



WITTERING PARISH COUNCIL

Terms of Reference: Policy & Procedures Subcommittee

1. Purpose & Objectives

1.1 The Policy & Procedures Subcommittee is appointed by and responsible to the Full Wittering Parish Council

1.2 Its core objective is to ensure that the Parish Council maintains a robust, compliant, and up-to-date governance framework by regularly reviewing, drafting, and monitoring statutory policies, protocols, and operational procedures.

2. Scope of Governance

The subcommittee oversees all regulatory, statutory, and operational policy documentation, including but not limited to:

Core Governance: Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, and Scheme of Delegation.

Ethics & Conduct: Code of Conduct, Member-Officer Protocol, and Register of Interests.

Information & Compliance: Data Protection (GDPR) Policies, Freedom of Information (FOI) Publication Scheme, Privacy Notices, and Retention Schedules.

Employment & Workplace: Employee Handbook, Health & Safety Policy, Grievance & Disciplinary Procedures, Equality & Diversity Policy, and Training Policy.

Public Engagement: Complaints Procedure, Media/Communications Policy, Social Media Policy, and Public Participation Guidelines.

3. Membership & Quorum

Composition: The subcommittee shall consist of a minimum of 3 elected Members of the Parish Council, appointed annually at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.

Ex-Officio Members: The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Parish Council shall be ex-officio members with voting rights (if so resolved by Council).

Non-Voting Advisers: The Parish Clerk / Proper Officer shall attend to provide professional legal, regulatory, and procedural advice, but holds no voting rights.

Quorum: The quorum required to conduct business shall be 3 voting members.

4. Key Responsibilities & Functions

A. Policy Review & Maintenance

Establish and manage a rolling Policy Review Schedule to ensure all council policies are formally re-evaluated at least once per council term (or annually for statutory documents).

Monitor changes in national legislation, local government guidance (e.g., NALC Model Standing Orders/Financial Regulations), and case law to update council policies proactively.

Draft new policies or revise existing policies in response to emerging legislative requirements, audit findings, or council decisions.

B. Statutory Compliance & Risk Oversight

Ensure the Council remains compliant with key statutory requirements, including the Local Government Act, Equality Act, Data Protection Act / GDPR, and Freedom of Information Act.

Review the Council's internal Risk Management Policy and annual Risk Register in coordination with the Clerk/RFO.

Oversee data protection compliance, including Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs) and handling of Data Subject Access Requests (DSARs) or FOI appeals.

C. Member & Staff Governance

Ensure council policies support fair, transparent, and respectful working relationships between Members, staff, and the public.

Review policies related to Member training, staff development, and workplace health, safety, and well-being.

Oversee the process for handling formal complaints against the council (excluding Code of Conduct complaints regarding individual councillors, which fall under the District/Unitary Council Monitoring Officer).

5. Delegation of Powers

5.1 Advisory Status: The subcommittee acts as an advisory body. It does not hold delegated authority to adopt or repeal formal policies.

5.2 Recommendations: All new or revised policies recommended by the subcommittee must be submitted to the Full Parish Council for formal debate and adoption.

5.3 Minor Corrections: The Parish Clerk, in consultation with the Subcommittee Chair, has delegated authority to make minor typographical, grammatical, or cross-referencing corrections to adopted policies without requiring Full Council approval, provided the core meaning remains unchanged.

6. Meetings & Governance

Frequency: The subcommittee shall meet at least quarterly, or as required when legislative changes or urgent policy issues arise.

Public Access: Meetings will be conducted in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. Agendas and minutes will be published publicly unless confidential matters require moving into a closed session.

Agendas & Minutes: Agendas must be issued at least 3 clear days before a meeting. Minutes will be recorded by the Clerk (or an appointed committee member) and submitted to the next Full Parish Council meeting for formal receipt.

Standing Orders: The subcommittee is bound by the Parish Council's adopted Standing Orders and Code of Conduct.

7. Review

These Terms of Reference shall be reviewed annually by the subcommittee and submitted to the Full Council for re-approval at the Annual Council Meeting in May 2027.