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Ingatestone and Fryerning Parish Council Committee and Working Group Terms of Reference

Terms of References were reviewed and approved at Full Council in April 2024. In terms of decision making and meeting procedures, Ingatestone and Fryerning Parish Council's standing orders and financial regulations apply.

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Facilities Committee

Prime Objectives

To oversee all the parish council assets.

The committee will meet monthly and consist of up to eight members. Three members of the committee will be required to be present in order to be quorate.

The objectives should be achieved within the constraints of the annual budget

Where funds exceeding £5,000 or contracts with a cumulative annual value exceeding £5,000 are required to be spent, the Facilities Committee will defer final decision to the Full Council as per Financial Regulations.

For actions requiring expenditure to ensure the smooth running of the Key Tasks, the Clerk is authorised to approve these actions subject to the limitations laid down by the Parish Council's financial regulations (section 4.5).

Key Tasks

- 1. Grounds and pitch maintenance** – Oversee the pitch and grounds maintenance contracts. To refer each contract to the Legal and Finance committee for contractual ratification in order to ensure the protection of the Parish Council in legal matters. When contracts are awarded, review their content before renewal. Regularly monitor the performance of contractors and act as appropriate. Contract procedures, as outlined in the Parish Council's Financial Regulations, should be followed.
- 2. Ingatestone Churchyard (St Edmund and St Mary)** - Ensure that the plants, flowerbeds, grass, hedges, fences, trees and seats are appropriately maintained.
- 3. Fryerning Cemetery** - Ensure that plants, flowerbeds, grass, hedges, fences, trees and seats are appropriately maintained. Ensure that the funeral directors and others follow Burial Regulations and that all necessary legal requirements are observed. Maintain burial records in accordance with statute. Review the charges on a bi-annual basis. Review the results of the annual inspections and initiate any corrective action required
- 4. Seymour Pavilion and field** – Oversee the running of the facility in conjunction with the Clerk and Parish Caretaker.
- 5. Office** – to oversee the running of the parish office in conjunction with the Clerk.
- 6. Playgrounds** - Review the facilities available annually within the Parish for the different age groups. Make recommendations for improvements that consider both new developments in equipment and changes in other Essex parishes. Arrange for an annual safety inspection by an outside agency. Review the results of the annual and weekly inspections and initiate any corrective action required.
- 7. Fairfield** - Ensure that the playing fields, cricket pitch, hedges, trees, seats, fences and the pond are in good condition. Report deficiencies to the appropriate authority and monitor their action. Remedy any faults for which we are responsible.

- 8. Rights of Way** - Ensure that the designated Rights of Way in the Parish are open and walkable by the relevant categories of user. Report deficiencies to the appropriate authority and monitor their action.
- 9. Trees** - Take regular professional advice on the state of trees for which the council is responsible and take the necessary action. Ensure that the appropriate authorities are consulted where trees are involved that have protection orders or are in the Conservation Area. Identify further opportunities for planting trees.
- 10. Christmas Trees** – to organise and erect the annual Christmas Tree display on the High Street, Ingatestone.

Legal and Finance Committee

Prime Objectives

To supervise the operational and financial planning activities of the Council as a whole. Ensure that the actions taken by the Council do not contravene statute or any other regulations. Provide and maintain Standing Orders and Financial Regulations within which committees and the Council should operate. These objectives should be achieved within the constraints of the annual budget (see below).

The committee will meet monthly and consist of up to eight members. Three members of the committee will be required to be present in order to be quorate.

Where funds exceeding £5,000 or contracts with a cumulative annual value exceeding £5,000 are required to be spent the Legal and Finance Committee will defer final decision to the Full Council as per Financial Regulations.

Key Tasks

1. **Financial** - Prepare an annual budget for the committee and consolidate one for the Council as a whole, to an agreed timetable established by this committee, for approval by the Council. Monitor performance against budget, ensuring that Financial Regulations are observed.

In line with Financial Regulation 5, authorise payments on behalf of the council, that have been correctly presented to the committee.

