

Yatton Parish Council

Full Council, 10 May 2010: Reports

Agenda item 9: Committee terms of reference

Agenda item 12: Schedule of meeting dates

Agenda item 15: Draft town and parish charter

Agenda item 17: Review of internal controls



(Adopted by Yatton Parish Council, 20 April 2009)

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF COMMITTEES

Matters reserved to Full Council

The following matters are reserved to Full Council (where appropriate, on the recommendation of a committee):

- The approval of the Council's annual budget and the setting of a precept
- The approval of the Council's Statement on Internal Control (including the review of the effectiveness of the Council's system of internal audit)
- The approval of the Council's annual accounts
- The consideration of the external auditor's report where the auditor requires it to be considered at a meeting of the Council
- Any decision to borrow money or to apply for permission to borrow
- The passing of a resolution to make the Council eligible to exercise the power to promote well-being
- The incurring of expenditure, whether included within budgetary provision or not, on any individual item or contract in excess of £5000
- Any variation or waiver of the Council's procurement policy
- The co-option of a member to fill a casual vacancy or the appointment of additional members
- The appointment of the Clerk

FINANCE, PERSONNEL AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

The committee must at all times consider its duty to Best Value, Equal Opportunities (race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, age and any disability), Crime and Disorder, Health and Safety and Human Rights

Responsibilities common to all committees:

- To be responsible for compiling its annual budget
- To present and obtain approval for its annual budget from Full Council
- In conjunction with the Clerk/RFO to monitor its functions and expenditure
- To assess and budget for future maintenance, replacement or upgrading of items for which it is responsible

Responsibilities specific to this committee:

- This committee has delegated responsibility for the overall management of the council's finances and any other matter which does not fall within the scope of any other committee and is not reserved to Full Council
- To deal with personnel matters including those allocated to the committee by the Council's Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures
- To appoint staff (other than the Clerk) and determine and review their terms and conditions of employment
- To manage the Parish Office in Yatton Library
- To propose the Council's annual precept and obtain Full Council approval for it.
- To ensure that an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the council's records and control systems is maintained as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations
- To implement an annual salary review for parish council employees, giving due regard to staff development and NALC guidelines.
- To review regularly in conjunction with the RFO, the council's insurance arrangements ensuring that the property and risks are adequately insured.
- To review the effective operation of the council, its policies and procedures, including maintaining Quality Parish Council status.
- To develop communications with the electorate and other partners (other than on strategic planning matters).

AMENITIES AND PROPERTIES COMMITTEE

The committee must at all times consider its duty to Best Value, Equal Opportunities (race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, age and any disability), Crime and Disorder, Health and Safety and Human Rights

Responsibilities common to all committees:

- To be responsible for compiling its annual budget
- To present and obtain approval for its annual budget from the Finance, Personnel and Administration Committee and then from Full Council
- In conjunction with the Clerk/RFO to monitor its functions and expenditure
- To assess and budget for future maintenance, replacement or upgrading of items for which it is responsible

Responsibilities specific to this committee:

- In accordance with council policy this committee has delegated responsibility for all matters relating to land and buildings owned or leased or managed by the Council (other than the Parish Office in Yatton Library), including:

Broadcroft, Rock Road and Hangstones Playing Fields and associated buildings, Glebelands, the War Memorial Gardens and the parish car park; the allotments and the burial ground(s); streetlights owned by the Council and Christmas lights and decorations as well as tools and equipment used in the maintenance of its amenities and properties.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

The committee must at all times consider its duty to Best Value, Equal Opportunities (race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, age and any disability), Crime and Disorder, Health and Safety and Human Rights

Responsibilities specific to this committee:

1. In accordance with council policy and operating at all times via the medium of the parish clerk, this committee has delegated responsibility for all matters relating to planning and the environment (except where these relate to land owned, leased or managed by the Council) and for community services such as community consultation and strategic community planning
2. to respond to North Somerset Council on any matter relating to planning applications/development control; and
3. to encompass all areas pertaining to planning which affects Yatton Parish.
4. To be responsible for the development and promotion of strategic policies concerned with national and local government plans and initiatives such as the Transport Plan, Local Plan, Waste Strategy, Sustainable development, etc.
5. To be responsible for all matters relating to public footpaths and bridleways, public transport and the condition of highways infrastructure not owned by the council.

