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WORKING PARTY POLICY AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.0 PURPOSE OF A WORKING PARTY

1.1 Party Working Parties are formed to assist the Full Council and Standing Committees to oversee a 'task and finish' project or to champion an initiative with a smaller membership of specialised or interested members. Working Party priorities will be agreed at the direction of full council.

1.2 They may be formed or disbanded at any time dependent upon the lifespan of any given project.

1.3 They will:

- Examine a matter in detail, read reports and related materials, examine options, get advice for the Council
- Act as experts and/or liaise with experts
- Make recommendations to council meetings
- Explain the recommendations, reasons and options and provide a brief written summary
- Answer questions from the Council
- Ensure no funding or monies are spent or committed without prior endorsement at Full Council

2.0 OPERATIONS OF A WORKING PARTY

- a) Working Parties do not have a budget and do not have any delegated authority to make any decisions
- b) Working Parties can either meet in person or virtually
- c) Administrative support will be provided by the Town Clerk or Appointed Officer



- d) The number of Councillors on a Working Party is decided at the time of formation, but must be a minimum of three councillors
- e) Three councillors must be present to ensure the meeting is quorate
- f) Although more informal than a meeting of Full Council or Committee meetings, the Council's meeting etiquette and the Councillors' Code of Conduct, still applies
- g) Working Party meetings will be arranged, as and when required
- h) Attendees are not formally summoned to a meeting, however if a Councillor or non-Councillor has committed to join a Working Party, then their attendance is expected
- i) Apologies in a timely manner should be notified to the Clerk or to the Appointed Officer providing administration support
- j) All members of a Working Party must declare any interests if anything comes up in the discussions
- k) Each Working Party will use a SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely) format and set up a Smart Action Plan setting out the aims of the Working Party. This will be shared with the Town Council
- l) A Chair of the Working Party is chosen at the inaugural meeting
- m) The Chair of the meeting will provide a verbal or written update, if time permits, at the next Full Council or Committee meeting
- n) The Working Party may co-opt, where necessary, other councillors and non-council members to provide any such specialist advice
- o) Co-opted non-members of the Town Council do not have any voting rights, and are in attendance solely for the purpose of the provision of advice and information
- p) The Working Party will maintain notes of all meetings and formulation of recommendations (this can be managed by the Working Party and does not necessarily require the Clerk).
- q) Where possible the distribution of documents and information will be via email to all members of the Working Party.
- r) Depending upon the commercial or confidential nature of a Working Party, all meeting notes will be published on the Council's website.

3.0 TOWN COUNCIL AND WORKING PARTY RELATIONSHIP

3.1 Final Recommendations will be presented by the Chair of the Working Party to the Town Council meeting, taking into account the legal status of agenda compilation and notification; where questions may be asked of the Working Party, members to ensure thorough consideration of each issue before the Town Council can pass a resolution on the subject.



3.2 The role of the Town Council is to, where necessary, question and challenge the recommendations of the Working Party, in order to openly display that all suitable considerations have been taken into account.

3.3 The questioning and challenging will be at a full Town Council meeting to ensure full transparency, though this might be in a confidential session, if the nature of the discussions is confidential.

3.4 The Town Council will review the Working Party Policy annually each April.