

Lowestoft Town Council

Terms of Reference for the Planning and Environment Committee

1. The Planning and Environment Committee is appointed by and solely responsible to Lowestoft Town Council.
2. The Committee's duties, as set out in these terms of reference, are defined and agreed by Full Council, which may vote, at any time, to modify, remove or increase the Committee's terms.
3. Meetings are to be held as and when required. This is likely to be two weekly.
4. **Membership** The Committee will consist of no fewer than seven Councillors. Full Council will elect a Chair for the Committee at the Annual Meeting of the Council every May. The Council will strive to appoint a minimum of one councillor from each ward where reasonably possible and practical. However, all members of the Committee are expected to represent the interest of the whole Council area. Any elected member can preside by agreement in the Chairman's absence. A quorum will be a minimum of four elected members. The Mayor will have automatic membership and full voting rights. There will be two named Councillors to act as substitutes to ensure that all meetings are quorate. All other members of the Council have the right to attend the meeting and make representations on the matters being discussed within the Public Forum.
5. **Record of Proceedings** The Committee will meet when required to prepare responses to all routine planning matters, including recommendations on planning applications. Written minutes will be taken to record the Committee's decisions and will be received at the next full Council meeting and tabled as an appendix. The Clerk will be responsible for arranging the recording and distribution of the minutes. All decisions will be relayed to the relevant planning authority by the Clerk or in the Clerk's absence another suitable staff member or councillor.
6. **Responsibilities** The Committee will be granted full delegated powers to make a Council Decision regarding responses on planning matters to the appropriate planning authorities and any other relevant parties. This will include delegated authority to act as per the items below:
 - a) To consider and provide a response, to the relevant Planning Authority, to all planning applications when notified under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 Sch 1 para 8. or otherwise, regardless of their size, controversial nature or effect on the area
 - b) To identify and make representations to the relevant authorities in respect of enforcement action or any matters considered to be breached of planning regulations.
 - c) To monitor, review and where necessary make recommendations to the Council for amendments to the planning consultation procedure.
 - d) To comment on licensing applications and other licensing matters when notified or otherwise alerted
 - e) To comment on street naming consultations and similar matters relating to the identity of the area when notified or otherwise alerted, taking into account related land ownership issues
 - f) To comment on rights of way and other highways consultations and similar matters when notified or otherwise alerted, taking into account related land ownership issues
 - g) To comment on planning and environment consultations including those from statutory bodies and those notified through the Suffolk Association of Local Councils LAIS service and advise the Council of any significant legal or policy developments
 - h) To make recommendations on Lowestoft Town Council planning and environment policies
 - i) To establish sub-committees and working groups, as required for significant planning or environment matters, such as for progressing neighbourhood planning

- 7. Climate Emergency** This Committee recognises that it plays an important role in delivering climate protection and improvement measures through creating appropriate planning policies and influencing others, including the local planning authority. During relevant decisions on planning applications, infrastructure and consultations (including on any revisions of the Local Plan), this Committee shall:
- Consider biodiversity
 - Support new or improved renewable energy
 - Support alternatives to car use, e.g. walking, cycling and public transport, and encourage efficient car use, including through appropriate car parking provision, car-sharing, differential car parking charges and the use of electric cars
 - Encourage the management of land for nature and increase in tree cover
 - Resist the use of natural open space for development and encourage reuse of brownfield sites
 - Support homes which are energy efficient, nature friendly and located close to public transport and amenities
 - Actively support robust planning and neighbourhood plan policies
 - Where information on environmental impacts of development is absent, responses to planning applications will state that the planning authority has failed to provide this essential information