2. **Contracts** - To review all contracts, drafted by Parish Council committees, for ratification on contractual matters.
Note. The Legal and Financial Committee has no other interest in the general content of contracts, as they fall under the responsibility of the other committees
3. **Audits** - Ensure an internal audit, approved by our auditors, is carried out annually, and that all necessary material is available for the external audit.
4. **Precept** - Based on the budget developed in 1 above, recommend level of Precept to Council.
5. **Elections** - To take responsibility for liaising with the Borough Council for all matters to do with elections of the Parish Council, ensuring consideration is given to ensuring appropriate publicity is organised in advance to encourage the nomination of candidates.
6. **Major Projects** - In conjunction with other committees, identify projects that would significantly enhance the Parish and its community. Ensure its implementation.
7. **Local Council Award Scheme** – Lead the Council's activities to ensure that all the necessary procedures are in place to allow Ingatestone and Fryerning Parish Council to obtain a Local Council Award
8. **Best Value** - Ensure that the Council adopts procedures that adhere to the principles of best practice and value.
9. **Community Relations** – To provide support and advice where applicable to appropriate community activities that parishioners wish to organise

10. **GDPR / Data Protection 2018** – to take the lead on data protection matters on behalf of the parish council and to report back to full council when necessary.
Note: the parish council as a whole is responsible for data protection but for this committee will take the lead for administrative purposes.

Neighbourhood Plan Implementation Committee

Prime objectives

The purpose of the Committee shall be to support the Parish Council to implement the policies within the Ingatestone and Fryerning Neighbourhood Plan.

Membership

The Committee shall consist of at least three Parish Councillors and other non-council members, as appointed at the Annual Parish Council Meeting of Ingatestone and Fryerning Parish Council, or as necessary.

In accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 s102(3) as amended by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 s13(1), non-members (those who are not Parish Councillors) do not have voting rights on the Committee.

Any councillor may attend meetings of the Committee, in the public forum, and abide by the regulations set down in Standing Orders.

At the first meeting of the Committee and at the following Annual Parish Council Meetings, the Committee shall elect a Chair and Vice Chair for the coming year. In the absence of both the Chair and Vice Chair, the members present at a meeting shall elect one of their number to act as chair of the that meeting only. The position of NPIC Chair and Vice Chair can only be filled by Parish Councillors.

The Committee will form Working Groups, that will undertake various tasks, consisting of Parish Councillors and/or non-council members to those groups, together with volunteers as necessary. Each Working Group will have an agreed lead person.

Wherever possible, all other members of the Committee and Working Groups should have a specific role, to be agreed by the Committee. The make-up and purpose of the Working Groups will be regularly reviewed by the Committee.

Key tasks

In developing the implementation plan, the Committee will carry out the following tasks:

- Identify sources of funding.
- Take responsibility for planning, budgeting and monitoring expenditure on the Neighbourhood Plan Implementation Strategy and report back to Full Council on these matters.
- To authorise expenditure within the budget set by Full Council annually and as amended when required.
- Liaise with relevant authorities and organisations to make the Neighbourhood Plan Implementation Strategy as effective as possible.
- Identify ways of involving the whole community and gather the views and opinions of as many groups and organisations in the community as possible.
- Parish Council insurance will cover the previously agreed activities of the Committee, Working Group members, and volunteers but those persons, in liaison with the Parish Clerk, need to ensure that terms of the insurance are not breached.
- Regularly report back to Full Council on progress, issues arising and outcomes.

Powers

The Committee is authorised by Ingatestone and Fryerning Parish Council, within the scope of its duties and responsibilities to:

- To investigate and carry out any activity and spend from its budget, within its terms of reference.
- To seek any information, from the Clerk, related to any matter within the Committee's terms of reference.

- To invite outsiders with relevant expertise to attend a meeting of the Committee if the Committee considers this is necessary.

Meetings

The Committee

- The Committee shall agree the next meeting date at each meeting but will aim to meet monthly.
- Notice given of the Committee meetings will be in line with legislation
- All meetings will be open to the public.
- The meetings will be minuted by a member of the Committee and written up by the Parish Clerk.

