

Report on the Re-Structuring of Committees and Working Groups

Faversham Town Council Meeting, 17th May 2021

1. Background

Following the adoption of the Report on Preparing for the Return to Face-to-Face Meetings at Faversham Town Council Meeting 6th April 2021, this report looks specifically at Recommendations (e) and (f):

- In order to reduce the amount of face-to-face meetings, the committee structure and terms of reference are reviewed to enable delegation to Officers or working groups (sub-committees).
- Standing Orders are amended accordingly.

2. Considerations

To reduce the amount of face-to-face meetings

It has already been noted that Legal Topic Note 5: Parish and Community Council Meetings, paragraph 84 states:

The meetings of a sub-committee appointed by a committee are the same as for committee meetings as described above except:

- A sub-committee meeting may be convened without any public notice being given;
- The **public have no statutory right to attend** a sub-committee meeting or report its proceedings.

Many parish and town councils are reverting to sub-committees/working groups to enable the continuation of virtual meetings. Whilst it may be appropriate for some working groups to remain closed to the public; allowing others to be held virtually is likely to enable a larger representation from the public, as has already been evidenced.

Appendix A is a draft committee structure based on the existing meetings, which allows for four face-to-face meetings per month – Full Council and three Standing Committees. The remaining to act as working groups reporting to Full Council or a Standing Committee. The three Standing Committees to comprise:

- Planning Committee
- Policy and Finance Committee

- Infrastructure and Open Spaces Committee (alternative names: Environment and Active Travel; Public Spaces)

Appendix B is a draft revised meeting calendar for 2021/22, which allows for face-to-face meetings to take place on every Monday of the month. Working group dates are listed as a guide only and are subject to agreement.

Appendix C is revised general terms of reference for working groups. The appointing Committee should determine the terms of reference for each working group, the co-option of non-councillors and public attendance.

Standing Orders

The Standing Orders have been drafted to include:

Committees and sub-committees and working groups

3(d) The Council may appoint standing committees or other committees as may be necessary, and:

- x. shall determine if the sub-committee or working group be held virtually;

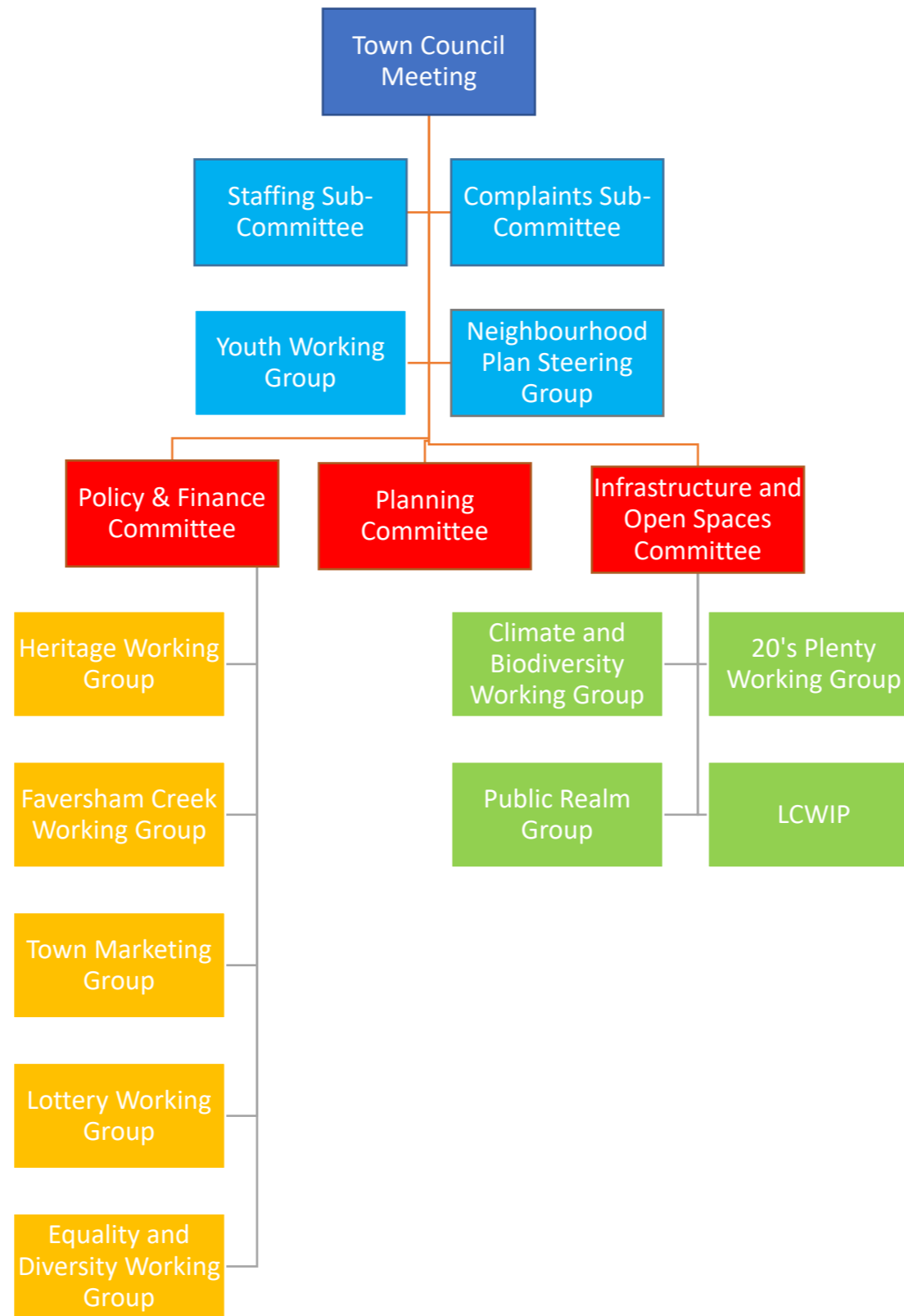
3. Recommendations

Further to the above considerations it is recommended that Members agree the following resolutions:

