

Chigwell Parish Council

Planning Committee Terms of Reference

1. Committee

The Planning Committee is constituted as a Standing Committee of Chigwell Parish Council.

2. Membership

All Parish Councillors will be appointed annually at the Annual Council Meeting as voting members.

All members of the Planning Committee are required to complete a recognised Councillor planning training programme within three months of their appointment. This shall be valid for two years from date of completion.

Any Parish Councillor who has submitted a planning application to Epping Forest District Council up to five years prior of the beginning of the Parish Council's term for anything other than works relating to or the construction of a single dwelling or workplace that is in their own or close family member's ownership shall not be appointed to the Planning Committee. This exclusion shall also apply if the employer of any Councillor or their close family member or any company in which they hold, either directly or indirectly, more than 5% of the shares, has made a planning application to EFDC up to five years prior of the beginning of the Parish Council's term for anything other than for works relating to or construction of a single dwelling or workplace in their ownership.

The quorum of the Committee shall be four Members.

3. Chairperson

The Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the Committee will be elected annually at the first meeting of the committee.

If the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson resigns from the Committee/Council during the year a new Chairperson or Vice Chairperson will be appointed at the next appropriate Full Council or Planning meeting. The next appropriate meeting will be the next meeting where an agenda item can be published to carry out this action.

4. Voting

Only appointed members may vote and participate at a meeting.

Members of the public may attend and speak at a meeting during public participation.

In the case of an equal vote the Chairperson of that meeting shall have a second or casting vote.

5. Declaration of Interests

All Councillors must declare interests on agenda items in line with the Code of Conduct as adopted by Chigwell Parish Council.

6. Meetings

The Committee will meet at least 12 times a year with additional meetings as the workload requires, with a minimum of 5 clear days notice given.

7. Admission of the Public and Press

The initial position should always be in favour of disclosure of as much information as possible about the decisions the council takes, and only in limited circumstances should information be withheld, where there is a justification, in law, for doing so. The Public and Press will be admitted to all meetings of the Committee in line with the Council's Standing Orders.

If required, the Committee will have the right to pass a resolution to exclude the press and public in accordance with s1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 considering the specific permissible reasons detailed in Local Government Act 1972 Schedule 12A (as amended). Schedule 12A contains 10 categories of information which can be exempt, 3 of which relate specifically to Standards Committee or Sub-Committee meetings. All of them require consideration of the public interest (via the application of the public interest test in Section 2 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000) before passing a resolution to withhold the information by excluding the Public and Press. Details of the categories are attached as Appendix 1 to these Terms of Reference.

Where it is known in advance that the press and public are likely to be excluded from the meeting, this will be advertised on the Committee's agenda.

8. Minutes of Meetings

The minutes of the meetings will be approved at the next meeting of the Committee. The draft minutes will be published on the Council's website as soon as possible after the meeting and always within 3 working days, these will be replaced with the approved minutes.

9. Meeting Duration

The duration of the Planning Committee's meeting will be for a maximum of 2 hours unless a resolution is passed to extend the meeting for a further 30 minutes after which any unfinished business being taken at the beginning of the next Planning Committee Meeting.

10. Funding

The Committee shall have the remit to commit/spend up to £100 of the Council expenditure. Any amount over that value will be reported to the next appropriate Full Council meeting for their approval.

11. Terms of Reference

The Full Council will review and approve these Terms of Reference each year at the Annual (or First) Council Meeting. The Planning Committee can review them at any time and when necessary recommend any changes to the Council at the next appropriate Full Council meeting.

12. Responsibilities

The purpose of the Committee is to deal with all Planning matters within the responsibility of or devolved (now and in the future) to the Parish Council, including (but not limited to):

- Planning Applications received from the District and County Councils.
- Correspondence relating to the Planning Committee and Planning Matters.
- Consultations with regard to Planning Matters on behalf of the Parish Council as appropriate.

13. Best Value

The Committee will ensure the Council follows the principle of Best Value at all times **

Considered, amended and approved by the Committee at its Annual meeting on 23 May 2023.

Review Date: May 2024

** Best Value Statutory Guidance as published by the Department for Communities and Local Government, see Appendix 2