

Rushmere St Andrew Parish Council – Internal Note

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PARISH COUNCIL POLICIES ON COMMITTEE & ADVISORY PANELS, REPRESENTATIVES, OFFICERS & BOARDS

1. INTRODUCTION

This document sets out, in Section 2, the structure, function and membership of the Committees and Advisory Panels of Rushmere St Andrew Parish Council (The PC). The decision to appoint Executive Committees or Advisory Panels rest with The PC. The Standing Orders [1] adopted by The PC shall take precedence over this document and shall be used by the Committees and Advisory Panels.

In Section 3 of the document the appointment of persons as members of external committees, associations or other bodies as representatives of the Parish Council is set out. It also defines the appointment of Councillors as members with special responsibilities.

With effect from 12th May 2015 the civil parish is split into two electoral wards, Village Ward, (three councillors) – Northern side of the A1214 and Tower Ward (12 councillors) – Southern Side of the A1214. This document reflects that change where consideration of the warding structure is relevant to the efficient and fair working of the Council.

Where an item is annotated **[**D P**]** it signifies that the particular Committee or Officer has the authority of the PC to take the indicated decision as a ‘Delegated Power’ without referral to the full Council. However, decisions so made, must be reported and documented at the earliest opportunity and will be subject to any overriding rules contained within Standing Orders [1] and Financial Regulations [3].

It should be noted that under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, all approved minutes of meetings are considered to be in the Public Domain.

2. POLICY ON EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES AND ADVISORY PANELS

The need for Committee and Advisory Panels is briefly stated as follows.

- To allow more effective use of PC time.
- To ensure issues are given due consideration without the pressures associated with a PC meeting.
- To broaden Councillors influence and expertise in The PC’s activities.

2.1 MEMBERSHIP OF STANDING COMMITTEE & ADVISORY PANELS

- The PC Chairperson and vice-Chairperson are ex-officio members of all Executive Committees, Sub-Committees, Advisory Panels & Working Parties and shall have full voting powers on those committees and advisory panels.
- The Planning & Development [Executive] Committee (P&D), and Public Amenities & Services [Executive] Committee (PA&S) shall each have, ideally, a minimum of eight members. These Executive Committees shall have a maximum complement of one less than the current number of serving full council members. Membership shall be a balanced mix of experienced and less

experienced Councillors. Membership should be reviewed at the Annual Meeting of The PC. Changes may be made at any time provided the bodies concerned are not weakened.

- The GP&F [Executive] Committee (GP&F) shall have one less than the total complement of serving members. (Assuming the Council is up to a full complement of 15 members then the GP&F will consist of 14 members).
- Each Executive Committee shall contain at least one member from the Village Ward.
- In order to balance workloads all Councillors must be a member of at least one other Committee/Panel in addition to the GP&F.
- Membership of any other convened Panels, Working-parties or Sub-Committees shall be at the agreed discretion of the governing Executive Committee and may include members of the public, by invitation, in accordance with the PC's Standing Orders. In the interests of practicality, membership of Sub-Committees, Working Parties and Advisory Panels should not exceed a total of 10 (including Ex-Officio) members unless specifically authorised by their governing Executive Committee. Where members of the public (non-council members) are included their voting rights shall be in accordance with the Local Government Act (LGA) 1972-S7.43 and NALC LTN 7. Councillors are requested to make their preferences known regarding membership of Executive Committees and Advisory panels to the Clerk. On this basis The PC Chairperson will determine membership distribution but with an eye towards balanced teams.
- All committee, sub-committee and advisory panel meetings shall require a quorum that will comprise three or one third of its members whichever is the greater, or as defined by Standing Order No. 3[u] which shall take precedence over this document. Note that the quorum total is inclusive of ex-officio members, i.e. PC Chairman and PC vice-Chairman.

