

Meeting: Full Council

Date: 12th December 2023

Author: Town Clerk

Item for Consideration: Scheme of Delegation and Creation of Two Committees

1.0 Background Information

- 1.1 Many councils adopt a committee system whereby responsibility and delegated authority is given to a committee for certain functions. It ensures that full council meetings are focused on community wide matters and enables a smaller group of councillors to meet (still in the public domain) and discuss matters that they might be more interested in and make decisions on behalf of council, with their delegated authority. When a committee has delegated functions and powers there is usually no need to refer a matter to the council. At the same time, a council will adopt a scheme of delegation which sets out the decision-making structure of the council. This includes delegating certain authorities to the Clerk, and decision making to the Clerk and Chair and Vice Chair in an emergency. The Scheme of Delegation offers a broad framework, which is reviewed from time to time as the council evolves and takes on greater responsibility.
- 1.2 Council are still informed of the decisions made at either a committee meeting, or via delegated authority to others, as the minutes from meetings are formally noted at council meetings, and reports will be produced by the clerk, inline with the delegated authority. Members of council who are not nominated as a committee member can still attend a committee meeting (other than the staffing committee), but they do so with limited authority, and would not be able to vote on any matter and would be asked to leave (as would the public and press) if a confidential item was to be considered.

Scheme of Delegation

- 1.3 It was agreed at the meeting on 8th November 2023 that a scheme of delegation be drafted, that gives spending authority to the clerk of up to £500 per single item. The scheme of delegation also outlines the responsibilities that are delegated to committees. It will need to be updated frequently as Kingswood Town Council creates its structure and governance arrangements.
- 1.4 A draft scheme is presented at Appendix A for consideration and adoption.

Creation of a Finance and Administration/Strategy and Resources Committee

- 1.5 It was proposed at the meeting on 8th November 2023 that the council establishes its first committee to oversee finance and general matters. In summary, such a committee would have delegated authority over the following: corporate governance, service delivery, risk management, internal control, structure and procedures as well as a community grant scheme.
- 1.6 The draft terms of reference for this Committee is attached at Appendix B.

Creation of a Staffing Committee

- 1.7 It was proposed at the meeting on 8th November 2023 that the council establishes a Staffing Committee to oversee all matters relating to the organisation, employment, management and terms and conditions of employment of the Council. The Staffing Committee would also make appropriate recommendations to the Council for ratification, as well as providing a structure to develop general human resources policy matters (for recommendation and approval by the full council) and to handle individual staffing issues which are beyond the normal delegated management responsibility of the Clerk to the Council. There are many positives that this approach brings including maintaining independence in cases of disciplinary action or a grievance being made.

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1.8 The draft term of reference for this Committee is attached at Appendix C.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 For Councillors to agree to adopt the scheme of delegation.

2.2 For councillors to agree to the creation of either, or both, the Finance and Administration Committee and the Staffing Committee.

2.3 For Councillors to decide their names, composition and frequency of meetings.

2.4 For the clerk to be delegated authority to update and publish the policies and to create a meeting schedule.