



STURMINSTER NEWTON TOWN COUNCIL

SCHEME OF DELEGATION

1. Introduction

This scheme of delegation outlines the responsibilities and decision-making processes within Sturminster Newton Town Council. It aims to ensure efficient governance, accountability and transparency, while delegating authority appropriately.

Under the Local Government Act 1972 s101(a) the Town Council has the power to arrange for the discharge of its functions to a committee, sub-committee or officer of the authority.

Delegation of some decisions is an essential part of the efficient operation of the Town Council, which provides a range of services and assets. The Town Council does not have the power to delegate a decision to an individual Councillor or informal grouping of Councillors.

The matters detailed in this document will be delegated on an ongoing basis, until such time as this Scheme of Delegation is reviewed.

2. General Principles:

- a) The Town Council will operate within the legal framework set by relevant legislation and regulations.
- b) Decision-making will be conducted in accordance with democratic principles, considering the best interests of the community.
- c) Delegated authority will be exercised responsibly, with due consideration for public scrutiny and accountability.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 Full Council

Some matters cannot be delegated; these include the following items, which can only be determined by resolution of the Full Council:

- a) Appointing the Mayor and Deputy Mayor in May each year.
- b) Adopting and amending Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Committee Terms of Reference and the Scheme of Delegation.
- c) Approving the Town Council's budget and the precept.
- d) Agreeing the Town Council's Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statement.

- e) Authorising expenditure not provided for within the approved budget or otherwise permitted under the Council's Financial Regulations.
- f) Authorising borrowing.
- g) Appointing representatives to outside organisations.
- h) Declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence.
- i) Confirming the appointment of a new Town Clerk, further to a recommendation from the appointed recruitment panel when a vacancy arises.
- j) Making, amending, revoking, re-enacting or adopting by-laws and promoting or opposing the making of local legislation.
- k) All other matters which must, by law, be determined by resolution of Full Council.

3.2 Committees, Sub-Committees and Working Groups

Matters delegated to the council's standing committees, sub-committees and working groups are specified under each Terms of Reference.

3.3 Town Council Officers

Under the Local Government Act 1972 the Town Council 'shall appoint such Officers as they think necessary for the proper discharge by the authority of such of their or another authority's functions as fall to be discharged by them'.

Officers have the role of interpreting and implementing decisions made by the council and its committees/sub-committees/working groups.

Specific decisions can be delegated to Officers by the Town Council, sometimes with the requirement for the Officer to consult with the Mayor (Deputy Mayor in the Mayor's absence), or a Committee Chairman.

In the vast majority of instances, the Officers decision will accord with the views of the Councillors consulted, however the act of delegation to the nominated officer means the decision is theirs and theirs alone. All such delegated decisions will be reported to a subsequent Council meeting.

The Town Clerk is the Council's Proper Officer and in their absence their duties will be fulfilled as shown in the Business Continuity Plan.

Nominated officers can delegate functions to an appropriate staff member, although they retain ultimate responsibility for any decisions made.

Delegated authority must be exercised in accordance with the law, the council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and wider policies.

No.	Area of Operation	Delegation	Officer/Committee
1.	Allotments	Liaise with the Allotment Association.	Proper Officer
		Carry out inspections of allotment plots.	Proper Officer
		Issue eviction notices	Proper Officer
2.	Appointments	Nomination and appointment of representatives of the Council to any other authority, group or organisation	Full Council
3.	Archives and information management	Receive, retain and archive documentation in accordance with the Records Retention Policy	Proper Officer
4.	Assets	Maintain the fixed asset register	Proper Officer/RFO
		Day to day administration and operation of play areas, public open spaces and other community areas, together with routine inspection and control	Grounds Manager
5.	Audit	Liaise with internal and external auditors	Proper Officer/RFO
		Review internal auditors reports	Finance & Policy Committee
6.	Cemetery	Sign Deeds of Exclusive Right of Burial, Transfer of those rights, approve memorial applications and requests for additional inscriptions	Proper Officer
		Allocation of new ashes plots	Proper Officer
7.	Civic Events	Organising civic events	Mayors Secretary, in consultation with the Mayor
8.	Communications	Issue all formal communications on behalf of the Town Council.	Proper Officer in consultation with the Mayor where appropriate.
		Manage the Town Council's social media platforms	Proper Officer
9.	Consultations	Respond to consultations in accordance with the resolutions of the relevant committee	Proper Officer