Working Groups

- Working Groups will meet as and when required to complete their tasks.
- These meetings do not require public notice or to be held in public.
- No formal minutes of these meeting will be taken.

The Working Groups will provide a full report to the next Committee meeting

Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee sits and functions under the delegated authority of the Parish Council. Like the Full Council, it exercises its authority as a collective body. The Personnel Committee has the delegated authority to make decisions on behalf of the Full Council on matters within its areas of responsibility without the need for these decisions to be ratified by the Full Council. In other cases it makes recommendations to the Full Council. This does not affect the overall compliance with Financial Regulations where certain financial actions but be approved by Full Council.

Terms of Reference

These are to be reviewed annually by the committee and submitted to the Full Council.

Membership

Membership of the committee is to be 6 councillors (3 to actively deal with day to day matters and 3 to be called on if a dispute arises). Members will be decided and appointed annually in the Full Council's May Annual Parish Council meeting, in accordance with the protocols laid down in the Standing Orders and Guide to Standing Orders.

Chairman

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the committee will be elected annually by the members of the committee at its first meeting after the Annual Meeting of the council.

Quorum

A quorum will be reached with a minimum of 3 Councillors.

Emergency Powers

Generally staffing matters should be dealt with in committee meetings, however, in exceptional circumstances, if there is an emergency personnel or staffing issue, the Clerk shall take the initial action – informing the Chair and Vice-Chair as soon as possible. The matter or outcome is to go to the next regular meeting, or an extra meeting is to be called if the time before the next regular meeting would cause unnecessary delay.

Examples of 'exceptional circumstances' may include a serious offence, gross misconduct or other major incident or accident. The Clerk may also accept an unexpected resignation but must report as above.

Responsibilities

The Personnel Committee delegates the responsibility to the Clerk to provide day to day oversight, direction, guidance and support for the work of the council staff. The Clerk is also responsible for managing annual leave, approved lieu time and monitoring sickness. It is the responsibility of the Clerk to bring serious matters of concern to the Personnel Committee, including unusual or extended sick leave patterns.

The Clerk should always seek external advice from the EALC and retained HR sources, as and when needed. Generally, the Clerk is the named officer to approach such external bodies.

In matters connected with the Clerk's performance or management, the Personnel Committee will authorise their Chair to contact these bodies. If the Chair is not available, the committee will nominate a member.

If any member of the staff is unhappy with the line management and feels they must bypass the normal structure, they may request a meeting with the Chair and Vice-Chair or in their absence two other members of the committee. The outcome is to be taken to the next committee meeting or an extra one called.

The Personnel Committee manage, on behalf of the council, advised as necessary by the Proper Officer the following:

- The overall performance of the staff, delegating the day-to-day line management of the Clerk. The committee will be the body authorised to guide and assist the Clerk.
- Staff development and progression and succession planning.
- Approving any overtime requirements within the committee's budget.
- Ensuring the delivery of regular staff appraisals and noting and agreeing any actions and outcomes.
- Nominating a member to carry out the Clerk's appraisals and reporting any actions etc as above.
- Dealing with matters of individual or group discipline through the established management ranks, offering guidance and support to line management as appropriate.
- If the problems require disciplinary and grievance procedures, then these will be directed to the appropriate panel as per the adopted procedures.
- Any appeal will be reported to Full Council for the appeals procedure to be implemented.
- Carrying out an annual review of the Council's employment policies, making recommendations to Full Council for any alterations/amendments.
- Periodically reviewing staff contracts and initiating any amendments/alterations considering the correct employment law procedures.
- Through the Clerk (RFO) the committee will be aware of pay, NI, pension contributions and other related expenses, and ensure that legal requirements and recommendations are complied with, including recommended pay reviews.
- The committee will forward details of resignations to Full Council and will initiate filling the vacancy in accordance with the Council's approved recruitment policy.
- Advertising for new staff, conducting interviews and making recommendations to the Full Council.
- Contracts of employment for new staff members are agreed by the Personnel Committee but are referred to Full Council for acceptance.
- The committee Chair and/or Vice-Chair may approve the Clerk's annual leave, lieu time and expenses claims. Details of periods exceeding 1 day should be passed to all committee members – to a meeting, or via email if granted and take between meetings.

