



Launceston Town Council

Terms of Reference

2026

Approved by Full Council on: 26 May 2026

Minute Reference: 2605/36

Introduction

Launceston Town Council has appointed a number of committees to undertake work for and on behalf of the council. The specific responsibilities of each committee are confirmed by terms of reference.

This policy sets out the Terms of Reference of each Committee of the Town Council and confirms the following :

- Membership and number of seats
- Role of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor
- Frequency of meetings
- Remit of the committee and reporting structure
- Scheme of delegation

In the absence of any policy, a committee of the council will abide by the criteria established for full council as prescribed by the Council's Standing Orders.

These terms of reference apply to Committees, sub committees and any other group established to undertake work on behalf of the council in an advisory capacity.

Launceston Town Council has the General Power of Competence as a power of first resort. Where the council becomes ineligible, it will refer to the powers quoted in these Terms of Reference for the conduct of its business.

General Terms of Reference Applicable to all Committees

The Terms of Reference of all committees are subject to the following principles:

1. That powers be exercised in accordance with any policy adopted or directions given by the Town Council
2. That powers be subject to the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.
3. That any unresolved differences between committees shall be referred to the full Council for determination
4. That any proposal which involves any change in the existing policies already approved by the Council shall be submitted to the Council for approval
5. Day to day management of Council matters rests with the Town Clerk
6. Urgent/emergency matters may be dealt with as they arise by the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman of the appropriate committee (or in their absence the Vice Chairman) and Mayor and reported to the next appropriate committee or full Council meeting, whichever is first
7. Committees will bring to the attention of Council any matters being pursued by other local authority/statutory/voluntary or other bodies which have a beneficial or detrimental effect on the area of Launceston
8. The Minutes of all Committee Meetings will contain all recommendations it wishes to make to the full Council. These will be clearly set out so that members can fully understand the implications of their acceptance/rejection of them when they are moved at a meeting of the full Council.
9. Guest speakers should normally be limited to one per meeting with a time limit placed upon them
10. Public participation
 - a. There will be, during each committee meeting, a 15 minute public session with members of the public being able to speak and ask questions concerning the business of the Committee in accordance with the Standing Orders.
 - b. During Planning Committee meetings members of the public may speak at the discretion of the Chairman and with the approval of members of the Planning Committee
 - c. There will be no public participation at meetings of the Staffing Committee.
11. Committees will monitor/respond with critical appraisals to minutes, reports, documentation which from time to time are received from Cornwall Council or other bodies which have been brought to the Council's attention by the Town Clerk/individual Councillors or member of the public which may have an adverse or beneficial effect on the Town of Launceston
12. Where a committee resolves to exclude the press and public from all or part of the a meeting, the Committee may resolve to permit councillors not elected to the committee to remain in the meeting.

13. From time to time a committee may appoint up to two (2) members of the public to serve on a council committee or sub committee as non voting members. Appointed members will be required to abide by the Council's Code of Conduct.
14. All members will attend training relevant to the work of the committee as identified by the Town Clerk in conjunction with the Chairman of the appropriate Committee; such training to be provided at the expense of the Council.

Delegation of Authority to Sub-Committees

Where a function within the Terms of Reference of a committee has been further delegated to a sub-committee or working party that sub-committee or working party will report its findings and any recommendations back to the appropriate committee or direct to the Council, as per the remit

Estates & Properties Committee (ES & P)

Composition:	Six elected members, plus Mayor, Deputy Mayor (ex-officio, voting) and Chair of F & GP (voting)
Chairmanship:	Chair and Vice Chair to be elected from the members of the Committee at the first meeting in each council year
Non members:	Any member of the Council is able to attend and may participate at the discretion of the Chairman, but may be asked to leave if the press and public are excluded.
Quorum :	Five members
Meetings:	Town Hall
Timing:	Bi-monthly
Venue:	Town Hall albeit regular site inspections will be required
Reports to:	Full Council
Administration:	Town Council – the Estates and Property Manager will act as Clerk to the Committee (non-voting)
Remit :	Town Hall and all other premises or properties owned or administered by the Council. All land owned or administered by the Council, whether used as allotments or for recreational purposes.

