Stoke Bliss Group Parish Council

SCHEME OF DELEGATION 2025

Local Councils may only do what legislation requires or permits them to do. With some particular exceptions, the Council may delegate functions to committees, sub committees, officers, or other authorities. The power to delegate functions by local councils is set out in the Local Government Act 1972 S.101.

This document clarifies the manner in which Stoke Bliss Group Parish Council has delegated its powers and the authority to spend.

Council

Certain functions cannot be delegated and are therefore reserved to the full Council, although an appropriate committee may make recommendations thereon for the Council's consideration:

- Setting the precept and approval of the Council's budget
- Approval of the Annual Accounts
- Completion of the Annual Return including the Governance Statement
- Consideration of an Auditor's report made in the public interest (*within one month of receipt)*.
- The making, amending or revoking of Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and this Scheme of Delegation
- Adoption or revision of the Council's Code of Conduct.
- Confirmation (by resolution) that the Council has satisfied the statutory criteria to exercise the General Power of Competence
- Determination and review of the Bank Mandate
- Matters of principle or policy
- Nomination or appointment of representatives of the Council to outside bodies (except approved conferences or meetings)
- Nomination or appointment of representatives of the Council at any inquiry on matters affecting the Parish, excluding those matters specific to a committee
- The making, amending or revoking of bye-laws
- Agreement to write off bad debts
- Approval by resolution, before payment, of any grant or single commitment in excess of £5,000.
- Authorisation as to terms and purpose for any application for Borrowing Approval and subsequent arrangements for the loan.
- Approval of any financial arrangement which does not require formal borrowing approval from the Secretary of State (eg hire purchase or leasing of tangible assets)
- Approval of purchase, acquisition by other means, sale, lease or disposal of tangible moveable property over £1,000.
- Approval of purchase, acquisition by other means, lease, sale or disposal of real property (interests in land).

- Approval of the virement of unspent and available amounts to other budget headings or reserves
- Approval of changes in earmarked reserves as part of the budgetary process

Proper Officer

The Clerk to the Council shall be the Proper Officer and carry out the functions of the Proper Officer as provided by the Local Government Act 1972 and as set out in the job description for the post. In the absence of the Clerk, the full authority of the Proper Officer does not pass to any other person.

- Delegated actions of the Clerk shall be in accordance with Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and this Scheme of Delegation and in line with directions given by the Council from time to time.

The Clerk is specifically authorised to:

- Receive declarations of acceptance of office.
- Receive and publish Members' Registers of Interest
- Receive and grant Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) dispensations after consulting with the District Council's Monitoring Officer; details of all dispensations received and granted to be reported to the Council at the next available meeting.
- Sign and serve on councillors a summons with an agenda to attend Council and committee meetings
- Convene a meeting of the Council if a casual vacancy occurs in the office of the Chairman
- Sign notices or other documents on behalf of the Council
- Receive and hold copies of byelaws made by a principal local authority which affect the Council's area
- Receive and retain plans, notices and documents
- Certify copies of byelaws made by the Council

In addition, the Clerk is authorised to undertake the day to day administration of the Council, to include:

- Calling extra meetings of the Council or any committee or sub-committee as necessary, having consulted with the appropriate chairman, except those called by the Chairman or members in accordance with Standing Order 6.
- Issuing press releases and statements to the press on the Council's known policies, subject to the provisions of the Council's Press and Media Policy.
- Updating and managing the content on the Council's website
- Making arrangements for the maintenance of the office IT system.
- Co-ordinating the production of the Council's newsletters
- Disposal of Council records according to legal restrictions and an agreed retention and disposal policy
- Handling requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.
- in the first instance, acknowledging and handling all complaints regarding the council (except where the complaint relates to the clerk);

- Purchasing basic office equipment and supplies
- Arranging emergency repairs to the Council property (subject to the council's standing orders and financial regulations.)
- Taking appropriate action arising from other emergencies (in consultation with the Chairman/Vice Chairman of Council or committee chairman as appropriate to the circumstances)
- Supervising the work of Council employees and contractors.
- Making arrangements to pay salaries/wages and expenses to all employees of the Council (subject to the Council's financial regulations);
- Dealing with day to day matters in relation to the allotments function, in accordance with any policies and decisions of the Allotments Committee or full Council to include issuing Allotment Tenancy Agreements and making arrangements for collecting the annual rents.
- Authorising payment for items below £500 in consultation with the Chairman of Council or the Chairman of the appropriate Committee (Fin Regs 4.1).
- Emergency expenditure up to £500 whether or not there is budgetary provision for the expenditure (Fin Regs 4.5).

