

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Working Groups / Working Party / Lead Councillors / Committees / Other Group(s)

1. Introduction

With the introduction of the new Council operational structure in November 2013, all standing committees at that time were disbanded with the exception of Planning. As such UPC Policy & Procedure No 1, Committee Terms of Reference, has been placed in abeyance pending possible reference/re-use in the future.

This new policy has been prepared to ensure that fundamental minimum criteria for agreeing Terms of Reference is in place for all working groups, working parties, lead councillor roles, other groups or new standing committees now and/or should these be established in the future.

2. Criteria for Establishing Groups / Individual Roles and Terms of Reference

- (a) All working groups / working parties / lead councillor roles / committees / other groups must have the prior approval of the full Council.
- (b) Terms of reference must be determined and agreed by full Council for each working group / working party / lead councillor(s) / committees / other groups prior to implementation. This should include as a minimum in each case:
 - Membership
 - Responsibilities - specific requirements and objectives
 - Reporting and proposal recommendation requirements
 - Parameters of Authority
 - Start and end dates (where appropriate)
 - Any constraints
 - Whether a formal record is required of any meeting / decision process / consultation
- (c) Any proposal or consultation mechanism should be examined to establish whether or not it might be perceived as having policy or procedural implications for the Parish Council as a whole; or as being controversial, either for councillors or in the wider community. Where this is the case, approval should be sought from the full Council prior to implementation.
- (d) A working group / working party / lead councillor(s) / committee / other group should consider obtaining an 'in principle' decision from the full Council before undertaking a detailed evaluation of a proposal. This might save unnecessary work should the Parish Council not agree with the proposal. An 'in principle' decision should determine what actions might be undertaken to progress the proposal.
- (e) All individuals /groups are required to work within the policies, procedures and budgetary constraints determined by the full Council.

3. Approved Terms of Reference

Approved Terms of Reference for all current working group(s) / working party(s) / lead councillor(s) / committees / other groups will be published on the website www.urchfont-pc.gov.uk under Urchfont Parish Council>Policies & Procedures>TOR.

4. Facilitation of Council Decisions outside of Meetings

Exceptionally decisions can be determined and implemented outside of meetings where time is of the essence and by using the following delegation and procedure.

General delegation is vested in the Clerk to the Council to facilitate and determine decisions within the parameters of agreed Parish Council policies and budgetary provision using email, fax and/or telephone as follows, subject to specific direction by the Chairman or Vice Chairman of individual issues to be resolved in this way.

- (a) An email/fax is to be sent to all Councillors clearly outlining the issue and seeking a clear view from each in this respect by a specified date.
- (b) A response must be received from all Councillors
- (c) Non respondents are to be hastened by telephone.
- (d) Based on the responses from ALL Councillors, the Clerk is delegated to make and enact the decision on behalf of the full Council. Where responses do not give a majority view, then the Clerk is to consult the Chairman/Vice Chairman before taking the final decision.
- (e) All Councillors are to be notified of the final decision by email/fax.
- (f) A record is to be kept of the views of each Councillor and the final decision taken and this is to be reported at the next full Council.

Author: Bob Lunn, Clerk to the Council – January 2014