Terms of Reference & Matters Delegated to the Committee:

1. To consider such matters as may be delegated by the Council from time to time
2. To draft, negotiate with the lessee/licensee terms and conditions of leases/licences for all Town Council property and land and submit recommendations for consideration by the full Council
3. To consider the renewal of leasing/licensing agreements and make recommendations to the F & GP Committee if it is not felt appropriate to continue such an agreement
4. To consider the securing and security of all Town Council property and land and make recommendations to the appropriate committee or the full Council
5. To maintain the register of all Town Council property and ensure and maintain its registered title at the Land Registry
6. To maintain the exterior and structural fabric of all Council buildings/structures

7. To consider and submit to the F & GP Committee annual estimates of income and expenditure on continuing services and capital expenditure for the forthcoming year
8. The management and maintenance of any bus shelters owned or administered within the area of Launceston
9. Reviewing the level of fees and charges of the committee's functions and making appropriate recommendations to the F & GP Committee
10. Acceptance of tenders and supervision of contracted projects – provided expenditure is within the budgetary provision and is for areas within the scope of the committee
11. All aspects of Health and Safety.
12. Making recommendations to the Council on all matters not within existing policy
13. Preparation and review of a plan for future requirements within the scope of the committee regardless of feasibility
14. The consideration of recommendations of sub-committees, working groups etc under the control of the Committee
15. Consultation with other relevant bodies with similar interests, including other Town Council committees and sub-committees, and consideration of their recommendations
16. The implementation of agency agreements for the delegation of services from Cornwall Council which fall within the remit of the committee and have been negotiated and agreed by the full Council
17. To consider and submit to the F & GP Committee annual estimates of income and expenditure on continuing services and capital expenditure for the forthcoming year
18. Authorisation of expenditure within the committee's budget, provided that the payment is made from a budget that is within the limits previously approved by the Council. The committee cannot commit or spend from future budgets not confirmed or from future years. The virement of funds from within the Estates & Property Committee's total budget is permissible

Finance and General Purposes Committee (F & GP)

Composition:	Seven elected members, plus Mayor, Deputy Mayor (ex-officio, voting)
Chairmanship:	Chair and Vice Chair to be elected from the members of the Committee at the first meeting in each council year
Non members:	Any member of the Council is able to attend and may participate at the discretion of the Chairman, but may be asked to leave if the press and public are excluded.
Quorum:	Five members
Timing:	Bi-monthly but with the ability to schedule additional meetings if deemed necessary.
Reports to:	Full Council
Administration:	Town Council – The Responsible Finance Officer will act as Clerk to the Committee (non-voting)

Terms of Reference & Matters Delegated to the Committee:

1. To consider such matters as may be delegated by the Council from time to time
2. To review, from time to time, policy objectives within the committee's Terms of Reference for consideration by the Council
3. To prepare annual estimates of income and expenditure of the Council on continuing services and of payments on capital account for the next financial year and to make a recommendation to the Council as to the precept in time for its annual budget meeting each year
4. To regulate and control the finance of the Council and to have charge of the financial and accounting arrangements of the Council
5. To consider matters arising from the report of the internal and external auditors and where considered necessary make changes to the Council's system of controls
6. To receive and approve schedules of payments
7. To agree virements between approved budget headings
8. To make recommendations to the Council on the use of financial reserves
9. To make recommendations to the Council on capital expenditure not already provided for in Council's estimates of expenditure for the current financial year
10. To consider and decide upon grants to local organisations in accordance with the Council's adopted grants policy

11. To undertake annually the risk assessment in the relation to the Council's insurance cover
12. To insure against such risks as the committee deems necessary to cover
13. To make recommendations to the Council regarding the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, following consultation with the appropriate bodies
14. To make recommendations to the Council regarding the prosecution or defence of any legal proceedings
15. To make recommendations to the Council for the use of powers to acquire by agreement, to appropriate, to dispose of land
16. To make recommendations to the Council for the use of its powers to promote a lottery
17. To make recommendations to the Council for the use of its powers to accept gifts, including land
18. To make recommendations to the Council regarding the future provision of civic regalia
19. To agree the use by any other organisation of the Town Crest
20. To review the Financial Regulations on a regular basis and make recommendations to the Council
21. To make recommendations to the Council regarding the review of existing policy matters
22. The delegated power to keep all procedures under active review
23. The delegated power to exercise the Town Council's powers to direct as to the custody of parish property and documents
24. Authorisation of expenditure within the committee's budget, provided that the payment is made from a budget that is within the limits previously approved by the Council. The committee cannot commit or spend from future budgets not confirmed or from future years. The virement of funds from within the F & GP Committee's total budget is permissible.
25. The negotiation of tenders which do not fall within the terms of reference of any other committee and the acceptance of tenders and supervision of contracted projects (provided expenditure is within the budgetary provision) with the practical implementation of the contract devolved to the appropriate committee
26. Making recommendations to the Council on all matters not within existing policy
27. Preparation and review of a plan for future requirements within the scope of the committee regardless of feasibility
28. The consideration of recommendations of sub- committees, working groups etc under the control of the F & GP Committee

