



GOVERNANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE 2026

Status of the Committee

The Governance and Resources 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 adopted policies; and
- any specific direction of the Town Council.

Membership of Committee

Membership

- The Committee shall comprise nine Town Councillors, appointed annually by the Town Council at its Annual Meeting.
- Membership shall comprise:
 - the Chair of the Town Council;
 - the Vice-Chair of the Town Council;
 - the Chairs of the Council's standing committees; and
 - any additional Town Councillors required to bring the total membership to nine.
- Where a Councillor holds more than one qualifying office, the Town Council shall appoint an additional Councillor to ensure that the Committee has nine members in total.
- 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.
- Five members shall constitute a quorum.
- Non-members of the Committee may attend meetings and, at the discretion of the Chair, may speak but may not vote.

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 Governance and Resources Committee is to oversee the Council's corporate governance, financial management, policy framework, risk management, audit arrangements, grants, civic matters and human resources functions.

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

- the Council's adopted Corporate Strategic Plan;
- sound financial management;
- effective internal control;
- risk management;
- openness, accountability and transparency;
- value for money;
- equality, diversity and inclusion;
- lawful and effective employment practice; and
- the long-term sustainability of the Council's resources.

Delegated Authority

The Committee is authorised to make decisions and incur expenditure within its approved budget and delegated powers in relation to the functions listed below.

The Committee may:

- oversee and monitor the Council's financial and governance arrangements;
- make recommendations to Full Council on the annual budget, precept, reserves and capital programme;
- review and recommend amendments to corporate policies;
- determine grant applications within the approved Grants Policy and budget;
- oversee staffing structure, employment policies and HR procedures;
- establish sub-committees or panels for staffing matters where required;
- make recommendations to Full Council or another committee where matters fall outside its delegated powers.

Functions of the Committee

Policy and Corporate Governance

The Committee shall be responsible for:

- Developing policy for recommendation to Full Council.
- Reviewing the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and recommending amendments to Full Council for adoption.
- Reviewing the Council's Scheme of Delegation and recommending amendments to Full Council where required.
- Overseeing implementation of the Council's Public Sector Equality Duty.
- Reviewing all policy documents within the Committee's remit.
- Reviewing the draft Annual Report prior to submission to Full Council.
- Overseeing matters relating to the Council's offices and corporate support arrangements, including office-related contracts such as IT and telecommunications, where not otherwise delegated.

- Advising Full Council on the making, amendment or revocation of byelaws where not specifically within the remit of another committee or principal authority.
- Responding on behalf of the Town Council to consultation documents relevant to the Committee's remit, where delegated to do so.
- Ensuring that corporate governance arrangements support the effective and lawful operation of the Council.

Finance and Resources

The Committee shall be responsible for:

- Overseeing and monitoring the Council's bank accounts, investment arrangements and reserves in accordance with Financial Regulations and the Investment Policy.
- Reviewing the Investment Policy annually and recommending any proposed amendments to Full Council.
- Monitoring the Council's general reserve and earmarked reserves and making recommendations to Full Council where required.
- Considering and recommending to Full Council the write-off of irrecoverable amounts in accordance with Financial Regulations.
- Considering and recommending to Full Council the financial implications and funding of major capital works.
- Considering and recommending to Full Council a capital programme.
- Considering and recommending to Full Council a medium to long-term financial plan.
- Resolving actions incurring expenditure within the Committee's approved budget and delegated limits.
- Preparing estimates of expenditure in October for the forthcoming financial year for consideration by the Town Council.
- Conducting a half-yearly appraisal of budgets based on September figures, or such other reporting cycle as the Council determines.
- Receiving draft budget estimates from other committees for the forthcoming financial year.
- Considering the draft budget, committee proposals, reserves and forward financial forecast, and making recommendations to Full Council on the annual budget and precept.
- Reviewing budgets and reserves prior to year-end and determining any actions required, including recommendations on virements where appropriate.
- Monitoring the use and adequacy of the Council's earmarked reserves.
- Overseeing the financial aspects of office accommodation and corporate support resources.

For the avoidance of doubt, the approval of the annual budget and setting of the precept remain matters reserved to Full Council.

Capital Programme, S106 and Strategic Funding

The Committee shall be responsible for:

- Considering and recommending to Full Council a rolling capital programme.
- Monitoring the Council's Capital Projects Earmarked Reserve and associated capital project planning.
- Reviewing the financial implications, funding options and affordability of major capital works.
- Working with Central Bedfordshire Council and other relevant bodies regarding the allocation of S106 contributions to support Town Council priorities.
- Monitoring S106 funding opportunities and relevant deadlines.
- Making recommendations to Full Council on the prioritisation and use of S106 funding where appropriate.

- Ensuring that externally restricted funds are monitored and used within the period stipulated in any relevant agreement.