2.2 GENERAL PURPOSES & FINANCE COMMITTEE (GP&F)

To be responsible for;

- considering and resolving issues-of-the-day **[**DP**]** referred to it as delegated powers of the PC (NOTE: excepting the functions of (i) determining overall and (ii) short term borrowing limits, (iii) determination of the amount of interest payable by it at rates variable by a lender controlled by external factors, (iv) the issue of a precept and (v) the approval of a lottery scheme. All as defined by LGA 1972.
- preparing the draft annual PC budget and recommended precept for submission to The PC for approval; **[**DP**]**
- monitoring overall expenditure and giving financial guidance to The PC; **[**DP**]**
- general administration of the Parish Council **[**DP**]**
- The Cemetery Management Advisory Panel (CMAP) **[**D P**]**

The GP&F Committee shall meet on alternate months (normally second Thursday, excepting October when it will be the third Thursday) throughout the year and during months not normally occupied by a PC Meeting. The GP&F Committee meeting is a public meeting and subject to the same procedural requirements as for a full Parish Council meeting and outlined in references [1] & [2].

The GP&F Committee will elect a member as its Chairperson at the first meeting after the Annual Meeting of The PC.

A report of the GP&F Committee's activities will be made to each regular meeting of The PC by its Chairperson or nominee. A copy of the unapproved GP&F minutes will be circulated to all councillors along with the agenda for the subsequent months PC meeting.

2.3 PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (P&D)

To be responsible for;

- determining the response to planning applications; **[** DP **]**
- developing policy and decisions regarding area development matters, District Council policy and plans and like issues. **[** DP **]**
- considering and resolving issues-of-the-day **[**DP**]** referred to it as devolved powers of the PC (NOTE: excepting the functions of (i) determining overall and (ii) short term borrowing limits, (iii) determination of the amount of interest payable by it at rates variable by a lender of controlled by external factors, (iv) the issue of a precept and (v) the approval of a lottery scheme. All as defined by LGA 1972.

The following procedures will be adopted in dealing with P&D matters.

- a) The Clerk (or nominee) will be responsible for notifying the SCDC Planning Services of the recommendations of the P&D to any given planning application.
- b) Each meeting of the P&D will report and record any SCDC planning decisions notified to the PC since the previous meeting of the P&D.
- c) A copy of the minutes from each P&D meeting will be circulated as soon as available to all councillors along with the agenda for subsequent PC, GP&F, PA&S and P&D meetings as appropriate. Note: These circulated minutes may be 'unapproved' or 'approved' depending on timing.
- d) A report of the P&D Committee's activities will be made to each regular meeting of The PC by its Chairperson or nominee.
- e) P&D Committee's financial matters that have been identified within The PC agreed annual budget can be carried out by the P&D **[**DP**]**.
- f) The P&D Committee shall meet when determined by its Chairperson in consultation with the Clerk and as required to satisfy planning application response times.
- g) The P&D Committee meeting is a public meeting and subject to the same procedural requirements as for a full Parish Council meeting and outlined in references [1] & [2].
- h) The P&D will elect a member as its Chairperson at the first meeting after the Annual Meeting of The PC.

2.4 PARISH AMENITIES & SERVICES COMMITTEE (PA&S)

To be responsible for;

- maintenance and development of allotments, foot-paths, Public Open Spaces (POS), ponds, street furniture, tree planting, Local Nature Reserves (LNR) and general Parish environmental issues. **[**D P**]**
- Allotments Management Advisory Panel (AMAP)
- considering and resolving issues-of-the-day **[**D P**]** referred to it as devolved powers of the PC (NOTE: excepting the functions of (i) determining overall and (ii) short term borrowing limits, (iii) determination of the amount of interest payable by it at rates variable by a lender of controlled by external factors, (iv) the issue of a precept and (v) the approval of a lottery scheme. All as defined by LGA 1972.

The following procedures will be adopted in dealing with PA&S matters.

