



Christchurch Town Council: **Scheme of Delegation**

1) Scope

Officers & Members

- 2) [Proper Officer](#)
- 3) [Responsible Financial Officer](#)
- 4) [Town Clerk \(General\)](#)
- 5) [Office of the Town Mayor](#)
- 6) [The Council \(Body Corporate\)](#)
- 7) [Committee Chairs](#)

Council & Standing Committees

- 8) [Planning & Regulatory Committee](#)
- 9) [Community Committee](#)
- 10) [Finance & Policy Committee](#)
- 11) [Personnel Committee](#)
- 12) [Advisory Committees \(General\)](#)

Adopted:

Review Date:

Scope

- 1.1) This scheme of delegation sets out the principal governance structure of the Council and the decision making process, utilising the power of delegation set out in the Local Government Act Section 101. The scheme allows the Proper Officer, Responsible Financial Officer, officers under direction and all levels of committee to act with delegated authority in specific circumstances detailed. The scheme is overseen by the Council and should be reviewed on an annual basis, taking into account the changing nature of the committee structure.
- 1.2) The scheme provides clarity and transparency in the decision-making process and ensures that decisions are made at the appropriate level within the organization. The scheme can be used to identify the powers delegated to each decision-making body within the organization, including elected officials, committees, and officers. It specifies the extent of their decision-making powers, including financial decision making powers, policy-making authority, and procedural responsibilities.
- 1.3) The scheme of delegation also identifies matters that are reserved for specific decision-making bodies or are subject to further approval and outlines the criteria for referring matters to higher authorities and specify the procedures for doing so.

Proper Officer

2.1) The Council's 'Proper Officer' is a statutory appointment and is entrusted to the office of the Town Clerk. The Proper Officer is responsible in law for ensuring that the Council's records, assets and processes are kept in good order, regularly reviewed and reported to Council. Specifically, duties of the Proper Officer include:

- Receiving declarations of acceptance of office.
- Receiving and recording notices disclosing interests.
- Receiving and retaining plans and documents.
- Sign notices and documents on behalf of the Council.
- Receive copies of bylaws made by a principal local authority.
- Certify copies of bylaws made by the Council
- Draft and publish agenda papers in consultation with the relevant chairperson.
- Sign summons to attend ordinary meetings of the Council.
- Retain custody of the Council's seal for use by resolution.

Responsible Financial Officer

3.1) The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) is a statutory appointment under S151 of the Local Government Act 1972 and is the Town Clerk. The RFO is accountable to the Council and holds responsibility for determining the Council's form of accounts, ensuring that accounts are maintained in accordance with the Accounts & Audit Regulations in force at any given time. In addition, duties of the RFO include:

- Accountability for the management of budgetary information, reporting and management of reserves.
- Accountability for the timely and proper report of all cashbooks and reconciliations to the Council
- Ensuring investments are carried out in accordance with the Council's Treasury & Investment Policy.
- Maintaining a sound system of internal control and convening the Financial Scrutiny Panel, including implementing the recommendations of the panel.
- Discharging all responsibilities in relation to the Local Government Pension Scheme.
- Completion and certification of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return.
- Ensuring the obligations of the Accounts & Audit Regulations are met.
- Publishing all relevant financial information as per Transparency Code requirements.

Town Clerk

4.1) The role of the Town Clerk is that of 'chief executive' or 'head of paid service'. The title of 'Town Clerk' is an historic office that is widely retained by Town Councils. The office holds responsibility for presiding over administrative and operational matters, but not matters of policy approval which is reserved for the Council. The Town Clerk is responsible for issuing directions and orders to staff as the principal line manager and is accountable to the Council as a body corporate. The Town Clerk holds delegated authority to undertake the following matters on behalf of the Council:

- Day to day administration of services, together with routine inspection and control
- Day to day supervision and control of all staff employed by the Council
- Personnel matters including capability and disciplinary procedures as per policy.
- Deployment of council resources to discharge the statutory duties of the Council and agreed committee business plans.
- Providing comments to local press and media on behalf of the Council in consultation with relevant stakeholders.
- Authorisation to respond immediately to any correspondence, requiring or requesting information or relating to previous decisions of the Council, but not correspondence requiring an opinion to be taken by the Council or its Committees
- Authorisation of routine recurring expenditure within the agreed budget lines.
- Authorisation of expenditure on any general works within the agreed budget lines.
- Authorisation of emergency expenditure outside of an agreed budget in accordance with Financial Regulations, with any such emergency expenditure to be reported to the Council at the earliest opportunity.
- Proposition of new policies and initiatives for consideration by the Council.