In addition, the committee provides responsible oversight and guidance in the management of the budget allocated to personnel.

Planning and Highways Committee

Prime Objectives

To ensure that decisions on planning and other matters referred to the committee balance the wishes of the applicants with those of other interested parties and take account of the character and amenities of the Parish, the protection of the Conservation Area and the Green Belt.

The committee will meet once a fortnight and consist of up to eight members. Three members of the committee will be required to be present in order to be quorate.

This committee has no delegated powers to spend.

Key Tasks

1. **Task Planning** - Annually identify key tasks for the coming year.
2. **Planning Applications** - To examine each application and decide whether to recommend either an 'Objection' or 'No Objection' to the Planning Authority (except in 4 below). Decisions should be based on the following agreed planning grounds:
 - a. Compliance with current planning policy guidelines, at both national and local level
 - b. Protection of the Green Belt
 - c. Protection of the Conservation Areas
 - d. Effect on neighbours
 - e. Effect on amenity
 - f. Effect on traffic and highway safety
 - g. Prevention of over-development
 - h. Effect on street scene and landscape
 - i. Acceptable high standard of design
 - j. Effect on sustainment of services
3. **New Construction** - To recommend a response to Full Council for applications for construction of entirely new buildings. If a Full Council meeting is scheduled to be held after the deadline for responses to the application, then the Planning and Highways Committee will have delegated powers to provide a response to Brentwood Borough Council. This power will only be used when responses for new buildings need to be returned and Brentwood Borough Council are not prepared to extend the deadline before the next Full Council meeting can be held. Before responding to Brentwood Borough Council, the Parish Council Chair will be informed, and the action will be reported at the next Full council meeting.
4. **Planning Application Process** - Ensure that all responses to all planning applications are made within the time specified on the Planning Application notice. All grounds for 'Objection' must be clearly stated.
5. **Planning Appeals** - Consider all appeals and submit comments where appropriate to the Department of Transport, Environment and the Regions.
6. **Site Visits** - Where necessary, make use of site visits to finalise a decision. At least two members should make such visits.
7. **Notice to Public** - Notify, in writing, residents that, in the opinion of the committee, could be particularly affected by planning applications. Advise where and when details of the application will be available for review.

8. **Public Involvement** - Permit affected residents or their nominated representatives to address the committee on a specified application.
9. **Planning Notices** - Actions as follows:
 - a. Note proposed decision by the Planning Authority's officers. If appropriate, exercise right of referral to the Planning Authority
 - b. Planning Applications Submitted – check that committee received and
 - c. Planning Applications Denied – note the Planning Authority's decision
10. **Correspondence** - Answer all relevant correspondence within two weeks and check any resulting actions have been implemented.
11. **Representation** - Provide representatives for relevant Brentwood Borough Council and Essex County Council meetings and committees for seminar, briefing and training sessions appropriate to the committee Terms of Reference.

To make representations to the Local Highways Panel on behalf of the Parish Council.
12. **Consultations** - To recommend to Full Council responses of consultation of similar papers relating to planning, highways, transportation, parking and other issues relevant to this committee. In line with its delegated responsibility the committee will investigate parking issues appropriate to Council policy.

Climate Emergency Working Group

Prime objectives

- To advise the Parish Council on implementing the 'Climate Emergency' declared on 5th November 2020.
- To assist the Parish Council with practical work to deliver the eight points within the 'Climate Emergency' resolution.
- To do everything within the Parish Council's power to make Ingatestone & Fryerning carbon neutral by 2030.

