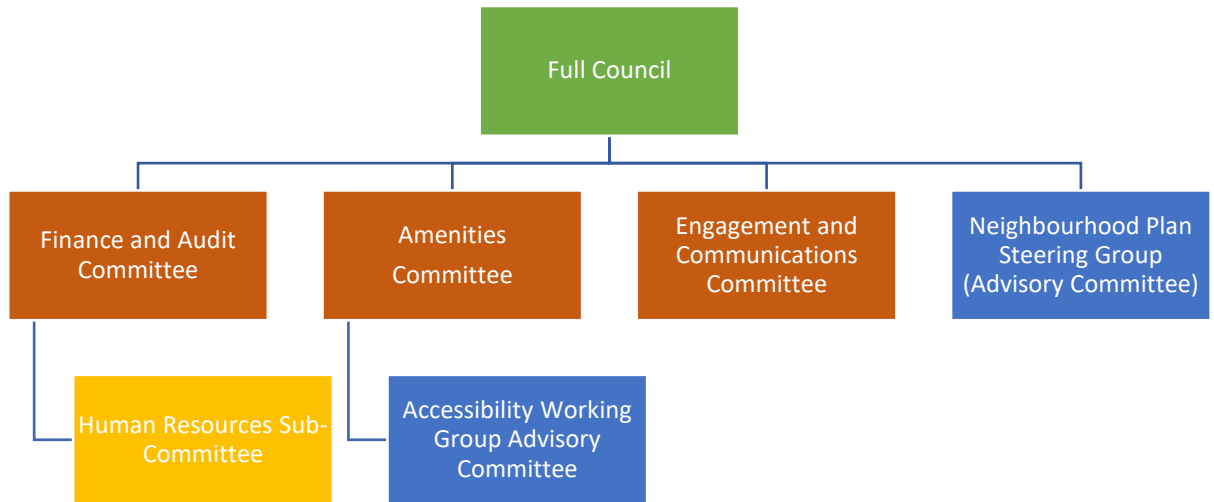


BEXHILL-ON-SEA TOWN COUNCIL TERMS OF REFERENCE AND SCHEME OF DELEGATION 2024-25



I. SUMMARY

- a) Subject to the observance of decisions of the Council on matters of principle or policy, the Council's powers and duties shall be delegated to the Committees, as permitted under the Local Government Act 1972 s101, in accordance with the approved Terms of Reference unless otherwise stated.
- b) Committees will operate within approved Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, other policy documents and procedures and approved budgets in the areas detailed in the following pages. The Council may revoke powers delegated to Committees by resolution.
- c) Only the Full Council can appoint a clerk, raise a loan, agree the annual precept, sign off the Annual Governance and Accountability Statement
- d) The Full Council delegates responsibility for Communications (website, press statement, newsletter) using its Press and Media Policy.

2. OFFICERS

- a) Officers will operate within approved Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, other policy documents and procedures and approved budgets.
- b) Officers will need to be aware that financial delegation can be broken down into three elements:
 - i. Revenue expenditure which allows the Council to continue business uninterrupted – delegated to Officers and reported through the monthly management reports.
 - ii. Capital expenditure – which is always decided by Committee or Council.

- iii. New items, whether they are considered Revenue or Capital – will always be decided by Committee or Council.
- c) Following these simple rules will enable the officers to maintain business continuity but also ensure elected councillors have overall control of major spending decisions.
- d) To comply with Financial Regulation 4.5 which allows the Clerk to incur expenditure on behalf of the Council up to £2000 plus VAT for any repair, replacement or other work which is of such extreme urgency that it must be done at once.
- e) To report all such action to the next meeting of the appropriate Committee or Council

3. FINANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

The role of the Finance and Audit Committee is to oversee the financial management of the council and human resources matters.

3.1 Membership

- a) The Finance and Audit Committee shall consist of SIX councillors.
- b) The Mayor and Deputy Mayor will be ex-officio members without voting rights.

3.2 Meetings

- a) The Committee shall meet monthly, except for August unless there is urgent business as directed by the Chair.