ADVISORY COMMITTEES

(Note: advisory committees do not have the power to make decisions on behalf of the Council, to make policy on behalf of the Council or to incur expenditure)

ROAD SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

To consider and make recommendations to Full Council on any matter relating to road safety

To co-operate with other organisations in Yatton and Claverham on any matter relating to road safety.

HANGSTONES REDEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

To consider and make recommendations to Full Council on any matter relating to the redevelopment of Hangstones Pavilion

BURIAL GROUND ADVISORY COMMITTEE

To consider and make recommendations to Full Council on any matter relating to a possible new burial ground.

YATTON PARISH COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL, 10 May 2010

AGENDA ITEM 12: SCHEDULE OF FULL COUNCIL MEETINGS

Report of the Clerk

1. If members wish to have Full Council meetings monthly (but with no meeting in August) the schedule for 2010/11 would be:

Monday 14 June 2010

Monday 12 July 2010

Monday 13 September 2010

Monday 11 October 2010

Monday 8 November 2010

Monday 13 December 2010

Monday 10 January 2011

Monday 14 February 2011

Monday 14 March 2011

Monday 11 April 2011

Monday 16 May 2011 (Annual Meeting, one week later than usual because of elections)

2. If members want to continue with bi-monthly meetings the schedule would be::

Monday 14 June 2010 (approval of accounts)

Monday 12 July 2010

Monday 13 September 2010

Monday 8 November 2010

Monday 10 January 2011

Monday 14 March 2011

Monday 16 May 2011 (Annual Meeting)

3. Members are INVITED to agree on a schedule of Full Council meetings for 2010/11, all meetings to be held at Hangstones Pavilion at 7.30 p.m.

YATTON PARISH COUNCIL

Full Council, 10 May 2010

Agenda item 15: Draft town and parish charter

Report of the Clerk

The North Somerset draft town and parish charter has been circulated to all councillors and a further copy is attached. Comments are invited by 31 May.

For convenience I have drafted some comments, which the Parish Council may wish to adopt, with or without amendment.

Draft comments

(Not included in public report. Final comments will be published once agreed by Council.)

YATTON PARISH COUNCIL

Full Council, 10 May 2010

Agenda item 17: Review of internal controls

Report of the Clerk

1. The Parish Council is required to carry out an annual review of its internal controls and report the results to a meeting of the full Council. The Finance, Personnel & Administration Committee appointed Councillors Rosey Knifton and Ian Payne to carry out the review and they carried out the review on 29 April, in discussion with the Clerk and Finance Assistant.

2. Rosey and Ian went through the existing Statement on Internal Control and were satisfied with the procedures for making payments and awarding contracts (the only major contract awarded in 2009/10 was for costing the options for Hangstones redevelopment).

3. The following matters were discussed and are reported to Council:

- The monthly check by a councillor should include a check on salaries to insure that the correct amount is being paid and that there is an explanation for any variation (salary scales and monthly salaries will be reported to the Finance, Personnel & Administration Committee on 24 May to form the basis of any subsequent check).
- There should be more consistency in including the minute number authorising expenditure on the grid of purchase orders.
- The Finance, Personnel & Administration Committee needs to carry out a review of risk assessment (this will be on the agenda for 24 May).
- There may be a need for refresher training for grounds staff on use of tools and other equipment.
- There is a need for a safe in or near the Parish Office to store petty cash and confidential staff details.
- It is desirable for there to be a key code lock on the door from the Parish Office into the library corridor.

4. An updated Statement of Internal Control is attached and members are invited to approve it. The Finance, Personnel & Administration Committee will consider the effectiveness of internal audit on 24 May.