No.	Area of Operation	Delegation	Officer/Committee
10.	Correspondence	Authorisation to respond immediately to any correspondence requiring or requesting information or relating to previous decisions of the Council, but not correspondence requiring an opinion of the Council to be taken	Proper Officer
11.	Council Meetings	At least three clear days before a meeting of the Council or a committee, serve on Councillors a signed summons in accordance with Standing Orders	Proper Officer
		Give public notice of the date, time, place and agenda at least three clear days before a meeting of the Council or a committee, in accordance with Standing Orders	Proper Officer
		Keep minutes and other proper records of Council meetings, in accordance with the Records Management and Retention Policy	Proper Officer
12.	Elections / Co-options	To notify Electoral Services of all casual vacancies arising in Council membership	Proper Officer
		Arrange for newly elected/co-opted Councillors to sign Declaration of Acceptance of Office forms	Proper Officer
		Arrange for newly elected/co-opted Councillors to complete Register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests	Proper Officer
13.	Emergency Planning	Lead the Council's response in the case of a major emergency, in consultation with Dorset Council's Emergency Planning Officers and in accordance with the Town Council's Community Emergency Response Plan	Proper Officer and Lead Councillor, as appointed by Full Council
14.	Employment	Oversee the operational duties, welfare, training (with the exception of Professional qualifications) and development of all staff in addition to matters contained in the Staff Handbook and Health and Safety Handbook	Proper Officer
15.	Events	Authorise requests to facilitate events, in accordance with the Town Council's Hire of Council Land Policy and Room Hire Policy	Proper Officer
		Authorise Council representation at public events, in accordance with the authority to spend as detailed in the Financial Regulations	Proper Officer, in consultation with the Mayor

16.	Expenditure	Budgetary control and authority to spend, in accordance with the Financial Regulations	Proper Officer/RFO
17.	Expenditure in an emergency/urgent situation	Unbudgeted expenditure on behalf of the Council which is deemed urgent or is of an emergency nature, eg work or services required to address an imminent risk to Council operations, personnel or the public This expenditure is subject to a financial limit of £2000 Retrospective approval of such items of expenditure must be obtained at the next relevant meeting	Proper Officer/RFO
18.	Finance – Cash flow and payments	The Proper Officer and Finance Officer will create online bank payments and transfers in accordance with the Financial Regulations	Proper Officer/RFO Finance Officer
19.	Finance - Investments	Invest Council funds in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations and Investment Policy	Proper Officer/RFO
20.	Finance - Virements up to £2000	The virement of funds between budgets up to £2000, in accordance with the Financial Regulations.	Proper Officer/RFO
21.	Finance - Virements of £2000 and over	The virement of funds between budgets of £2000 and over, in accordance with the Financial Regulations.	Finance and Policy Committee
22.	Freedom of Information	Respond to Freedom of Information requests	Proper Officer
23.	Grants	Consideration of grant applications submitted to the Town Council, in accordance with the Grants Policy	Finance & Policy Committee
		Submission of grant applications on behalf of the Town Council, as instructed by the Council	Proper Officer
24.	Health and Safety	Act as the Council's nominated Health and Safety Officer <i>Please note that the Council appoints an external advisor to act as its 'Competent person' under relevant legislation. The shared Health and Safety responsibilities are set out in the Council's Health and Safety Handbook</i>	Grounds Manager

25.	Insurance	In accordance with the Financial Regulations, affect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the Council's insurers.	Proper Officer/RFO
		Annual review of the Council's insurance cover, including fidelity guarantee insurance	Full Council
26.	Legal documents	Sign notices, contracts and agreements on behalf of the Council and any other documents requested by the Council, in accordance with the Standing Orders	Proper Officer
27.	Mayor	Arrange for newly elected Mayor to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form	Proper Officer
28.	Planning Committee Decisions	Respond to the Local Planning Authority on planning applications and consultations, in accordance with the resolutions of the Planning Committee	Proper Officer
29.	Procurement	Undertake procurement exercises in accordance with the Financial Regulations	Proper Officer
30.	Property and Assets	Manage the Town Council's property and assets, instigating repairs and maintenance within agreed budgets.	Grounds Manager.
32.	Recruitment of Town Clerk	Approve recruitment process	Full Council
		Shortlisting and interviewing applicants	Recruitment Panel Agreed by Full Council
		Confirming the appointment of a new Town Clerk, following a recommendation from the recruitment panel	Full Council
33.	Recruitment of replacement of permanent staff (other than the replacement of the Town Clerk) or temporary staff to cover long periods of absence	Accept resignation and approve recruitment process	Proper Officer
		Shortlisting and interviewing applicants	Proper Officer
		Appointment following the recruitment process	Proper Officer

No.	Area of Operation	Delegation	Officer/Committee
34.	Recruitment of additional staff	Approve staffing budget	Finance & Policy Committee
		Approve Job Description	Staffing Committee in consultation with the Proper Officer
		Approve recruitment process, ensuring the additional recruitment is in line with the agreed staffing budget	Proper Officer
		Shortlisting and interviewing applicants	Proper Officer
		Appointment following the recruitment process	Proper Officer
35.	Services	Day to day administration and operation of services, together with routine inspection and control	Proper Officer Grounds Manager
		To set a chargeable rate not to exceed £500 for occasional or one-off services provided by the Town Council staff, such as the emptying a litter bin on behalf of a third party	Proper Officer
36.	Vehicles and equipment	To maintain, repair and service the Council's motor vehicles and equipment using contractors where appropriate	Grounds Manager

Approved on: 2nd July 2025

Review due: Annual Town Council meeting May 2026