Audit, Risk Management and Insurance

The Committee shall be responsible for:

- Overseeing and monitoring systems of internal control for the proper management of Council finances and resources.
- Reviewing Internal Audit arrangements and monitoring reports, and making recommendations to Full Council as appropriate.
- Reviewing External Audit correspondence and reports where relevant to the Committee's remit.
- Reviewing the Council's risk management arrangements and making recommendations to Full Council where required.
- Monitoring and reviewing the Council's insurance arrangements.
- Monitoring and reviewing the Council's asset register in conjunction with relevant officers and committees.
- Overseeing strategic health and safety monitoring and corporate risk management issues.
- Receiving and reviewing reports on governance, audit, risk and compliance matters within the Committee's remit.

Democratic and Civic Matters

The Committee shall be responsible for:

- Approving Member attendance at training events, seminars, conferences and relevant external meetings, in accordance with approved budgets and policies.
- Overseeing matters relating to civic functions, civic regalia and the role of the Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor.
- Receiving details of the Mayor's accounts in accordance with the Council's procedures.
- Considering matters relating to elections and electoral wards and making recommendations to Full Council where appropriate.
- Considering corporate democratic services matters where not specifically reserved to Full Council or delegated to officers.

Grants

The Committee shall be responsible for:

- Determining grant applications in accordance with the Council's Grants Policy and approved budget.
- Approving, refusing or deferring grant applications in accordance with the policy criteria.
- Applying any conditions to grant awards where appropriate.
- Monitoring the grants budget and grant award process.
- Reviewing the effectiveness of the grants scheme periodically.
- Recommending amendments to the Grants Policy to Full Council where required.

Human Resources

The Committee shall be responsible for:

- Overseeing the staffing structure and staffing budget, ensuring alignment with Council objectives and approved budgets.
- Reviewing staff sickness and absence data at least annually.

- Appointing two Councillors to undertake the Town Clerk’s annual performance appraisal, including target setting, training needs identification and review of the Clerk’s job description, in accordance with approved procedures.
- Overseeing the conditions of service for employees.
- Monitoring staff contracts of employment, terms and conditions, and employment-related policies, including but not limited to:
 - absence management;
 - performance management;
 - pension arrangements;
 - staffing levels;
 - staffing policies; and
 - the staff handbook.
- Reviewing staff salaries and contracts when relevant national agreements or NALC updates are issued, and making recommendations as required.
- Considering staffing establishment changes, creation of new posts, or significant changes to terms and conditions where these have budget implications.
- Establishing sub-committees or panels for staff appointments, grievances, disciplinary matters and appeals as required, in accordance with the Council’s adopted procedures.
- Receiving confidential staffing reports where appropriate and ensuring that personal data and employment matters are handled confidentially.

For the avoidance of doubt, day-to-day staff management remains the responsibility of the Proper Officer and relevant line managers under the Council’s Scheme of Delegation.

Matters Reserved to Full Council

The following matters remain reserved to Full Council unless expressly delegated by law or formal resolution:

- Approval of the annual budget and setting of the precept.
- Approval of borrowing.
- Approval of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return and annual accounts.
- Adoption or amendment of Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, the Scheme of Delegation and council-wide policies.
- Agreement or amendment of committee Terms of Reference, committee composition and committee appointments.
- Approval of major capital programmes and projects not already within approved budgets.
- Approval or reallocation of ringfenced earmarked reserves where required by Council policy.
- Approval of commitments above delegated limits or outside approved budgets.
- Matters involving expenditure for which budget provision is not made or is exceeded, unless otherwise delegated.
- Appointment of the Town Clerk/RFO.
- Any matter which by law must be determined by Full Council.

Working Groups, Sub-Committees and Panels

- The Committee may establish working groups, task and finish groups, sub-committees or panels in accordance with Standing Orders and the Scheme of Delegation.
- Working groups and task and finish groups shall be advisory only and shall not make binding decisions on behalf of the Council.
- The remit, membership and duration of any working group, sub-committee or panel shall be clearly recorded.

- Staffing sub-committees or panels may be established for recruitment, grievance, disciplinary and appeal matters where required.
- Confidentiality requirements shall apply to any group, sub-committee or panel considering staffing, legal, contractual or commercially sensitive matters.

Officer Delegation and Urgent Matters

- Officers shall support the Committee in carrying out its functions and shall act in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Scheme of Delegation.
- Where urgent action is required between meetings in relation to matters within this Committee's remit, the Town Clerk/Proper Officer may act in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Scheme of Delegation, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee and/or Chair of the Council where appropriate.
- Any urgent or delegated action taken shall be reported to the next meeting of the Committee or Full Council as appropriate.
- Delegated decisions shall be recorded in accordance with the Council's delegated decision reporting arrangements.

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 service responsibilities, budgets, work programme and delegated powers.
- The Committee shall review all documents and policies within its remit and recommend changes where required.
- The Committee shall maintain oversight of the Council's financial planning timetable and ensure that budget recommendations are submitted to Full Council in good time.
- These Terms of Reference shall be reviewed annually at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council, or sooner if required.