29. Consultation with other relevant bodies with similar interests, including other Town Council committees and sub-committees, and consideration of their recommendations
30. Matters not already delegated to the Town Clerk which relate to the Town Council newsletter, websites, webcam, publicity and press releases
31. To consider such other matters of a general nature not clearly falling within the Terms of Reference of any other committee referred either by the Council or the Town Clerk.

Planning and Economic Development Committee

Composition:	Seven elected members, plus Mayor, Deputy Mayor (ex-officio, voting)
Chairmanship:	Chair and Vice Chair to be elected from the members of the committee at the first meeting in each council year
Non members:	Any member of the Council is able to attend and may participate at the discretion of the Chairman, but may be asked to leave if the press and public are excluded.
Quorum :	Five members
Timing:	Every three weeks – to accord with the schedule of time afforded to a local Council to respond to issues raised by Cornwall Council
Reports to:	Town Council

Terms of Reference & Matters Delegated to the Committee:

1. To consider such matters as may be delegated by the Council from time to time
2. Full delegated authority to make responses on behalf of Launceston Town Council to all applications for development in and outside the Launceston Town Council area (including Listed Building, Conservation Area consents, consent for advertisement displays etc) received from Cornwall Council.
3. To consider any request for pre application discussions with any developer and make a response on behalf of the council
4. To review council planning policy and procedure make recommendations to council to ensure that the council is able to meet any additional requirements of the planning process.
5. To respond to consultation documents regarding tree preservation and other matters regarding general land development
6. To consider all appeals against planning refusal by Cornwall Council within Launceston Town Council area and with an ability to submit comments to the Planning Inspectorate
7. To consider any proposals for new and reviews of the Core Strategy and any other consultation documents of a planning nature and to make recommendations to the Council
8. During Planning Committee meetings members of the public may speak at the discretion of the Chairman and with the approval of members of the Planning Committee

9. The consideration of recommendations of sub-committees, working groups etc under the control of the Planning Committee
10. Consultation with the Chamber of Commerce and other relevant bodies with similar interests, including other Town Councils, their committees and sub-committees, and consideration of their recommendations
11. To consider and submit to the F & GP Committee annual estimates of income and expenditure on continuing services and capital expenditure for the forthcoming year
12. Authorisation of expenditure within the committee's budget, provided that the payment is made from a budget that is within the limits previously approved by the Council. The committee cannot commit or spend from future budgets not confirmed or from future years. The virement of funds from within the Planning & Economic Development Committee's total budget is permissible.

Staffing Committee

Composition:	Chairman of Finance, Planning, Library Arts Business Information and Estates committee (4 in total) (voting) Mayor and Deputy Mayor (ex officio, voting) Vice Chair of Finance, Planning or Estates committee in the absence of a standing member
Chairmanship:	Chair and Vice Chair to be the Mayor and Deputy Mayor respectively
Non members	Any member of the Council is able to attend and may participate at the discretion of the Chairman, but <u>must</u> leave the room whenever the press and public are excluded. There will be no public participation at the meetings of the committee
Extra Terms:	A member will not be eligible for nomination to the committee – or if already a member must step down - if they have been the subject of an upheld grievance or finding of a breach of the Code of Conduct by, or relating to, a member of staff during the previous 12 months.
Meetings:	As and when required
Quorum :	Three members

Terms of Reference & Matters Delegated to the Committee:

1. To consider such matters as may be delegated by the Council from time to time
2. The overall performance of the staff, delegating the day to day line management to the Town Clerk
3. To receive reports from the Town Clerk in respect of attendance, short and long term sickness, return to work interviews, annual leave, maternity leave, paternity leave, adoption leave, compassionate leave, and flexible leave requirements and with delegated the powers to resolve any associated matters
4. To review and implement all employment policies in consultation with members of staff
5. To maintain the staffing levels necessary to efficiently discharge the work required by the Council and to review the workloads periodically and report any recommendations for change to the full Council
6. To oversee the recruitment process of all staff and where required, assist, when required, the Town Clerk in the recruitment of new staff
7. To undertake the recruitment of the Town Clerk with any associated expenditure and making the appointment.

