



## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE 2026**

#### **Status of the Committee**

The Community Engagement Committee is a standing committee of Stotfold Town Council established under section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972.

The Committee shall exercise the powers and functions delegated to it by the Town Council, subject to:

- statute and common law.
- the Council's Standing Orders.
- the Council's Financial Regulations.
- the Council's Scheme of Delegation.
- approved budgets.
- the Council's Consultation Policy, Equality and Diversity Policy and other relevant adopted policies; and
- any specific direction of the Town Council.

#### **Membership of Committee**

- The Committee shall comprise 8 Town Councillors, appointed annually by the Town Council at its Annual Meeting.
- The Town Council shall appoint the Chair of the Committee in accordance with Standing Orders.
- The Committee may appoint a Vice-Chair at its first meeting after the Annual Meeting of the Council, if permitted by Standing Orders.
- The Chair of the Council and Vice-Chair of the Council shall be ex-officio members of the Committee and shall be voting members.
- Four members shall constitute a quorum.
- Up to two non-voting community advisers may be appointed during the year with Town Council approval.
- Community advisers may speak at meetings with the permission of the Chair but may not vote, move or second motions.
- Non-members of the Committee may attend meetings and, at the discretion of the Chair, may speak but may not vote.

#### **Frequency of Meetings**

- The Committee shall meet at least six times in each municipal year, or more frequently as required.
- Extraordinary meetings may be called in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders.

- Meetings shall be held in public unless the Committee resolves to exclude the press and public in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 and other relevant legislation.
- Public participation shall be in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of the Community Engagement Committee is to oversee the Council's programme of community engagement, events, consultation, communications and civic recognition activities, and to make decisions within approved budgets and delegated powers.

In all its considerations and actions, the Committee shall have regard to:

- the Council's adopted Corporate Strategic Plan.
- inclusivity and accessibility.
- health and safety requirements.
- value for money.
- effective community participation.
- equality, diversity and fairness.
- timely and proportionate consultation.

## **Decision/Delegated Powers**

The Committee is authorised to make decisions and incur expenditure within its approved budget and delegated powers in relation to:

- Town Council-led and partner-supported events.
- community engagement initiatives.
- consultation activity.
- communications and publicity within approved policy.
- the Citizens Award scheme.
- associated event charges and operational arrangements.

## **Functions of the Committee**

### **Events and Community Activities**

The Committee shall be responsible for:

- Implementing and managing Town Council-led and partner-supported events.
- Considering all aspects of event planning and delivery, including:
  - health and safety.
  - traffic management and road closures.
  - liaison with the Safety Advisory Group where appropriate.
  - accessibility and inclusion.
  - stewarding, safeguarding and welfare arrangements where relevant.
  - publicity and community participation.
- Monitoring and reviewing each event following its conclusion.
- Making recommendations to Council on event-related matters where required.
- Overseeing the annual Christmas celebration, including festive lighting arrangements.

## **Community Engagement and Inclusion**

The Committee shall:

- Promote inclusive decision-making and community-supported projects across the town.
- Encourage participation from residents, businesses, voluntary organisations and community groups.
- Consider how the Council can better engage with diverse sections of the community.
- Support community cohesion and positive engagement in line with the Council's Equality and Diversity commitments.

## **Consultation**

The Committee shall oversee the Council's consultation activities within its remit, including:

- Public surveys, engagement exercises and feedback processes.
- Consultation methods appropriate to the scale and significance of the issue.
- Ensuring consultation is clear, inclusive, accessible and timely.
- Reviewing consultation outcomes and recommending next steps.
- Publishing or communicating outcomes where appropriate.

All consultation activity should be carried out in accordance with the Council's Consultation Policy, including proportionality, minimum consultation periods where appropriate, and feedback on outcomes

## **Communications and Publicity**

The Committee shall oversee the Council's communication and public engagement activity within its remit, including:

- Website content relating to community engagement and events.
- Social media activity relating to community engagement and events.
- Publicity and promotion of Council events, initiatives and engagement opportunities.
- Use of appropriate communication channels to reach different sections of the community.
- Review of effectiveness of communications linked to engagement activity.

For the avoidance of doubt, day-to-day operational management of the website and social media remains with officers under the Council's wider officer delegation arrangements

## **Citizens Award Scheme**

The Committee shall:

- Seek nominations for the Citizens Award scheme.
- Consider nominations confidentially.
- Determine the recipient(s) of the award in accordance with any approved criteria.
- Keep award decisions confidential until announcement at the Annual Town Meeting or such other event as the Council may determine.

## **Finance and Budget**

Within the service areas delegated to it, the Committee shall:

- Spend within its approved budget and delegated financial limits.
- Formulate and recommend a revenue and capital budget request for the following financial year.
- Submit budget proposals, including proposed event charges, to the Governance & Resources Committee as part of the annual budget-setting process.
- Review charges associated with events, including for vendors, funfairs, catering and similar activities, where delegated.
- Monitor event income and expenditure during the year.

- Refer any unfunded or over-budget proposals to Governance & Resources Committee and/or Full Council as appropriate.

### **Matters Reserved to Full Council or Another Committee**

The following matters are reserved to Full Council, Governance & Resources Committee, or another properly authorised body unless expressly delegated elsewhere:

- Approval of the annual budget and precept.
- Approval of borrowing.
- Approval or reallocation of earmarked reserves.
- Adoption or amendment of council-wide policies.
- New commitments outside approved budgets.
- Commitments above approved delegated limits.
- Creation of any permanent committee structure or formal outside-body arrangement not already approved.
- Any matter which by law must be determined by Full Council.

### **Working Groups and Advisers**

- The Committee may establish time-limited working groups or task and finish groups in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders and Scheme of Delegation.
- Such groups shall be **advisory only** and shall not make binding decisions on behalf of the Council.
- The Committee may appoint advisers or involve non-councillors where this would add relevant expertise or community perspective, subject to confidentiality and conduct requirements.
- The remit, membership and duration of any working group shall be clearly recorded.

### **Officer Delegation and Urgent Matters**

- Delegated authority is given to the Town Clerk, Deputy Clerk and Community Engagement Officer to take decisions on the operational arrangements for Council events, within approved policy and budget.
- Officers may decide not to exercise delegated powers and may instead refer a matter to the Committee or Full Council.
- Any urgent action taken between meetings shall be reported to the next appropriate meeting through the Council's delegated decision reporting process.

### **Reporting and Accountability**

- Minutes of the Committee shall be reported to the next appropriate meeting of the Town Council.
- The Committee shall keep under review its work programme, budget responsibilities and delegated powers.
- The Committee shall review documents and policies within its remit and recommend changes where required.
- These Terms of Reference shall be reviewed annually at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council, or sooner if required.