

Somerton Town Council

Policy Documents

SCHEME OF DELEGATION

This Scheme of Delegation authorises the Clerk / proper officer / Responsible Financial Officer and Committees of the Council to act with delegated authority in the specific circumstances detailed.

1. Town Clerk

There are certain matters undertaken by the Clerk which might be regarded as routine managerial issues by some people whilst others might regard them in a different way.

The Town Clerk has the delegated authority to undertake the following matters on behalf of the Council related to the day to day administration of services, together with routine inspection and control.

Delegated actions of the Town Clerk shall be in accordance with Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and this Scheme of Delegation and with directions given by the Council from time to time.

All items that the Town Clerk acts upon under the delegated powers shall be reported to next appropriate Council meeting and recorded in the minutes.

In the absence of the Town Clerk due to incapacity the Deputy Clerk or Finance Officer will have delegated authority related to the functions below.

Service Area Function

Administration:

Agendas: To sign summonses to attend meetings of the Council.

Documents To sign notices and other documents on behalf of the Council, and to receive and retain plans and documents.

Communication:

Communications: To deal with press and public relations on behalf of the Council

Freedom of Information: To have overall responsibility for the Council's Freedom of Information Publication Scheme

Information and Communication Technology: To be responsible for the provision and management of information and communication technology provided throughout the Council including the replacement of out-dated equipment or the purchase of new equipment within the approved Budget

Governance

Councillors: To receive declarations of acceptance of office and to receive and record notices disclosing personal and prejudicial interests.

Elections: To notify the Returning Officer of all casual vacancies arising in the membership of the Council as required by statute and to liaise with him or her regarding the conduct of elections

Finance / Insurance

Audit: To maintain a continuous internal audit

Banking: To administer the Council's bank balances and undertake movements between accounts in line with Financial Standing Orders.

Bad Debts: To write-off outstanding debts in accordance with Financial Regulation

Grants: To seek grants that aid the Council meeting its objectives.

Insurance To maintain adequate insurance cover for the Council's activities and property

Payment Authorisation: On agreed expenditure items up to a limit of £2,500 plus all items approved by Full Council.

General Expenditure: With the joint authority of Chair/ Vice Chair of Council **or** Committee Chair £3000. With the joint authority of Chair/ Vice Chair of Council **and** Committee Chair £6000.

Emergency expenditure: up to £3000.

Purchases: To purchase necessary goods and supplies to meet day to day operational requirements.

Maintenance: To maintain the Council's offices and property in accordance with Financial Regulation / Risk Management

Grass Cutting, Hedge Cutting, Footpaths: To adjust grass cutting frequencies and other maintenance requirements in relation to the maintenance of the various open areas for which the Council is responsible

Trees: To ensure that trees for which the Council is responsible are maintained in a safe condition in accordance with good arboricultural practice.

Lettings: To authorise casual lettings of the Council's various properties subject to payment in accordance with the approved scale of charges where appropriate negotiate discounts that are to benefit of the Council.

Motor Vehicles and Plant: To maintain, repair and renew the Council's motor vehicles, plant and equipment as required.

Utilities: Enter into contracts for the supply of utilities subject to receiving 3 quotations.

Staffing

Pay: To implement agreed pay awards and conditions of service and administer payroll and HMRC requirements.

Supervision: Day to day supervision and control of all staff employed by the Council, including formal reviews.

Recruitment: Within the approved budget to engage temporary or seasonal workers and determine their wages and conditions of service

Others

Emergency Planning: To work with the Chair to lead the Council's response in the case of a major emergency in consultation with and/or under the direction of the Emergency Planning Officers.

2. Council

2.1 The following matters are reserved to the Council for decision, notwithstanding that the appropriate committee(s) may make recommendations for the Council's consideration.

- Setting the Precept;
- Borrowing money;
- Making, amending or revoking Standing Orders, Financial Regulations or this Scheme of Delegation.
- Matters of principle or policy.
- Nomination and appointment of representatives of the Council to any other authority, organisation or body.
- Any proposed new undertakings;
- Prosecution or defence in a court of law;
- Nomination or appointment of representatives of the Council at any inquiry on matters affecting the Town, excluding those matters specific to a committee.

3. Committees

The Committees are defined in the Terms of Reference and are delegated to operate within those terms, any expenditure can only be approved within the available budget for that committee.

The committees may from time to time be delegated authority from the Full Council to deliver a service or project, with the exception of any items under section 2.

A Committee may refer matters on which it has delegated authority to the Council for a final decision if it so wishes.

A committee chair may in conjunction with the Town Clerk cancel a meeting or call an additional meeting of the committee they represent.

Delegated actions of the committees shall be in accordance with Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and this Scheme of Delegation and with directions given by the Full Council from time to time.

4. Working Groups/Parties

4.1 Working groups/parties may be formed by resolution of the Council or a committee at any time. The work of such a working group/party will be decided upon at the time it is formed by means of a minute detailing the terms of reference.

Each working group/party will report back with recommendations to the Council or the committee that formed it.

5. Urgent Matters

5.1 In the event of any matter arising which requires an urgent decision the Town Clerk shall consult the Chair and Vice Chair and the members of the Chairs group and with the concurrence of those member(s) shall have delegated power to act on behalf of the Council in respect of the particular matter then under consideration.

5.2 Before exercising the delegated powers granted by paragraph 5 (1) above, the Town Clerk and those members consulted shall consider whether the matter is of sufficient interest to justify the summoning of a special meeting of the Full Council or appropriate committee and where a meeting is so summoned the committee concerned shall have delegated power to act on behalf of the Council in respect of the particular matter then under consideration.

5.3 Any action is taken under this Standing Order must be recorded in writing and made available for inspection by any member of the Council. Full details of the circumstances justifying the urgency and of the action taken shall be submitted in writing to the next available meetings of the Committee concerned and of the Council and recorded in the minutes.

6. Delegation - Limitations

6.1 Committees and working groups shall, at all times, act in accordance with the Council's standing orders, financial regulations and this scheme of delegation and, where applicable, any other rules, regulations and with any directions given by the Council from time to time.

Adopted: 10th November 2015
Reviewed & re-adopted: January 2023
Review Date: March 2024

7. Right of recall

7.1 The Clerk or Chair of Council may call-in a decision taken by a committee under this scheme and refer to the next Full Council / extraordinary Full Council as appropriate.