

Terms of Reference of Charlton Kings Parish Council Committees

Finance and General Purposes standing committee

Approved by Council Minute 148/18/19 - Full Council 26th November 2018

Purpose

The Finance and General Purposes Committee (F&GPC) has responsibility, with the Clerk, for overseeing the proper conduct of the Parish Council's affairs. It supports the Council's work, ensuring that the necessary policies and procedures are in place and regularly reviewed.

In particular it will:

- i. Maintain oversight of the financial affairs of and the demands on the Parish Council and recommend to the full Parish Council the annual Precept it will require in order to meet its commitments.
- ii. Manage Council's personnel functions to ensure that good employment and staff management practices are in place and operational.
- iii. Manage Council's administration, governance and communications.
- iv. Ensure that Council has appropriate legal advice to guide its actions.

Duties and Powers

F&GPC has responsibility for the oversight and management of much of Council's budget, in the cost centres related to its role. This responsibility is not delegated to its subcommittees.

The Clerk will provide assistance to the committee in the delivery of its programme and will carry out such support functions as are necessary. The committee will also work closely with the Clerk to manage Council's business, the operation of the Parish Office and the Parish Hub, including the adjacent public toilets.

F&GPC has responsibility for advising Council on both internal and external communications, ensuring that through its communications strategy, Council's business is communicated clearly, effectively and in a timely manner, both within the Council and externally to the public and partners.

The committee has three advisory subcommittees, whose role is to advise the chair of F&GPC on matters within their remit.

The three F&GPC subcommittees are:

Finance

The Finance subcommittee is responsible for ensuring compliance with Charlton Kings Parish Council's financial regulations and for co-ordinating the internal and external checks required by them. It conducts an annual review of the financial regulations and makes recommendations for amendments in time for the Annual Meeting of Council.

In particular it will:

- i. Ensure financial propriety is maintained in accordance with Council's financial regulations.

- ii. Receive bids from standing committees, including its own, by December each year, for projects and activities that contribute to the delivery of Council's Annual Action Plan.
- iii. Prepare and recommend to Council a detailed annual, and outline forward-looking, programme of projects and activities that is affordable and can be delivered; including proposals for the use of revenue and capital expenditure as appropriate.
- iv. Recommend to the January meeting of full Council each year, the amount of the annual Precept it will require to meet its commitments; and advise on the use of hypothecated reserves.

Personnel

The Personnel subcommittee will work with the chair and vice-chair of Council to ensure that the Council has appropriate staff resources to carry out its business effectively.

In particular it will:

- i. Ensure that the Council is adequately staffed to meet its requirements and that appropriate training is made available to its employees.
- ii. Ensure that working conditions are of an acceptable standard.
- iii. Prepare, by the November meeting of F&GPC each year, an estimate of staff costs for the following year for inclusion in the proposed annual budget.
- iv. Annually review staff contracts and make recommendations to F&GPC if changes are required.
- v. Administer the staff disciplinary and grievance procedure if required.
- vi. Assist the chairs of Council and F&GPC in the management of council's employees.

Governance

The Governance subcommittee is responsible for all aspects of governance and in particular for ensuring that the necessary policies and procedures are in place and regularly reviewed. It conducts an annual review of Council's procedural standing orders, financial regulations, and such other policies and procedures as may from time to time be required and makes recommendations for amendments in time for the Annual Meeting of Council.

Membership

- i. The Finance and General Purposes Committee has a minimum of five members, comprising the chair of F&GPC, the chair and vice-chair of Council, and the chairs of the two 'spending' standing committees (Community Development and Allotments).
- ii. The Annual Meeting of the Parish Council will approve the membership of the committee and elect the chair. A vice-chair will be elected at the first meeting of the committee following the Annual Meeting of Council.
- iii. Ideally, a member will not hold the chair for more than three consecutive years.

Meetings

- i. The committee will meet at least two and ideally three times a year. Additional meetings may be called when required.
- ii. The quorum is one third of the committee membership rounded up, subject to a minimum of three members, which must include the chair or vice-chair. In the absence of a properly constituted quorum for a planned meeting, the committee should re-convene at the earliest available opportunity.
- iii. A provisional schedule of meetings for the municipal year will be agreed at the Annual Meeting of Council in May.

- iv. Extra-ordinary meetings of the committee will be convened by the Clerk at not less than three clear days' notice.
- v. Subcommittees will meet as the need arises to complete their business.

Standing Orders

- i. The Clerk will distribute the agenda for each meeting to all committee members at least three clear days in advance of the meeting.
- ii. All meetings will be minuted by the Clerk.
- iii. Minutes will be circulated to committee members normally within one week, and no later than within fourteen days of the meeting and before distribution to the full Council.
- iv. Committee members should verify the accuracy of the minutes in advance of the distribution of such minutes to the full Council. Any amendments are to be notified to the Clerk within three days of receipt.
- v. Only Councillors who are properly appointed members of the committee will vote on issues within its assigned terms of reference.
- vi. Where there is equality in a vote, which cannot be resolved in committee, the chair will have a casting vote.
- vii. The committee will adhere to the Nolan Principles on standards in public life in everything it does.