

# Highley Parish Council – Committees & Working Groups 2026–2027

## Draft Terms of Reference for Approval at the Annual Council Meeting

### 1. Membership (unchanged from 2025 ToR)

- Membership of Working Groups is chosen by individual councillors.
- Each group should ideally consist of **at least five councillors**, with the option to co-opt members of the public with relevant expertise.
- Membership runs for **12 months** until the next Annual Parish Meeting.
- Councillors are encouraged to join **one committee and two working groups** to ensure capacity and continuity.
- Attendance should ideally reach **75%** of meetings.

### 2. Role of Working Groups (unchanged core principles)

#### Working Groups:

- Examine issues in detail and consider all options.
- Read reports, gather evidence, and seek specialist advice where needed.
- Co-opt councillors or non-councillors to support their work.
- Maintain notes of meetings and submit recommendations to Full Council.
- Have **no delegated decision-making powers**; they make recommendations only.

#### Committees:

- Have delegated powers as agreed by Full Council.
- Must report decisions and actions to Full Council for transparency.

## 3. Committees

### A. Planning Committee

**Membership:** 6 councillors **Delegated Powers:** Yes **Meeting Frequency:** Monthly (usually before Full Council)

#### Terms of Reference

- Review planning applications and submit comments to Shropshire Council.
- Attend planning training and maintain awareness of planning legislation.
- Review street closure applications.
- Monitor wider planning matters including the Shropshire Local Plan.
- Attend Guildhall planning meetings where possible.
- Report decisions and observations to Full Council.
- Agree next meeting date before closing each meeting.

### B. Revenue & Resources Committee

**Membership:** 6 councillors **Delegated Powers:** Yes **Meeting Frequency:** Quarterly

#### Terms of Reference

- Oversee all financial decisions within delegated authority.
- Monitor income, expenditure, reserves and budget performance.
- Prepare the annual budget for recommendation to Full Council.
- Ensure compliance with Financial Regulations and internal controls.
- Review corporate and financial risks and insurance arrangements.
- Set and monitor the internal audit process.
- Oversee operational and management issues relating to:
  - Streetlights
  - Bus shelters
  - Benches
  - Waste bins
  - Allotments
  - Other parish assets
- Agree next meeting date before closing each meeting.

## 4. Working Groups

### A. Communications & Events Working Group

**Membership:** Up to 8 **Meeting Frequency:** As required

#### Responsibilities

- Plan and deliver:
  - Annual Parish Meeting
  - Best Kept Village Comp
  - Christmas Lights Switch-On (with Severn Centre)
  - Santa at the Centre
  - Highley in Bloom
- Support community events including Carnival and Best Kept Village.
- Oversee civic awards and raffle beneficiary processes.
- Review website and explored gov.uk email options.
- Promote parish activities and ensure consistent communication.

#### Objectives (to be set by the group annually)

- Identify annual event priorities.
- Develop a communications plan for the year.
- Agree volunteer roles and event timelines.
- Agree next meeting date before closing each meeting.

### B. Environmental & LNRS Working Group (including Footpaths)

**Membership:** Up to 8 **Meeting Frequency:** Monthly or as required

#### Responsibilities

- Coordinate volunteer activity including:
  - Litter picking
  - Tree planting
  - Footpath monitoring
- Develop and review environmental improvement plans.

- Liaise with landowners and Shropshire Council.
- Monitor LNRS (Local Nature Recovery Strategy) actions.
- Ensure works are completed within budget and to a high standard.
- Make recommendations to Full Council.
- Agree next meeting date before closing each meeting.

### **Objectives (to be set annually)**

- Identify priority environmental projects.
- Establish volunteer schedules.
- Set monitoring and reporting processes.

## **C. Youth Working Group**

**Membership:** Up to 8 **Meeting Frequency:** As required

### **Responsibilities**

- Support youth provision in Highley, including the Youth Club.
- Provide occasional volunteer support when additional hands are needed.
- Explore best value and best provision for young people.
- Liaise directly with young people to understand needs and aspirations.
- Make recommendations to Full Council regarding funding and development.
- Agree next meeting date before closing each meeting.

### **Objectives (to be set annually)**

- Identify youth priorities for the year.
- Develop a youth engagement plan.
- Review opportunities for partnership working.

## **D. Village Maintenance Working Group (including Bus Shelters)**

**Membership:** Up to 8 **Meeting Frequency:** Monthly or as required

### **Responsibilities**

- Review and monitor the Parish Council's responsibilities for village assets including:

- Bus shelters
- Benches
- Bins
- Streetlights
- Planters and troughs
- Other fixed assets
- Identify maintenance needs and improvement opportunities.
- Obtain quotes and make recommendations to Full Council.
- Monitor contractor performance.
- Agree next meeting date before closing each meeting.

### **Objectives (to be set annually)**

- Produce an annual maintenance plan.
- Prioritise asset improvements.
- Establish inspection schedules.

## **E. Allotment Inspections Group**

**Membership:** Up to 8 **Meeting Frequency:** Twice yearly (Spring & Autumn)

### **Responsibilities**

- Conduct inspections of all three allotment sites twice yearly.
- Monitor tenancy compliance and plot condition.
- Identify maintenance needs and report to Full Council.
- Support tenant engagement and site improvement.

### **Objectives (to be set annually)**

- Agree inspection criteria.
- Set improvement priorities.
- Review tenancy issues and recommend actions.

## **F. NCN Route 45 Cycle Path Working Group (NEW)**

**Membership:** Up to 8 **Meeting Frequency:** Quarterly or as required

## Responsibilities

- Oversee maintenance, monitoring and reporting for NCN Route 45.
- Follow Sustrans guidance and previous examples for inspection and reporting.
- Liaise with landowners, volunteers, and SVCP representatives.
- Identify safety issues, vegetation management needs, and signage requirements.
- Make recommendations to Full Council on improvements and funding needs.

## Objectives (to be set at first meeting)

- Define inspection schedule and reporting format.
- Establish communication channels with Sustrans.
- Set annual priorities for maintenance and improvement.
- Agree next meeting date before closing each meeting.

## G. Highley Steering Group (Outdoor Space & Health)

**Membership:** Open to councillors and residents **Meeting Frequency:** Monthly

### Responsibilities

- Support development of outdoor space and health-related community projects.
- Work with partners including Halo, Wellness Woodlands, Men's Shed, and others.
- Develop long-term community wellbeing initiatives.
- Report progress to Full Council.

### Objectives (to be set annually)

- Identify project priorities.
- Establish partnership roles.
- Develop funding and sustainability plans.

## H. Staffing Committee

**Membership:** Chair and Vice-Chair **Delegated Powers:** Yes (within limits set by Full Council)

**Meeting Frequency:** As required

## Terms of Reference

The Staffing Committee is responsible for all employment-related matters concerning Parish Council staff. Its remit includes:

- Overseeing recruitment processes, including:
  - Reviewing job applications
  - Shortlisting candidates
  - Conducting interviews
  - Making recommendations to Full Council on appointments
- Reviewing staff contracts, job descriptions and terms of employment.
- Conducting the annual performance review of the Clerk, including setting objectives and monitoring progress.
- Considering salary reviews and making recommendations to Full Council.
- Managing any staffing issues, concerns or grievances in accordance with adopted policies and procedures.
- Ensuring compliance with employment law, council policies, and best practice in HR management.
- Reporting decisions and recommendations to Full Council, except where confidentiality applies.

## Objectives (to be set annually by the Committee)

- Agree annual performance objectives for the Clerk.
- Review staffing needs and capacity for the year.
- Identify any required training or professional development.
- Review HR policies and recommend updates where necessary.