



## **Handforth Parish Council**

### **Planning and Environment Committee**

*P&E Committee Terms of Reference 2019-05*

#### **Composition of the Planning and Environment (“P&E”) Committee**

The Committee will be comprised of a minimum (quorum) of three members selected by vote, if necessary, from the full membership of the Parish Council. The Committee will select, by vote if necessary, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee.

#### **Dates and Conduct of Meetings**

The Chair of the P&E Committee shall call meetings as required and having regard to the local planning authority's deadlines for the receipt of comments on planning applications, and as required in the event of public inquiries into matters of relevance to the Parish Council.

The P&E Committee will follow the standing orders of Handforth Parish Council (“HPC”) regarding notice and general conduct of meetings.

All members may attend meetings of the P&E Committee but only members of the Committee, or their substitutes for the time being, shall be able to vote.

Meetings will normally be open to the press and the public.

#### **Terms of Reference.**

The principal purposes of the P&E Committee are

- 1) to comment upon planning applications affecting the parish of Handforth and to deal with matters concerning Parks, Gardens, Play Areas and Open Spaces in Handforth
- 2) To formulate and implement policies for a “Greener Handforth” -  
to bring forward proposals to;-
  - reduce carbon emissions
  - increase planting of trees and shrubs and other “green infrastructure”
  - reduce energy consumption and increase proportion of renewable energy
  - reduce waste, particularly plastic waste
  - increase public understanding of how to help these objective

- 3) To establish and maintain liaison with outside bodies that have a planning or environment or infrastructure impact on Handforth.
- 4) To monitor and update where appropriate the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5) To bring forward proposals to implement infrastructure projects arising from the Neighbourhood Plan and funds from infrastructure sources such as CIL, Section 106, New Homes Bonus
- 6) To work with Cheshire East Council to improve  
Roads and signage  
Pavements and dropped kerbs  
Parks and open spaces

The P&E Committee shall have devolved powers to deal with all these matters, meaning that decisions made by the Committee shall be binding on the full Council. However, wherever a matter is considered by the Chair of the Committee, or by a majority of its members, to be sufficiently significant, the matter shall be referred up to the full Council, provided there is sufficient time available in the full Council's schedule and agenda.

The Chair of the P&E Committee, or a substitute appointed for the time being by him/her, or by a majority of the members of the Committee, shall be empowered to attend meetings, inquiries, and hearings and speak on behalf of the Council and the Committee, provided that wherever possible and where time allows, the Chair (or substitute) shall consult as widely as practical with other members of the Committee (and where relevant other members of the full Council) before attending and speaking.

## **Planning Applications**

The P&E Committee shall respond on behalf of the Council to planning applications received from Cheshire East Council (the Local Planning Authority). The Committee will also have the authority to respond to planning appeals heard by the Planning Inspectorate, and to Footpath Diversion Orders, Tree Preservation and Woodland Orders

When considering a particular planning application, members will be free to consult the planning authority's website, and/or documents held by the Parish Clerk, and (through the Chair or the Parish Clerk) the planning authority's case officer by email, copying such emails to all other members of the Committee and the Parish Clerk. Prior to drafting a report, Committee members will be free to discuss aspects of the application face-to-face, by telephone, or by email or post. Each planning application will normally be considered by the Committee at a public meeting. Where a member considers it desirable, the Committee will use a projected display to show drawings, texts, and photographs for members (and as far as practicable, members of the press and public) to view during the debate.

The agreed response to the Planning Authority shall be despatched to the authority with e-mail copies sent to each member.

Formal written statements made to meetings of the Planning Authority (such as Area Planning Committees, Strategic Planning Board, Cabinet) shall (where time allows) be drafted and agreed by the committee. The same shall apply to appeals conducted by the Planning Inspectorate.

Where time allows, the broad thrust of the Committee's case (or if referred up, of the full Council) shall be agreed in advance of any such meeting, and the nominated spokesperson (Chair or substitute) shall present the Council's case in accordance with that view when speaking on behalf of the Council.

### **Section 106 and CIL monies in Planning Applications**

Wherever an application may involve S106/CIL monies, the Committee will seek to make the views, including amount and disposition, of the Council known to the authority. Wherever time allows, the Committee will either consult members of the full council or refer the matter up to the full Council. Such views will be agreed formally and conveyed to the authority by the Parish Clerk, by letter or email, and copies conveyed to all members of the Council.

### **Pre-Application Planning Proposals**

Members need to take care when receiving representations of any pre-application proposals, not to allow any opinions to be made known by them to the potential applicants or developers or any other member of the public. The Parish Clerk, and/or the Chair, will make it clear (in writing) to the applicants that they may not in any way imply that the Parish Council has looked on their proposals with either favour or disfavour, prior to its having considered its response and submitted it to the Planning Authority following receipt from the Local Planning Authority of a formal planning application..

### **Parks, Open Spaces, Play Areas**

The Committee shall attempt to maintain and improve the availability and quality of parks, open spaces, and play areas where feasible, for example in the following ways:

Act as conduit between "friends" groups and HPC

- eg Friends of Meriton Road Park
- Friends of Stanley Hall Park
- Incredible Edible
- Handforth Gardening society

Encourage improvements, planting

- Parks
- Pocket Parks
- Planters (involve business community)

Look for Green Infrastructure opportunities

Encourage wildlife involvement/interests

Monitor waterways, ponds

Monitor public trees, shrubs, planters

Encourage use of playing pitches

## **Budget for the Committee's purposes**

The Committee shall have the power to use the budget voted for it by the full Council in pursuit of its purposes as described in the above Terms of Reference.

## **Working Groups**

The Committee shall have the power to establish, manage, and dis-establish Working Groups comprising members of the Committee and any members of the public the Committee deems appropriate.

Each Working Group shall have a Chairperson who is a councillor of the Committee.

Working Groups shall have no powers to enter into contracts on behalf of the Committee or the Parish Council, nor enter into any leases nor any contracts, nor spend or promise to spend any money, except as may be expressly authorised by the Committee.

Adopted by Handforth Parish Council on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2019, minute ref: 19/18/12.