When the Council delegates a specific task or function to the Proper Officer, the action taken must be reported to the next Council meeting

Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)

The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) to the Council is responsible for the Parish Council's accounting procedures and financial records and is accountable for the proper administration of its finances, in line with the current Account and Audit Regulations and the Council's adopted Financial Regulations.

COMMITTEES

All Committees are authorised to:

- At the first meeting after the Annual Parish Council meeting, elect a chairman, and if appropriate, vice-chairman from within the membership of that Committee
- Approve the Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee
- Spend money from budget headings under that Committee's remit up to the limit of the budget and/or named reserve
- Make recommendations on the budget requirement for the Committee for the coming Financial Year.
- Delegate any of their functions to a Sub Committee or officer of the Council.

For each committee meeting an agenda will be prepared by the Clerk in conjunction with the Committee Chairman and will be displayed no later than three working days before the date of the meeting.

COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Finance Committee

1) Membership and frequency of meetings

The Finance Committee will be made up of three members of the Council appointed by the full Council. The Chairman of the Council shall be one of these members. The

Committee will meet at least every three months if required, and the quorum shall be at least three members.

2) Terms of Reference

a) To co-ordinate, in consultation with the Chairman of the Committees of the Council, the Chairman of the Council, the Parish Clerk and the RFO, the detailed budget of the Council and to recommend to the Council the annual budget and the annual precept to be levied for the Parish.

a. To monitor expenditure and ensure that the Council receives reports at the end of each quarter on the progress of actual expenditure compared with budget.

b. To prepare the accounts of the Council and arrange for their annual external audit.

c. To be responsible for overseeing the administration and review of day to day financial matters including internal audit of the Council's income and expenditure.

d. To conduct an annual review of the effectiveness of Internal Audit and Internal Control procedures.

e. To arrange for annual review of the Council's insurance policies and to oversee the procedure for risk assessment of all the Council's activities.

f. To advise the Council on all aspects of finance and financial policy, including the investment of both operating and capital balances and any transfers into and out of the capital fund.

g. To review from time to time the Council's banking arrangements and make recommendations to the Council when necessary.

h. To approve, on behalf of the Council, the transfer of funds from and to particular budget items where the Chairman of the Committee is satisfied that the transfer of funds must take place before the next meeting of the Council. Such urgent transfers of funds must be agreed by the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Committee affected by the transfer and by the Chairman or Vice Chairman of Council.

i. To review the Council's Financial Regulations annually.

j. To draw up and periodically review a procedure for the making of grants and donations and to consider and make decisions on such requests made to the Council, in accordance with that policy.

k. To deal on behalf of the Council and as instructed by it, with any matters of policy which do not fall clearly within the responsibilities of the other Committees or where there is any conflict between them.

l. To ensure that appropriate records are kept of all assets and that they are adequately controlled.

m. The Committee may delegate any of its functions to Sub-Committees constructed from its members or to an officer of the Council.

INDIVIDUAL COUNCILLOR ROLES

Advice from Worcestershire CALC confirms that during a period when there are no meetings and the Clerk is circulating all incoming correspondence to Councillors, It is the responsibility of each Councillor to contact the Clerk to Declare any Disclosable Pecuniary/Non-Pecuniary Interest they may have in any item circulated. The Clerk will then notify all Councillors so that each Councillor is made aware when discussing or circulating information on such an item that the Councillor declaring the interest is not included in circulation of any discussions that take place.

Individual Councillors may undertake roles involving day-to-day organisation or supervision subject to:

- Overall direction of the Council or a Committee.
- Provision of regular reports to the Council or Committee.
- Any matter involving staff terms and conditions, rate of pay or contractual terms being referred to the Clerk who is responsible for these issues.