Key tasks

- To engage the whole community in addressing Ingatestone & Fryerning's 'Climate Emergency' – including, but not restricted to, our residents, school children, businesses, employers, faith groups, community organisations, and visitors.
- To source data and other information in support of these objectives – seeking Ingatestone & Fryerning, Brentwood and Essex specific data, where possible.
- To make recommendations to Full Council on how its policies and activities might be modified to reduce emissions – including, but not restricted to, Neighbourhood Plan, Planning, Highways & Transport, Land & Property, Facilities, Communications and Grants.
- To make recommendations to Full Council on our villages could contribute to the 2030 target – developing initiatives and project as appropriate.
- To develop a rolling plan to “to make Ingatestone & Fryerning carbon neutral by 2030” – first draft and proposals for adoption to be presented to Full Council by May 2021, and thereafter to be reviewed annually.
- To make recommendations to Full Council on any calls that should be made to Brentwood Borough Council, Essex County Council, Central Government, and any other external bodies for the powers and resources to make the 2030 target possible.

Meetings

The Climate Emergency Working Group will meet bi-monthly with frequency and timings to be determined by the working group.

Membership

The membership of the Climate Emergency Working Group will be noted at full council. It will consist of at least two councillors and can include non-councillors as members. The Climate Emergency Working Group will invite local representatives and community groups to attend.

Reporting to full council

The Climate Emergency Working Group should make updates and recommendations to full council monthly and should be ready to answer questions from councillors.

Conduct

All Climate Emergency Working Group members should adhere to code of conduct as specified in the Ingatestone and Fryerning Parish Council Code of Conduct and section five of the parish council's Communications Policy.

Communications Working Group

Prime objectives

To focus on the communications activities of the council as a whole.

Key tasks

To assist the Communications Clerk with the following tasks

- Development and optimisation of the current parish council website, paper newsletter, e-newsletter and other further digital developments.
- To review and update the council's media policy for approval at Full Council
- To review the council's marketing and branding – To oversee all marketing and branding activity of the parish council, based on the branding guidelines detailed in the media policy.
- Seymour marketing – to oversee the marketing of the pavilion and field for hirers.
- PR and promotion – to oversee all the PR and promotion of the parish council and the parish as a whole. To encourage tourism to the parish and working with businesses to promote the High Street.
- Facebook – To ensure that the Ingatestone & Fryerning Parish Council Facebook page is kept up to date on a regular basis, remains reactive and reflects the work of the council, by publicising news, meetings and events. To increase the traction and the number of followers, likes and shares on the existing Facebook page.
- Twitter – To maintain a Twitter account, develop a following and update this community regularly with news, meetings and events
- Instagram – To maintain a parish council Instagram account that allows the council and parish community to share pictures of Ingatestone and Fryerning.
- Website – Make recommendations for development and improving content on www.ingatestone-fryerningpc.gov.uk. Improve the website's search ratings and search engine optimisation based on recent traffic reports and ensure that any bugs are fixed.
- Images – To review and improve the current stock of images used on social media, newsletters and online.
- Major projects - In conjunction with other committees and working parties, identify communications projects that would significantly enhance the parish and its community and help promote their activities, events and initiatives.
- Newsletter and other printed correspondence – To oversee the publication of the parish council newsletter and ensure that printed correspondence is maintained in order to not exclude residents who do not have access to the IT mentioned in these terms of reference.
- To oversee the production of an Enewsletter.
- Accessibility - To ensure that the website meets all accessibility requirements. To research and implement best methods of communication to ensure demographic coverage.

Meetings

The Communications Working Group will meet as and when required and can meet online or in person.

Membership and delegated authority

The membership of the Communications Working Group will be noted at full council. It will consist of at least two councillors and can include non-councillors as members. The working group has no delegated authority to act on behalf of the parish council.

The Communications Clerk has delegated authority to undertake the above tasks as well as the production of the paper newsletter and e-newsletter, consulting with the member of the working group on editorial content.

Reporting to full council

The Communications Working Group should make updates and recommendations to full council on a monthly basis and should be ready to answer questions from councillors.
Conduct

All Communications Working Group members should adhere to code of conduct as specified in the Ingatestone and Fryerning Parish Council Code of Conduct and section five of the parish council's Communications Policy.