3.3 Responsibilities

- a) Develop and recommend policies and procedures for the financial management of the Council.
- b) Promote a culture of safety through risk assessments and ensure compliance with current health and safety procedures.
- c) Oversee the human resources management of the council, reviewing the council's operations in line with employment law and health and safety legislation and good practice.

3.4 Rights and Powers

- a) Review all risk assessments on an annual basis.
- b) Determine pay and contractual conditions of employment of the Clerk in line with the Green Book and review/update these as necessary to comply with UK Employment Law as well as good practice
- c) Set the expenses policy for both staff and councillors
- d) Set ex-gratia payments, honoraria or exceptional increments.
- e) Form a complaints committee in the case of an unresolved complaint as per the Council's complaints policy.
- f) Carry out an annual review of the Financial Regulations and Standing Orders for recommendation to full council at the ACM in May.

- g) Monitor reserves to ensure that surpluses are not built up other than for working capital or for earmarked projects and known liabilities, ensuring that sufficient reserves are retained for future maintenance, replacement or upgrading of items for which the Council is responsible
- h) Receive and consider annual budgets prepared by each Committee
- i) Prepare an annual budget for the Council and recommend an annual precept
- j) Monitor each Committee's performance against budget and report significant variances to Council with recommendations for appropriate action
- k) Undertake a regular review and reconciliations of the bank accounts
- l) Monitor purchasing decisions to ensure value for money as agreed in the Financial Regulations
- m) Undertake a financial risk analysis annually and review the Council's insurance arrangements to ensure that property and identified risks are adequately insured
- n) Consider and determine requests for community and other grants within agreed annual budgets
- o) Monitor grant applications and seek external funding where possible to support council functions
- p) Review the staff handbook annually

4.HUMAN RESOURCES SUB-COMMITTEE

The role of the Human Resources Sub-Committee is to provide line management to the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer. The HR Sub Committee is a sub-committee of the Finance and Audit Committee.

4.1 Membership

- a) The HR Sub-Committee shall consist of THREE councillors appointed from the Finance and Audit Committee.
- b) The Mayor and Deputy Mayor will be ex-officio members without voting rights.

4.2 Meetings

- a) The HR Sub-Committee will arrange meetings as required, and a minimum of quarterly, and shall not be open to the public.

4.3 Responsibilities

- a) To agree and review a minimum of three and a maximum of five objectives in relation to the strategy of the council
- b) To complete regular appraisals of the clerk's performance at least quarterly.
- c) To ensure that the clerk is supported and has the resources to manage the staff of the council.
- d) To provide regular updates to the Finance and Audit Committee on the clerk's progress.

4.4 Rights and Powers

- a) The HR Sub-Committee will have delegated powers to oversee the clerk's day to day activities and to authorise annual leave.
- b) The HR Sub-Committee will monitor the clerk's absence and carry out health and well-being reviews in relation to absences.
- c) The HR Sub-Committee will review the salary and pay scales of the clerk on a regular basis and make recommendations to the Finance and Audit Committee for approval.

- d) The HR Sub-Committee will review training and development requirements for the clerk and make recommendations to the Finance and Audit Committee for the provision of any training and continuous professional development.
- e) The HR Sub-Committee is to take responsibility that confidentiality and integrity is maintained over all staffing matters under the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Model Code of Conduct.

5. AMENITIES COMMITTEE

The role of the Amenities Committee is to monitor the implications of highways, transport and environmental issues within the Council's area and to manage Council services, included devolved functions. The Committee shall also oversee the management of the allotment sites on behalf of the Council. Any anticipated devolved functions or services shall be reviewed by the Amenities Committee before recommending to the Full Council.

5.1 Membership

- a) The Amenities Committee shall consist of SIX councillors.
- b) The Mayor and Deputy Mayor will be ex-officio members without voting rights.

5.2 Meetings

- a) The Committee shall meet every other month, except for August unless there is urgent business as directed by the Chair.