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

Office of the Town Mayor

5.1) The full duties, expectations and protocols of the Town Mayor are set out in the Civic Handbook. The Town Mayor is the 'First Citizen' and acts as a focal point for the town and a living embodiment of democratic values.

5.2) In the event of any matter arising which requires an urgent decision, the Clerk to the Council shall forthwith consult with the Town Mayor and other relevant Committee Chairs and/or Vice Chairs before acting on behalf of the Council.

The Council (Body Corporate)

6.0) The following are reserved matters for the Council to decide, notwithstanding that the appropriate Committee(s) may make recommendations thereon for the Council's consideration.

- Setting the Precept
- Borrowing money
- Approval of the Council's Annual Accounts and the Annual Governance & Accountability Return
- Making, amending or revoking Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Code of Conduct or this Scheme of Delegation, in consideration of any relevant committee recommendations.
- Making, amending or revoking bylaws
- Making of orders under any statutory powers
- Approving and adopting the Council's Corporate Strategy
- Discharge of completed corporate strategy items upon notification by the relevant committee.
- The appointment of the Town Clerk taking into account the advice of the Personnel Committee
- Matters of principle or policy
- Final approval of any matter of capital expenditure to which a project budget or earmarked reserve has been applied where a valid business case has been assessed and approved by the Council, or received by the relevant committee.
- Receiving committee reports (*but not approving minutes of such committees*)
- Approval of application and renewal for the Local Council Award Scheme.
- Nomination and appointment of representatives of the Council to any other authority, organisation or body.
- Responses to legislative and other allied consultations excluding those dealt with by the Planning Committee.
- Prosecution or defence in a Court of Law other than an Employment Tribunal.
- Nomination or appointment of representatives of the Council at any inquiry on matters affecting the Town, excluding those matters specific to a Committee.
- Decisions to adopt or reaffirm eligibility of the General Power of Competence.

Committee Chairs

7.0) Committee chairs are responsible for the direction and success of their committee's business. In addition to presiding over meetings and keeping order, committee chairs drive forwards business plans and help their fellow Members form a consensus on items of debate.

7.1) Committee chairs are empowered as the principal stakeholder of their committee and corporate strategy plans to undertake all necessary enquiries with officers on any matter relating to committee business. All officer communications relevant to committees should be considered in the first instance by its respective chair.

7.2) Committee chairs are entitled to a private meeting with the Town Clerk to discuss and agree upcoming agenda papers for each committee meeting and may give direction as to the order of business and acceptance of written motions in accordance with standing orders, but may not exclude an item of business from a committee agenda that otherwise satisfies policy.

7.3) Committee chairs and vice chairs are entitled to attend the annual business planning meeting, (usually held in October) in accordance with the Council's adopted Business Planning Process and table early items of business for exploration ahead of committee adoption. Committee chairs and vice chairs are not obliged to partake in the business planning process.

7.4) The decision to approve or exclude any motion remains the power of the Proper Officer under Standing Orders.

Planning & Regulatory Committee

8.0) The Planning & Regulatory Committee serves to provide statutory consultation responses to the Local Planning Authority by reviewing all planning applications notified to it by the LPA. The Committee may also consider all transport and traffic related matters where such matters relate to material infrastructure.

8.1) The Committee consists of **9 members**.

8.2) The Committee shall consider and determine the following matters:

- All statutory consultation notices received in respect of full planning applications, listed building consent applications and change of use;
- To monitor on behalf of the Council the tidiness of the town;
- Plans and policy proposals received in relation to Minerals & Waste;
- Matters relating to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF);
- Matters relating to the Local Plan and its components;
- Matters relating to the Conservation Areas in Christchurch;
- Matters of national infrastructure, e.g railways, pipelines and pylon proposals;
- Any principal matters and correspondence relating to Neighbourhood Plans and recommendations from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group;
- Correspondence received from the Local Planning Authority in relation to administrative planning matters;
- Notifications of Tree Preservation Orders made by the Unitary Council;
- Notifications of Traffic Regulation Orders;
- Notifications of decisions taken by the Local Planning Authority where relevant;
- Flood risk management including the Christchurch Bay & Harbour Strategy;

Community Committee

9.0) The Community Committee serves to respect the interests of Christchurch's local citizens in respect of anything that directly impacts the local community, including matters of community safety, civil amenity and provision of local services. The Committee also presides over the management of events and key stakeholder relationships.