- a) PA&S Committee matters that have been identified within the PC agreed annual budget can be carried out by the Committee and the matter recorded at the next PC Meeting **[**D P**]**.
- b) A copy of the minutes from each PA&S Committee meeting will be circulated as soon as available to all councillors along with the agenda for subsequent PC, GP&F and PA&S meetings as appropriate. Note: These circulated minutes may be ‘unapproved’ or ‘approved’ depending on timing.
- c) A report of the PA&S Committee’s activities will be made to each regular meeting of The PC by its Chairperson or nominee.
- d) The PA&S Committee shall normally meet on the third Thursday of the same month in which the GP&F meets. The PA&S Committee may also meet for additional meetings as determined by its Chairperson in consultation with the Clerk (or assistant) There shall be a minimum of six meetings per annum.
- e) The PA&S Committee meeting is a public meeting and subject to the same procedural requirements as for a full Parish Council meeting and outlined in references [1] & [2].
- f) The PA&S Committee will elect a member as its Chairperson at the first meeting after the Annual Meeting of The PC.

2.5 CEMETERY MANAGEMENT ADVISORY PANEL (CMAP)

To be responsible for;

- The provision of a burial service as a ‘Burial Authority’ governed by statute. **[**D P**]**
- Maintaining a long-term policy towards amenity and management of the Lawn Cemetery.
- Acting as an advisory body to The Parish Council on cemetery and regulatory matters.
- Keeping the Lawn Cemetery in a neat and tidy condition by appropriate management of maintenance contracts. **[**D P**]**.
- Liaising with undertakers, stonemasons and clients.
- The Registrar of Burials.
- The Burials Register and it’s management and security.

The following procedures will be adopted in dealing with CMAP matters.

- a) The CMAP will report to the GP&F.
- b) A report of the CMAP activities will be made to the GP&F by its Chairperson or nominee at the next available meeting.
- c) To receive the report from the Registrar of Burials and a Cemetery account financial report from the Clerk at every meeting.
- d) Review and recommend annually to the GP&F a list of charges for the provision of all services.
- e) Review the Regulations for the Lawn Cemetery and recommend amendments to the GP&F as appropriate.
- f) Publish a current list of charges and Regulations. Send to local undertakers and masons.
- g) In handling communications with customers to recognise all proposals and issues have to be considered and settled with sensitivity in a timely manner.

- h) The membership of the Panel shall be the Chairperson and vice-Chairperson of The Parish Council, the Chairperson of the GP&F, the Chairperson of the PA&S, and at least one other member (that may or may not be a Parish Councillor). It shall not have less than five members.
- i) Minutes of the CMAP meetings will be kept and approved at the subsequent meeting.
- j) A copy of the minutes from each CMAP meeting will be circulated as soon as available to all councillors along with the agenda for a subsequent GP&F meeting. Note: These circulated minutes may be ‘unapproved’ or ‘approved’ depending on timing.
- k) The CMAP shall meet when determined by its Chairperson in consultation with the Clerk (or assistant) but regularised meeting dates are recommended at least four times per year.
- l) The CMAP will elect a member as its Chairperson at the first meeting after the Annual Meeting of The PC.

2.6 ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT ADVISORY PANEL (AMAP)

To be responsible for;

- The management and administration of the PC Garden Allotments (‘The Allotments’) on behalf of the Parish Amenities and Services Committee. **[**D P**]**
- Maintenance of The Allotments including resolution of plot layouts and any tenant disputes. **[**D P**]**
- Advising on rents and water charges.
- Organising and administering the Annual Allotment Holders meeting
- Allocation of plots. **[**D P**]**

The following procedures will be adopted in dealing with AMAP matters.

- a) The AMAP will report to the PA&S.
- b) The membership of the Panel shall be the Chairperson and vice-Chairperson of The Parish Council, the Chairperson of the GP&F, Chairperson of the PA&S, The Allotment Manager, Allotment Deputy Manager (if one is appointed) and at least one other member (who may be a non-Councillor). It shall have not less than seven members
- c) A copy of the minutes from each AMAP meeting will be circulated as soon as available to all councillors along with the agenda for subsequent PC, GP&F and PA&S meetings as appropriate. Note: These circulated minutes may be ‘unapproved’ or ‘approved’ depending on timing.
- d) A report of the AMAP activities will be made to each regular meeting of PA&S by its Chairperson or nominee at the next available meeting.
- e) The AMAP shall meet when determined by its Chairperson in consultation with the Clerk (or assistant) but regularised meeting dates are recommended. It must meet a minimum of twice a year in addition to the Annual Allotment Holders Meeting.
- f) The AMAP will elect a member as its Chairperson at the first meeting after the Annual Meeting of The PC.

