
 2. To review business cases and feasibility studies.
 3. To monitor risks and financial implications.
 4. To oversee stakeholder consultation.
 5. To make recommendations to Committee and Council.
 6. To operate as a strategic advisory group only.
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3. BLUE PLAQUES START AND FINISH GROUP

Membership

3 Councillors

Role

To oversee the development and implementation of the Council's Blue Plaques initiative and make recommendations relating to heritage recognition and commemorative plaques within Weston-super-Mare.

Terms of Reference

1. To develop criteria and guidance for the Blue Plaques scheme.
 2. To consider nominations for commemorative plaques.
 3. To engage with relevant heritage organisations, community groups and stakeholders.
 4. To review potential locations and historical significance of proposed plaques.
 5. To consider budget implications and funding opportunities associated with the scheme.
 6. To make recommendations to the relevant Committee and/or Full Council.
 7. To operate as a strategic advisory group only.
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PART 5 – SCHEME OF DELEGATION

1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

This Scheme of Delegation sets out powers delegated to Officers for the efficient administration of the Council.

Delegated powers shall be exercised in accordance with:

- the Local Government Act 1972;
- the Localism Act 2011;
- Standing Orders;
- Financial Regulations;
- approved budgets;
- Council policies;
- and all statutory requirements.

Officers may exercise delegated authority in relation to:

- day-to-day operational management;
- implementation of Council and Committee decisions;
- lawful administration of Council services;
- and matters necessary to protect the Council's interests and maintain business continuity.

All delegated decisions shall:

- remain within approved budgets and policy;
- be proportionate and lawful;
- and be reported where required by Standing Orders or Financial Regulations.

Nothing within this Scheme shall override:

- matters reserved by law to Full Council;
- statutory responsibilities of the Proper Officer or Responsible Financial Officer;
- or the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

Full Council may amend, suspend or revoke any delegation contained within this document at any time.

2. DELEGATION TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER / TOWN CLERK

The Chief Executive Officer/Town Clerk shall serve as the Council's Proper Officer in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972, except where the Council has specifically designated another officer for a particular statutory function.

General Delegations

The Chief Executive Officer/Town Clerk shall have delegated authority to:

1. Implement decisions of Full Council, Committees and Sub-Committees.
2. Manage the day-to-day operations and administration of the Council.
3. Manage Council staff and operational service delivery.

4. Deal with correspondence, complaints and routine administration.
 5. Manage Council property, facilities, contracts and assets.
 6. Exercise delegated powers in accordance with:
 - Standing Orders;
 - Financial Regulations;
 - approved budgets;
 - Council policies;
 - and statutory requirements.
 7. Sign notices, agreements, contracts and legal documentation on behalf of the Council in accordance with Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.
 8. Institute, defend or participate in legal proceedings where necessary to protect the Council's interests.
 9. Act as lead officer for:
 - governance;
 - data protection;
 - freedom of information;
 - health and safety;
 - business continuity;
 - and emergency planning.
 10. Exercise powers delegated by the Council under the Localism Act 2011 General Power of Competence.
 11. Take all necessary operational decisions to ensure lawful and efficient administration of Council functions and services.
-

Financial Delegations

The Chief Executive Officer/Town Clerk may:

1. Incur expenditure within approved budgets and delegated limits.
 2. Authorise routine operational expenditure in accordance with Financial Regulations.
 3. Approve virements within limits prescribed by Financial Regulations.
 4. Recover debts and authorise debt recovery action.
 5. Write off debts within limits prescribed by Financial Regulations.
 6. Approve quotations and tenders within delegated thresholds.
 7. Commission professional advice where necessary.
 8. Manage banking, contracts, leases and insurances in conjunction with the Responsible Financial Officer.
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Staffing Delegations

The Chief Executive Officer/Town Clerk may:

1. Recruit staff within approved establishment structures and approved budgets.
2. Manage staffing matters in accordance with adopted Council policies and procedures.

3. Manage staff performance, attendance, conduct and operational staffing matters.
4. Approve leave, overtime, training and development.
5. Implement staffing policies and procedures approved by the Council.
6. Undertake disciplinary, capability, grievance and absence management procedures in accordance with Council policy.
7. Implement nationally or locally agreed pay awards approved by Council.
8. Arrange temporary staffing cover and operational staffing adjustments within approved budgets where necessary for service continuity.

Planning Delegations

The Chief Executive Officer/Town Clerk or nominated officer may respond to planning consultations in accordance with the Planning Delegation Protocol adopted by the Council.

Emergency Powers

The Chief Executive Officer/Town Clerk, in consultation where practicable with the Chair and Vice Chair of the relevant Committee, may take urgent action necessary to:

- protect life;
- protect property;
- protect Council interests;
- maintain service continuity;
- or minimise legal or financial liability.

Any emergency action and associated expenditure shall:

- be reported to the next available meeting of the relevant Committee or Full Council;
- comply with Standing Orders and Financial Regulations where practicable;
- and be recorded appropriately.

3. DELEGATION TO THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES (DEPUTY TOWN CLERK)

The Director of Community Services shall act as Deputy Town Clerk.

In the absence of the Chief Executive Officer/Town Clerk, the Director of Community Services may exercise delegated powers necessary for:

- continuity of Council business;
- operational management;
- implementation of Council decisions;
- and discharge of Proper Officer functions where required.

Such delegated powers shall be exercised in accordance with:

- Standing Orders;
- Financial Regulations;

- Council policy;
- and statutory requirements.

4. DELEGATION TO THE RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER / DIRECTOR OF FINANCE & RESOURCES

The Director of Finance & Resources shall act as the Council's Responsible Financial Officer pursuant to Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972.

The Responsible Financial Officer shall have delegated authority for:

1. Administration of the Council's financial affairs.
2. Maintenance of accounting and financial records.
3. Budget monitoring and financial reporting.
4. Treasury management, banking and audit arrangements.
5. Financial compliance and internal control.
6. Financial governance in accordance with:
 - Financial Regulations;
 - Accounts and Audit Regulations;
 - procurement legislation;
 - and proper accounting practice.

In the absence of both the Chief Executive Officer/Town Clerk and the Director of Community Services, the Responsible Financial Officer may exercise such delegated powers as are necessary to maintain lawful business continuity and protect the Council's financial interests.

5. DELEGATION TO SERVICE MANAGERS

Service Managers may exercise delegated operational authority within their approved service areas and budgets in accordance with:

- Council policy;
- Standing Orders;
- Financial Regulations;
- procurement procedures;
- and direction from the Chief Executive Officer/Town Clerk or relevant Director.

6. PROCUREMENT DELEGATIONS

All procurement activity shall comply with:

- Financial Regulations;
- Procurement Procedures;
- Procurement Act 2023;
- and associated statutory guidance.

Unless otherwise provided within Financial Regulations:

- Up to £5,000 – Authorised Officer
- Up to £10,000 – Chief Executive Officer/Town Clerk or delegated Director, within approved budgets and in accordance with Financial Regulations.
- £10,001 – £25,000 – Chief Executive Officer/Town Clerk or delegated Director, following consultation with the relevant Committee, unless Emergency Powers are exercised in accordance with this Scheme of Delegation.
- Above £25,000 – Relevant Committee
- Strategic / High Risk Contracts – Full Council where appropriate

In the event of conflict, Financial Regulations shall prevail.

7. REVIEW

This document shall be reviewed annually by Full Council.