8. To review job descriptions, person specifications, staff establishment (including promotion, re-grading, redundancies and fixed term contracts) and to approve contracts of employment
9. To maintain confidentiality over all staffing matters as required under the General Data Protection Regulation 2018 and the Code of Conduct
11. To deal with all matters relating to councillor/staff conduct
12. Staff Appraisals
 - a. To ensure that annual appraisals for all staff are carried out, agree and monitor any associated actions and outcomes
 - b. The annual appraisal of the Town Clerk will be undertaken by the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee.
 - c. To review the appraisal of all members of staff so that they are able to oversee staff and member development including identify training opportunities and ensure that all training needs are met.
 - d. Any member of staff who acts as a clerk to one of the Council's Committees will be appraised on the performance of that aspect of their duties by the Chair of that Committee.
13. To consider and implement any changes which are required to comply with legislation and Terms and Conditions of Service as laid down by the National Joint Council (Green Book) and recommended by the National Association of Local Councils and Society of Local Council Clerks
14. To receive and consider any complaints made under the Council's Grievance and Disciplinary Procedure delegated responsibility take whatever action is deemed necessary. If felt necessary, it has the delegated approval (including financial) to seek outside professional assistance in order to conclude a disciplinary or grievance matter. Should there be insufficient members of the Launceston Town Council without prior knowledge of the matter or otherwise available to undertake any aspect of the process volunteers will be sought from the membership (or officers as appropriate) of other Town/Parish Councils.
15. All aspects of Health and Safety that fall within the remit of the committee.
16. To prepare and submit to the F & GP Committee budget proposals in respect of salaries and training for all staff not later than 30 November each year
17. Authorisation of expenditure within the committee's budget, provided that the payment is made from a budget that is within the limits previously approved by the Council. The committee cannot commit or spend from future budgets not confirmed or from future years. The virement of funds within the committee's total budget is permissible.

Library, Arts, Business and and Information Services Committee

Composition:	Six elected members, plus Mayor, Deputy Mayor (ex-officio, voting) and Chair of Planning and Economic Development (voting)
Chairmanship:	Chair and Vice Chair to be elected from the members of the committee at the first meeting in each council year
Non members	Any member of the Council is able to attend and may participate at the discretion of the Chairman, but may be asked to leave if the press and public are excluded. Representatives of Chamber of Commerce, We Love the Tamar Valley, English Heritage -
Quorum :	Five members
Timing:	Bi-monthly
Reports to:	Full Council
Administration:	Town Council - the VIC Manager will act as Clerk to the Committee (non-voting)

Terms of Reference & Matters Delegated to the Committee:

To consider such matters as may be delegated by the Council from time to time.

1. To promote and offer a range of community, business, information and visitor services through the library and the Visitor Information Centre
2. To promote Launceston as a destination of choice for tourists, visitors and travel organisations
3. To develop a comprehensive range of marketing strategies which promote and underpin the work of the council
4. To coordinate and cooperate with businesses, the maintained and third sector organisations, to support town events and infrastructure developments
5. To facilitate and promote local art and cultural events and offer a broad range of entertainment at Town Council venues
6. To promote regular markets and town events to increase footfall to the town
7. To consider and submit to the F & GP Committee annual estimates of income and capital and revenue expenditure

8. Authorisation of expenditure within the committee's budget, provided that the payment is made from a budget that is within the limits previously approved by the Council. The committee cannot commit or spend from future budgets not confirmed or from future years. The virement of funds from within the Library, Arts, Business and Information Services Committee's total budget is permissible.

Key Relationships:

Launceston Town Council

Cornwall Council

Launceston Library

Launceston Visitor Information Centre

Launceston Chamber of Commerce

Lawrence House Museum

Coronation Park Trust

The Causley Trust

Launceston Town Plan Group

English Heritage

Visit Tamar Valley

Visit Cornwall