



## **Planning & Highways Committee**

### **Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct**

#### **Purpose**

To deal with all matters concerning planning, such as planning applications on behalf of Council.  
To oversee all matters within Council's remit which relate to roads, parking, footpaths and similar, on behalf of council.

#### **Principles**

The Planning & Highways Committee will undertake its duties in a transparent and fair manner for the benefit of Halesworth and its residents.

#### **Responsibilities**

1. To review planning applications and represent the Town Council in its responses to the planning authorities. To work with the planning authorities on planning appeals and planning enforcement
2. To determine the policies for the improvement of Highways and Footpaths/Bridle Paths and make representations as required to County Council for repair, maintenance and improvements.
3. To lobby the parking agencies to ensure sufficient accessible parking for the town and to ensure that parking regulations are enforced.
4. To lobby the appropriate authorities to ensure that all road signage is up to date and relevant to the needs of the town.
5. To determine policy for the VAS (Vehicle activated speed signs) system including any additional equipment.
6. To determine strategy for the Thoroughfare and its environs in the Town
7. To consider and recommend street naming proposals
8. To lobby the District Council to ensure street cleaning is maintained
9. To develop a strategy and consider options when appropriate for traffic calming in cooperation with SCC.
10. Develop and recommend policies relevant to the committee and submit to full council for approval
11. To prepare reports on specific items or general progress for Council and public documents/Website related to the committee's area of responsibility.

#### **Membership**

In accordance with Standing Order 4d (vi), the membership and the Chair of the Committee will be determined by the Council annually.

In accordance with Standing Order 4a unless the Council determines otherwise, the Committee may create working groups and sub committees of which members may be non-Councillors.

## **Method**

The Planning & Highways Committee will engage and consult with representatives of relevant authorities, interested parties, user groups, professional bodies, land owners and the public, as necessary to further the responsibilities listed.

The Planning & Highways Committee meetings (including meeting dates, co-opting members of the public) are governed by the normal rules and procedures as set out in HTC's Standing Orders and by NALC/SALC recommendations for such meetings.

The Planning & Highways Committee may from time to time and as required engage the services of professional bodies to further its responsibilities.

The Committee has the authority to make decisions within the scope of its responsibilities and its agreed annual budget.

The Committee may not exceed the budget without approval of the Council.

All decisions and actions of the Committee will be implemented by the Town Clerk and/or delegated to the relevant staff unless the Committee has appointed a councillor for a specific task. The Clerks' day to day responsibilities for the assets under 'Responsibilities' are briefly laid out in the agreed 'Proposals for Committee responsibility V3 6th October 2021' agreed by the Council – minute ref 68.11 (1<sup>st</sup> November 2021)

## **Planning Applications Decision Procedures**

### **1. Minor Applications**

On receipt of minor applications, the Committee Chair, in consultation with the Clerk, may agree to ask the committee to consider the applications by e-mail. The Clerk will then circulate the applications to the Committee members for consideration. Committee members will copy their response to the Clerk and all Planning Committee members. Provided there are no objections from any Committee members, the Clerk will respond positively to the Planning Authority that 'The Planning Committee has no objections to the application'.

Minor applications include;

- a) Small external improvements eg: Porches, paving, windows, doors, etc.
- b) Tree works
- c) Internal alterations
- d) Fencing
- e) Extensions to existing dwellings
- f) Internal listed building consent
- g) Signage and advertising
- h) Non-material amendments

### **If however;**

- a Planning Committee member indicates they may wish to object to a minor application or,
- objections are listed on East Suffolk Council's Planning Portal from neighbours or other interested bodies at the time the Planning and Highways Committee considers the application, then the application must be considered at a formal sitting of the Planning and Highways Committee.

## 2. Major and Contested Applications

The Following will require a formal sitting of the Planning and Highways Committee

- a) New house builds
- b) Any multi property developments
- c) Listed buildings
- d) Change of Use
- e) Comments on reserved matters
- f) Approval of Variations of Condition
- g) Proposed infrastructure changes
- h) Objections from interested parties listed on the Planning Portal.
- i) Objections from Planning and Highways Committee members to the use of the minor application procedure.

These procedures will remain in place until such time as the Committee decides to amend them.

### **Code of Conduct**

A copy of the Town Council's Code of Conduct will be supplied to all Committees members, including those of sub committees and working groups. They must abide by the principles and practice required of the Code of Conduct, including declarations of interest, both pecuniary and non-pecuniary.

The Committee will abide by the following principles:

- i. Be clear and open when their individual roles or interests are relevant or in conflict with the matter under discussion.
- ii. Treat everyone with dignity, courtesy and respect regardless of their age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or religion and belief;
- iii. All communications from the Committee and individuals on the Committee should be via the Clerks' Office and in line with the relevant Council policy. Individuals on the Committee may not independently issue any information or personal views of any kind related to the Committee and its responsibilities through the use of any kind of media.
- iv. Where individual members of the Committee are absent from Committee meetings on more than three consecutive occasions without good cause or notification, then it will be referred back to the Council for appropriate action.
- v. The Committee has the authority to remove non-Council members on sub committees or working groups of the committee if found in breach of the Code of Conduct.
- vi. The Council has the authority to remove members of the Committee found in breach of the Code of Conduct.

### **Changes to the Terms of Reference**

This constitution may be amended with the support of at least two-thirds of the current membership at a committee meeting and with the approval of the Town Council.

### **Dissolution of Committee**

The Planning & Highways Committee can be dissolved by the Town Council once the objectives are achieved or are deemed to be unachievable.