9.1) The Committee consists of **9 members**.

9.2) The Committee shall consider and determine the following matters:

- Receive reports, recommendations and minutes from advisory committees and panels that may be appointed from time to time;
- To be responsible for the supervision and management of the Town Council's recreation grounds and open spaces;
- To be responsible for the supervision and management of the Town Council's allotments and land interests;
- To be responsible for the advancement and maximisation of the use of the Town Council's recreational offering;
- Promotion and encouragement of the expansion of sport and leisure activities within the community;
- To promote and encourage the arts and conservation and heritage of the Town;
- To set and manage policy required in terms of the management and supervision of the Town Council's recreation grounds, open spaces and allotments, including long term management plans;
- Matters of public health;
- Provision of Christmas decorations and celebrations, including Christmas Events;
- To liaise and promote the holding of events upon Town Council property and oversee any application process for large external events including the grant or otherwise of a licence to hold the event;
- To recommend to Resources Committee charges, rates and fees for services within the purview of the Committee.

Resources Committee

10.0) The Resources Committee serves to oversee the Council's financial position including matters relating to the management of budgets, reserves and cashflow. The committee is responsible for scrutiny and oversight of policies and making recommendations to the Council for amendments in Standing Orders & Financial Regulations.

10.1) The Committee consists of **9 members**.

10.2) The Committee shall consider and determine the following matters:

- All matters of policy adoption, amendment and approval, save for where a policy area is delegated to another committee or presided over by Full Council;
- Receipt of all budget reports for all standing committees;
- Receipt of cashbooks and bank reconciliations;
- To consider and determine applications for grant aid;
- To fix charges for services, licences and fees within the purview of the committee taking into account recommendations from Council or other Committees;
- Receipt of relevant proposals for instructions and reports.
- All matters concerning income and expenditure in general, including analysis of the Council's long-term financial forecast.
- To fix rents for any premises under the control of the committee;
- To negotiate land transactions on behalf of the Council including the content of leases;
- To be responsible for all of the Council's insurance matters;
- Periodic review of the Council's 'Earmarked Reserves' and receipt of EMR reports.
- Scrutiny of administrative practice and deployment of resource.
- To be responsible for the repair and maintenance of all the Council's built assets, fixtures and fittings with the exception of any shelters upon open space/recreational land which falls within the purview of Community Committee;

Personnel Committee

11.0) The Personnel Committee serves to oversee matters relating to employment and staff member circumstances and discharge the obligations of the Council as an employer under the Employment Rights Act 1996 and supporting legislation

Members who serve on this committee are party to sensitive, personal and confidential information and must maintain confidence at all times. This sub-committee reports to the Policy & Resources Committee.

11.1) The Committee consists of **5 members**.

11.2) The Committee shall consider and determine the following matters:

- Receipt of a regular reports from the Town Clerk as to staff morale, progress and project delivery.
- Welfare and reasonable adjustments for staff.
- Matters of long-term absence.
- All matters of staff recruitment.
- Employment disputes and executive disciplinary measures as per the Staff Handbook.
- Receipt of Town Clerk's recommendations from the Annual Appraisal Process.
- Adoption of specific policies in relation to personnel matters.
- Review of the Council's Pay Policy Statement.
- Review of the Employer's LGPS Discretions policy.
- Review of the Staff Handbook.
- Scrutiny of the Town Clerk's performance and decision taking in relation to staff matters.

Advisory Committees (General)

12) Advisory committees are non-decision-making entities established by the Council and its standing committees from time to time as required. Advisory committees may exist in one of four prescribed formats:

- Working Groups (Ongoing handling of delegated perpetual business)
- Review Groups (Specifically designated the exploration of a single issue for report)
- Scrutiny Panels (Standing oversight panels of 3 members holding power of intervention)
- Steering Groups (Explorative, consultative and research bodies)

These committees exist to examine particular issues in depth in researching topics, informing itself of a particular issue and making recommendations to the Council by producing reports and suggestions to their parent committee or where appropriate, full council. Such committees have no set numbers and need have no Members of the Council at all, but in all situations should be supported by a nominated officer of the Council. Advisory committees should be reviewed from time to time by their parent committee as to their effectiveness, purpose and scope of works, and each committee assigned terms of reference to ensure focus within their allocated remit.

12.1) Advisory committees are prohibited from making financial decisions under the Local Government Act 1972 and are prohibited from meeting remotely.