YATTON PARISH COUNCIL

STATEMENT ON INTERNAL CONTROL FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2010

SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY

Yatton Parish Council is a local authority funded largely by public money, and is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

In discharging this overall responsibility, Yatton Parish Council (the Council) is also responsible for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

THE PURPOSE OF THE SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROL

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

The system of internal control has been in place at the Council for the year ended 31 March 2010 and up to the date of approval of the annual accounts and accords with proper practice as set out in the Practitioners' Guide. *Governance and Accountability in Local Councils* (2010 Edition)

THE INTERNAL CONTROL ENVIRONMENT

The Council

The Council reviews its obligations and objectives and approves a budget for the following year at its December or January meeting. The meeting of the Council in January 2010 approved the level of precept for the following financial year.

The Council has appointed a Finance, Personnel and Administration Committee. The Committee met seven times in the year ended 31 March 2010. Members of the Committee monitor progress against objectives, financial systems and procedures, budgetary control and carry out regular reviews of financial matters. The minutes of the meetings of the Committee are circulated to all members of the Council.

The full Council met nine times in the year ended 31 March 2010. It monitors progress by receiving relevant reports from the Finance Committee and the Parish Clerk.

Some Committees have delegated powers to incur expenditure within their budgetary provision. Expenditure on any single item of more than £5000 must be authorised by full Council. The Clerk has delegated authority to incur expenditure of up to £1000 on urgent health and safety matters on £500 on other matters.

The Council carries out regular reviews of its internal controls, systems and procedures.

Clerk to the Council / Responsible Financial Officer

The Council has appointed a Clerk to the Council who acts as the Council's advisor and administrator. The Clerk is the Council's Responsible Financial Officer and is responsible for administering the Council's finances. The Clerk is responsible for advising on the day to day compliance with laws and regulations that the Council is subject to and for managing risks. The Clerk also provides advice to help the Council ensure that its procedures, control systems and policies are adhered to.

Payments

All expenditure must be authorised by the Council, or by a committee having delegated authority, or (as set out above) by the Clerk after consultation with the appropriate Chair. All one-off items of expenditure, other than out of petty cash, must be recorded on an official purchase order form, with the list of order numbers recording the Minute number of the authorising committee where possible. The list of orders is available for inspection by any member of the Council on demand.

All receipts and payments are reported to the Council. Two members of the Council must sign every cheque or order for payment. The signatories check each cheque against the relevant invoice (which has already been signed by the Clerk), sign the invoice and initial the cheque counterfoil. All authorised cheque signatories are members of the Council. No member of staff of the Council can make payments (otherwise than out of petty cash) or sign cheques.

In addition a nominated member performs a monthly sample check of one invoice, following the paper trail from the decision to incur the expenditure, through the placing of an order, receipt of an invoice, authority for payment and final payment. The nominated member also checks the monthly bank reconciliation and petty cash reconciliation.

Contracts

In March 2009 the Council has adopted a Procurement Policy which sets out the tender or quotation requirements for contracts of differing amounts.

Risk Assessments / Risk Management

The Clerk will report on risk assessment to the Finance, Personnel & Administration Committee on 24 May.. The Parish Council's insurance cover has been reviewed and the level of Fidelity Guarantee Insurance has been

raised to the recommended level (balances + half of precept, being the maximum amount of cash at risk at any time).

Internal Audit

The Council has appointed an Independent internal auditor who has reported to the Council on the adequacy of its records, procedures, systems, internal control and risk management.

The effectiveness of the internal audit is reviewed annually by the Council. The Council appointed a new internal auditor for the year ended 31 March 2010 and a report on the effectiveness of internal audit will be presented to the Council meeting on 14 June.

External Audit

The Council's external auditors, Mazars LLP, submit an annual Certificate of Audit, which is presented to the Council.

REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS

The Council has responsibility for conducting an annual review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control, which should include a review of the effectiveness of internal audit. The results of that review must be considered by the Council or the Finance, Personnel and Administration Committee and the Council or Committee must also approve the Statement on Internal Control.

(Chairman)

(Responsible Financial Officer / Clerk)

Approved and adopted by Yatton Parish Council

10 May 2010