5.3 Responsibilities

- a) The committee shall give strategic direction and recommend policy to Full Council on the transfer of devolved services.
- b) Capital and maintenance costs for each proposed transfer of service shall be researched and reported to full council with a recommendation for adoption of assets and services accompanied with a detailed budget.
- c) To be responsible for risk management and property maintenance of the Town Council Hub.
- d) To oversee the verge cutting contracts and investigating improvements to the service.
- e) To oversee the operation of five allotment sites which are run by local Allotment Associations and to be responsible for the management of the remaining two Town Council run sites.
- f) To oversee contract management of all Council amenities and report issues to Full Council for consideration.

5.4 Rights and Powers

- a) To manage the budgets of all Council amenities, adhering to the Financial Regulations of the Council.
- b) To consider all public realm matters such as highways, transport and parks and open spaces.

6. ACCESSIBILITY WORKING GROUP (ADVISORY COMMITTEE)

The role of the Accessibility Working Group is to research the issues that are affecting the accessibility in the whole of Bexhill.

7.1 Membership

- a) The Panel shall consist of THREE councillor members appointed by the Amenities Committee and an unlimited number of councillors and non-councillor members (any local community organisations, residents and businesses should be invited to join)

7.2 Meetings

- a) The group will arrange meetings as required, and shall not be open to the public.

7.3 Responsibilities

- a) The group will take into account all accessibility issues including hearing, visual, dementia, frailty and 'hidden' disabilities.
- b) The group will carry out an audit of current provisions in place for accessibility.
- c) The group will present a set of recommendations to the Amenities Committee to inform the five year strategic plan of the council set out in electoral ward categories.
- d) The Panel will produce notes for each meeting, of which are to be circulated to all Group members and progress updates are to be provided to the Amenities Committee regularly.

7.4 Rights and Powers

- a) This Group is unable to make council decisions however is able to make full representation to each relevant committee/full council in line with the council Standing orders.

7. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP (ADVISORY COMMITTEE)

The role is to prepare the policies and procedures required for the Neighbourhood Plan. A full Terms of Reference will be adopted when the group has met.

8. ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

The role of the Engagement and Communications Committee is to oversee the strategy and communication and engagement of the Council.

8.1 Membership

- a) The Engagement and Communications Committee shall consist of SIX councillors
- b) The Mayor and Deputy Mayor will be ex-officio members without voting rights unless they are members of the Community Committee

8.2 Meetings

- a) The Committee shall meet every other month, except for August unless there is urgent business as directed by the Chair.

8.3 Responsibilities

- a) To carry out public consultation exercises to inform the strategy and policy of the council, using methods accessible to all residents and local businesses, ensuring whole community engagement.

8.4 Rights and Powers

- a) To develop a five-year vision and strategic framework to encompass short-, medium- and long-term projects for recommendation to full council.
- b) To monitor and review the approved vision and strategic framework, recommending any remedial actions to full council.
- c) To be responsible for the Council's involvement consulting with young persons.
- d) To monitor and develop the communications of the council including, but not limited to:
 - i. Website
 - ii. Social media platforms
 - iii. Noticeboards
 - iv. Newsletter
- e) To consider the town council's involvement in local events in order to promote the work of the council and strengthen pride in the town.
- f) To oversee and develop civic events such as Mayor Making, Freeman/Freewoman awards, Remembrance Day.
- g) To work in conjunction with the Mayors Office to utilise the office of Mayor for the benefit of Bexhill-on-Sea Town Council as a whole.

9. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- a) The weekly planning application list is sent to all Councillors.
- b) Councillors review the applications within their ward boundary to identify which applications they wish the council to comment on.
- c) Councillors contact the Town Clerk to request that the planning application be added to the next Full Council agenda.
- d) This should be done within five days of receipt of the list, to ensure that deadlines can be met.
- e) If the 21-day deadline for comments on an application is outside of the usual Full Council meeting schedule, the Clerk will seek an extension to comments from the Planning Authority. If this is not granted, the Clerk will consult with the Chair of the Full Council with a view to calling an extraordinary meeting.
- f) If the deadline for comments is within the usual Full Council schedule the application will be added to the next Full Council agenda for consideration.