



Policy & Finance Committee Constitution

This document is intended to supplement the Standing Orders of the Council. In the event of conflict between this document and the Standing Orders, the Standing Orders will prevail.

1. Status, membership and quorum for meetings

- 1.1 The Policy & Finance Committee is a committee established by Ringwood Town Council to which it shall report all its proceedings and by which it may be dissolved at any time.
 - 1.2 The Policy & Finance Committee is a standing committee.
 - 1.3 Membership of the Policy & Finance Committee shall comprise:
 - 1.3.1 The following members *ex officio*: The Town Mayor, the Deputy Mayor and the chairs of the Planning, Town & Environment Committee, the Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces Committee and the Staffing Committee for the time being; and
 - 1.3.2 Such other members of the Council (if any) as the Council shall from time to time appoint.
- Members of the Policy & Finance Committee shall hold such office until the annual meeting of the Council next after the date of their appointment unless otherwise determined by the Council.
- 1.4 The quorum for meetings of the Policy & Finance Committee shall be three or one-third of the total membership of the committee at the start of the meeting rounded up to the nearest whole number (whichever is the greater).

2. Terms of reference

- 2.1 The primary purpose of the Policy & Finance Committee is to exercise on behalf of the Council all its powers, duties and functions with regard to the matters listed in paragraph 2.2 below. In exercising this function, the Committee shall:
 - 2.1.1 be bound by all relevant policies adopted by the Council and subject to the Council's budget and system of budgetary controls; and
 - 2.1.2 supervise the work of relevant officers and hold them to account.
- 2.2 The matters within the Policy & Finance Committee's remit are the following:

- 2.2.1 Advising the Council on the budget proposals of all committees and the level of the precept required for each year
- 2.2.2 Monitoring income and expenditure against budget and, when deemed necessary, either making recommendations to the Council for or approving any or all of the following:
 - 2.2.2.1 revisions to budget figures;
 - 2.2.2.2 virements between budget headings;
 - 2.2.2.3 transfers to or from reserves.
- 2.2.3 Overseeing all other aspects of the financial administration of the Council including arrangements for the preparation of accounts, audit of accounts, it's system of financial controls and their effectiveness, the management of financial risk, banking arrangements, investments and treasury management and the preparation of and compliance with the Council's Financial Regulations.
- 2.2.4 Overseeing the Council's formal policies, Standing Orders, strategies and governance documents, undertaking periodic reviews of these and, when deemed necessary, either making recommendations to the Council for or approving changes to them.
- 2.2.5 Advising the Council on the level of allowances to be payable to Councillors
- 2.2.6 Overseeing all Council business of a legal nature including:
 - 2.2.6.1 the acquisition or disposal of any freehold or leasehold interests in land;
 - 2.2.6.2 the granting or acquisition of any licences for the occupation of land (whether for the purposes of holding a fair, market or event of any kind or otherwise);
 - 2.2.6.3 the conduct of any dispute, claim or proceedings of any kind.
- 2.2.7 Overseeing the management of the Council's assets (save for those included within the remit of any other committee) and the Council's insurance needs and arrangements
- 2.2.8 Managing the Council's Grant Aid scheme
- 2.2.9 Reviewing the Council's scale of fees and charges annually (or at such other intervals as are thought fit) and determining changes to these
- 2.2.10 Reviewing the Council's subscriptions annually (or at such other intervals as are thought fit) and determining renewals or cancellations of them
- 2.2.11 Reviewing the Council's contracts, service level agreements and other legal arrangements with other parties annually (or at such other intervals as are thought fit) and, where necessary and practicable, giving guidance or directions about their variation, termination or renewal

- 2.2.12 Advising the Council on responses to be made to any plans, policies or strategies proposed or published by New Forest District Council, New Forest National Park Authority, Hampshire County Council, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England or any other competent authority where such response has been requested or is appropriate having regard to the powers and functions of the Council
- 2.2.13 Overseeing the management of the Council's office functions including the Information Service, IT hardware and software, the Council's website and official social media accounts, data protection policies and arrangements, publication scheme and freedom of information responsibilities.
- 2.2.14 The exercise of any other power, duty or function of the Council that may lawfully be delegated to a committee, where this is judged to be in the public interest and necessary without delay, notwithstanding that ordinarily the matter would have been referred to another committee or the Council for determination.

3. Delegated powers

- 3.1 The following powers are delegated to the Policy & Finance Committee to enable it to discharge its functions:
 - 3.1.1 To give to any officer any instruction, direction or guidance relating to any matter within its remit which the Council could lawfully have given and which is either consistent with the delegation of powers to officers or has been requested by the officer concerned;
 - 3.1.2 To approve on behalf of the Council any contractual or expenditure commitment for a matter within its remit that is within approved budgets and not inconsistent with decisions delegated to officers;
 - 3.1.3 To authorise on behalf of the Council the use of funds held in any earmarked reserve PROVIDED that "use" in this context shall include spending funds, committing funds to future expenditure or putting funds at risk of being called upon to meet a contractual or expenditure commitment;
 - 3.1.4 To revise the Council's budget or approve a virement between budget headings;
 - 3.1.5 To approve changes to any Council policy, governance or strategy document (except Standing Orders or Financial Regulations);
 - 3.1.6 To approve the initiation of any legal proceedings in the name of the Council or any steps in connection therewith; and
 - 3.1.7 To authorise the execution of any deed, agreement, notice or other instrument on behalf of the Council.

4. Rules about meetings

- 4.1 The provisions of Standing Order 3 which apply to committees shall apply to the Policy & Finance Committee.
- 4.2 The Town Clerk and the Finance Manager shall attend every meeting and the Town Clerk shall act as clerk to the Policy & Finance Committee. If either officer is unable to attend they shall arrange for another officer to deputize for them.

Adopted by: Ringwood Town Council on 28th May 2025 (minute ref. no. C/7358)