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TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR COMMITTEES – 2026-2027

1.0 Introduction

This document defines the Terms of Reference for standing committees of Sutton Parish Council (The Council).

These Terms of Reference are in two parts:

i. General Clauses which apply to all standing committees
ii. Specific Clauses which apply to particular standing committees.

Where a Specific Clause differs from a General Clause, the Specific Clause will take precedence.

2.0 General Clauses

2.1 The Terms of Reference set out in this document are approved by the full council, and subject to amendment at future Council meetings.

2.2 The committees will operate in accordance with the Standing Orders of the council.

2.3 Full council will appoint the members and the Chair of the Committee (if applicable) in accordance with Standing Order 4.d.vii.

2.4 Meetings will be called with a minimum three clear days' public notice which will not include the day on which the notice is issued or the day of the meeting.

2.5 Items to be discussed at the meetings are limited to those that are included on the agenda for the meeting.

2.6 The Council's standing orders will determine the date, place, notices and other procedures to regulate the committee.

2.7 The Committees' duties are defined and agreed by full council, which may vote, at any time, to modify a committee's powers.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Purpose of the Committee:

The consideration of local planning applications and other planning issues relating to the parish of Sutton.

The committee's duties are defined and agreed by full council, which may vote, at any time, to modify the committee's powers. The Planning Committee is defined as a Standing Committee pursuant to Standing Orders Section 4. The committee is appointed by and solely responsible to Sutton Parish Council.

Membership:

The Committee will consist of no fewer than five councillors and the Chair will preside over each meeting when in attendance. Any member of the Committee can preside by agreement in the Chair's absence. A quorum will be three members.

All other members of the Parish Council have the right to attend the meeting and make representations on the matters being discussed within the Public Forum.

Records of Proceedings:

Such meetings will be scheduled as and when planning applications are received and called by the Parish Clerk as Proper Officer to the Council. Written minutes will be taken to record the committee's decisions and will be received in draft form at the next full council meeting. Minutes will be formally signed at the next relevant Planning Committee Meeting.

The Proper Office will ask the Planning Officer of the Local Planning Authority to grant an extension of the time for consideration of an application if the application is received after the agenda has been set and cannot be amended and the closing date for comments is outside of the next 21 days.

The Parish 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. The Clerk will submit the Planning Committee's recommendations and supporting reasons to the Planning Authority or other relevant body and will ensure that communications arrive within the timescale required by the Planning Authority.

Should a Planning Application be received that is deemed to be potentially contentious, the Proper Officer will notify all members of the parish council and invite them to attend the Planning Committee meeting or submit any comments they wish to make prior to the relevant committee meeting.

Responsibilities:

The committee will be granted full delegated powers to make a council decision regarding responses to the appropriate authorities. It will therefore have the 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 Local Government Act 1972 Section 20, Schedule 16 or not, regardless of their size, controversial nature or effect on the parish.
   - In considering matters before it, the committee will take into account the council's vision for the parish, local opinion and comments from third parties. They will base their response on relevant or 'material' planning considerations e.g. (in order of weight) and will have mind to:
     - material considerations which include referring to particular policies that East Suffolk Council have adopted within their Local Plan
     - the most relevant version of the National Planning Policy Framework

   - The response will indicate whether the Council supports, has no comment or objects to the application and will be formed along the following lines:

     - support the application because it will have benefits for the parish, either now or in the future;
     - support the application but ask for details of the proposed development to be reconsidered and changed;
     - make "no comment", since the proposal's overall effect would be neutral or of little relevance to residents;
     - register an objection to the application, but suggest action that could be taken to address the objection, such as amending the proposal or attaching planning conditions or a planning obligation; or
     - request that the application be refused permission because of its adverse effects, which cannot be dealt with satisfactorily by using conditions or obligations.

b) In responding to all consultations regarding planning issues or issues that will have an impact on planning, the committee is authorised to make written representations or to elect a member to attend the hearing at which the proposal will be considered.

c) To make written representation or to elect a member to attend a hearing when an application is subject to appeal.

d) To monitor the general environment of the parish and report to the local planning authorities any potential planning breaches.

e) To consider and respond to any section 106 and/or Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) agreements in relation to developments within the parish.

f) To identify, research and review gaps in infrastructure.

g) To elicit and enable public support for its views about infrastructure and the role of the parish council in the development of a safe and sustainable community.

h) To approve requests for developer presentations, and agree date, time, location as per the adopted Pre-Application Protocol. All communication will be via the Proper Officer.

i) To comment on street naming where requested so to do by the local planning authority.

j) To attend planning training sessions as offered by the planning authority and to read all relevant documentation to ensure that the Committee is aware of current legislation and regulations.

k) To comment on licenses when requested so to do.

l) When appropriate, seek expert opinion and guidance from other parties.

m) To appoint sub-committees and/or working groups for specific purposes as required and determine their terms of reference.