Economic Development Working Group

Prime objectives

To suggest and support improvements to Ingatestone and Fryerning's economy.

Key tasks

- Support the local economy and independent businesses.
- Identify, maintain and grow the key local economic drivers within the parish and increase its local employment base.
- Enable new businesses to locate within the parish.
- Develop ideas that will be supported by employment sites, appropriate retail outlets and a thriving economy.
- Encourage business that can employ local people of all ages in growth sectors, such as technology, creative arts, healthcare, renewable energy, professional services, education and tourism.
- Support events to help businesses, for example, the annual Summer Show.
- Encourage the roll out of new technologies, such as gigabit broadband and 5G, working with the Neighbourhood Plan Implementation Committee.
- Primary contact between IFPC and Business Improvement District management (if the BID is established).

Meetings

The Economic Development Working Group will meet monthly.

Membership

The membership of the Economic Development Working Group will be noted at full council. It will consist of at least two councillors and can include non-councillors as members. The Economic Development Working Group will invite local business representatives, community groups and a member of Brentwood Borough Council Economic Development Group to attend.

Reporting to full council

The Economic Development Working Group should make updates and recommendations to full council on a monthly basis and should be ready to answer questions from councillors.

Conduct

All Economic Development Working Group members should adhere to code of conduct as specified in the Ingatestone and Fryerning Parish Council Code of Conduct and section five of the parish council's Communications Policy.

Natural Burial Working Group

Prime objective

To progress the creation of a Natural Burial Site at Fryerning Cemetery.

Key tasks

- To develop a suitable business plan. To investigate any relevant costings, agreements and contracts that might be required.
- To work with the Assistant Clerk to create a set of rules and regulations for the new site, that reflects those of the rest of the cemetery.
- To regularly report back to Facilities Committee on the groups progress.
- To present recommendations for approval by the Facilities Committee in a timely manner in order to allow background papers to be distributed with the summons and agenda.
- To seek approval by the Facilities Committee on any decisions required
- To acknowledge that this working group has no other delegated authority other than that stated above.

Meetings

The Natural Burial Working Group will meet as and when required.

Membership

The membership of the Natural Burial Working Group will be noted at Facilities Committee. It will consist of at least two councillors and can include non-councillors as members.

Reporting

The Natural Burial Working Group should make updates and recommendations to Facilities Committee on a monthly basis and should be ready to answer questions from councillors. The Facilities Committee will report on updates and relevant recommendations to Full Council when required.

Conduct

All Natural Burial Working Group members should adhere to code of conduct as specified in the Ingatestone and Fryerning Parish Council Code of Conduct and the parish council's Communications Policy.

Health and Wellbeing Working Group

Prime objectives

- To work on reducing social isolation and loneliness in identified groups and to improve mental wellbeing by co-ordinating appropriate events
- To work towards becoming a dementia friendly parish
- Encourage physical health activities in all age groups and abilities

Key tasks

- Mobilise local skills and knowledge to promote H&WB in the Community.
- Explore approaches to inform and involve isolated or lonely individuals regarding activities within the community, to improve Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Ensure Contact Details on services available within the community are displayed prominently for all those who need them.
- Access any volunteer organisations that may be able to help in delivering H&WB Services
- Support any local initiatives that promote H&WB in the community
- Explore possible facility provision ideas to support the main objectives

Meetings

The Health and Safety Working Group will meet monthly or as required.

Membership

The membership of the Health and Wellbeing Working Group will be noted at full council. It will consist of at least two councillors and can include non-councillors as members. The Health and Wellbeing Working Group may invite any local suppliers of H&WB Services to attend or supply advice at the above meeting.

Reporting to full council

The Health and Wellbeing Working Group should make updates and recommendations to full council on a monthly basis and should be ready to answer questions from councillors.

Conduct

All Health and Wellbeing Working Group members should adhere to code of conduct as specified in the Ingatestone and Fryerning Parish Council Code of Conduct and section five of the parish council's Communications Policy.