- a. *“This Council agrees the Meeting Structure as drafted in Appendix A.”*
- b. *“This Council adopts the revised Meeting Calendar.”*
- c. *“This Council confirms Terms of Reference for committees and working groups be delegated to Standing Committees”.*

Louise Bareham
Town Clerk

Draft Faversham Town Council Meeting Structure (May 2021)



	Start Time	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
Full Council	Face to Face												
Town Council (1st Monday)	7pm		7 th	5 th		6 th	4 th	1 st	6 th	10 th	7 th	7 th	4 th
Annual Finance Meeting	7pm									17 th			
Annual Council Meeting	7pm	17 th											
Mayor Making	7pm	-											
Annual Town Meeting	7pm											15 th	
Committees	Face to Face												
Planning Committee (1st and 3rd Mon)	6pm	17 th	7 th , 21 st	5 th , 19 th	2 nd	6 th , 20 th	4 th , 18 th	1 st , 15 th	6 th , 20 th	17 th	7 th , 21 st	7 th , 21 st	4 th , 18 th
Policy and Finance (4th Mon)	7:30pm		28 th	26 th		27 th	25 th	22 nd	13 th	24 th	28 th	28 th	25 th
Infrastructure & Open Spaces Committee (2nd Mon)	7:30pm			12 th		13 th		8 th		11 th (Tues)		14 th	
Sub-Committees	Virtual												
Staffing Sub-Committee (4th Mon)	7:30pm		28 th				26 th				28 th		25 th
Complaints Sub-Committee	As required												
Neighbourhood Plan Steering group (3rd Mon)	7pm	10 th	21 st	19 th		20 th	18 th	15 th		17 th	21 st	21 st	18 th
Youth Working Group													
Working Groups	Virtual												
Reporting to Policy & Finance													
Heritage Working Group (3rd Wed)	7pm		16 th	21 st		15 th	20 th	17 th		19 th	16 th	16 th	20 th
Faversham Creek Working Group													
Town Marketing Working Group													
Lottery Working Group (2nd Wed)	7pm	12 th	9 th	14 th		8 th	13 th	10 th		12 th	9 th	9 th	13 th
Equality and Diversity Working Group													
Reporting to Infrastructure & Open Spaces Committee													
Climate & Biodiversity Working Group (3rd Thurs)		27 th	17 th	15 th		16 th	21 st	18 th		20 th	17 th	17 th	21 st
20's Plenty Working Group (1st Thurs)	7pm		3 rd		5 th		7 th		2 nd		3 rd		7 th
Public Realm Group (4th Thurs)	9.30am	27 th		22 nd		23 rd		25 th		27 th		24 th	
LCWIP (1st Wed)	9am												
Swale Eastern Area Committee	7pm		22 nd			21 st			16 th			22 nd	
Swale Joint Transport Board	5:30pm		21 st			6 th			6 th		28 th		
Swale Planning Committee	7pm	27 th	24 th	22 nd	19 th	16 th	14 th	11 th	9 th	13 th	10 th	10 th	7 th

Terms of Reference for Working Groups

General

In addition to the Standing Committees, the Council has the option to form sub-committees and working groups. Each working group has its own Terms of Reference.

Working groups have no power to make decisions but will consider the relevant matters in detail and update and/or make recommendations to the appointing Standing Committee where appropriate.

The Standing Committee appointing the working group will have delegated powers to set the terms of reference of that group.

Working groups are more informal than Committees and have the opportunity of co-opting people from outside the Council who have the relevant skills for the task set by the Committee.

The working groups will produce a report with recommendations to be submitted to the relevant Committee outlining details of the review process, evidence gathered, conclusions and subsequent recommendations.

If the appointing Committee has appropriate delegated authority, it can consider the recommendations arising from the working group. The working group can gather evidence through a variety of ways, such as:

- written evidence
- oral evidence and interviews with external and internal witnesses
- site visits
- visiting other organisations - partners, user groups, other councils
- research
- holding public meetings to seek views on an issue
- talking to people who are affected by the issue.

Membership

Unless otherwise stated, the working group can be made up of a cross-section of the community as well as Town Councillors

Roles - The working group will elect a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson and together they will help facilitate discussion at working group meetings and ensure that the process is inclusive, fair and non-confrontational.

The Chairperson or Vice Chairperson will report progress / make recommendations to the relevant Committee meeting on behalf of the working group.

An Officer of the Town Council will act as administrator of the working group to issue agendas and notes of the meetings for circulation to all group members.

All members are expected to take an active role in the process.

Any dispute within the working group will be referred to the Town Council for arbitration

Budget

A working group does not have delegated powers to spend money or apply for funding from external sources.

Review

These terms of reference are to be reviewed annually.