2.7 NEWSLETTER AND WEBSITE EDITORIAL ADVISORY PANEL (NWEAP)

The NWEAP shall as a Delegated Power **[**D P**]**:-

- a) **Be responsible for the preparation and production of a Parish Council Newsletter.**

- **Aims and content** of which are to report Parish Council, Local Government and Community Matters without editorial or personal opinion at least twice a year.
- **Reported content** shall be limited to local news and community interest articles with no party political bias.
- **External content** may be included from the police, district & county councils, local schools where there is a need to keep parishioner informed of events, safety, warnings, etc – again with no party political bias.
- **Advertising** is permitted against a table of fees according to the size of advert.
 - Fees shall be reviewed annually by the Panel and recommended to the GP&F for approval.
 - Advertising space shall be limited to approximately 25% of the total newsletter page count.
 - Profit making organisation may not advertise or submit articles for publication unless the appropriate fee is paid.
 - Advertising by registered charitable organisations will be considered at a reduced rate.
 - At the discretion of the Panel local public service organizations, Parish Halls-RSA, local churches etc shall be considered for free advertising.
- **Prior to Publication** the draft layout and content (including advertising) of the Newsletter shall be proof read and ratified by a majority of members of the NWEAP – Note: This exercise may be carried out via email with the Assistant Clerk collating responses for feedback to the nominated Newsletter copy and mark-up editor (currently Mr R Potter).
- **Publication of author details** shall be at the discretion of the author.

b) Maintain the Parish Council web-site including:-

- Councillor names and contact details.
- Details of committees and their membership.
- Parish Council Representatives.
- To report approved minutes of PC and Committee meetings.
- To advertise parish council and public meeting dates and venues as required.
- To include, from time to time, such information as shall be required and approved by the P.C. and its Committees.

c) Publish as required suitable articles for local news & community publications.

- Any such articles should be approved by the Chairman of the Parish Council [or Vice-Chairman in absentia] and Clerk [or Assistant Clerk in absentia]

d) Adopt the following procedures in dealing with NWEAP matters:-

- The NWEAP will report to the GP&F.
- The membership of the Panel shall be the Chairperson and vice-Chairperson of The Parish Council, the Chairperson of the GP&F, the Chairperson of the PA&S, and at least three other members (that may or may not be a Parish Councillor). It shall not have less than five members.

- Minutes of the NWEAP meetings will be kept and approved at the subsequent meeting. *EXPLANATORY NOTE: The requirement to keep minutes and report to the GP&F does not mean that material for publication must go before the GP&F prior to publication. The NWEAP is autonomous in that it takes the decision to publish material [**D P**]. The requirement for minutes is simply to ensure that those decisions are recorded.*
- A copy of the minutes from each NWEAP meeting will be circulated as soon as available to all councillors along with the agenda for a subsequent GP&F meeting. Note: These circulated minutes may be ‘unapproved’ or ‘approved’ depending on timing.
- The NWEAP shall meet when determined by its Chairperson in consultation with the Clerk (or Assistant) but regularised meeting dates are recommended at least twice per year.
- The NWEAP will elect a member as its Chairperson at the first meeting after the Annual Meeting of The PC.

2.8 COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE

To be responsible for;

- Resolving complaints received from members of the public, councillors or officers of the council
- Resolving complaints from other local authorities

Composition of the Complaints Committee:-

- To cater for sensitivities and possible contentious situations this committee will have different terms of reference to other standing committees.
- It will report to the full parish council
- The minimum numbers of members will be three
- In order to maintain impartiality there will be no permanent membership, but ‘senior’ councillors who have no involvement with the nature of the complaint will comprise the committee and be convened on a complaint by complaint basis.
- ‘Senior’ councillors are usually assumed to be the Chairman, vice-Chairman and Chairmen of any Parish Council standing committees.
- The Clerk or Assistant Clerk if not the subject of, or not involved in the matter of the complaint, will act as secretary to the committee, but will not be involved in the decision making process.
- The Parish Council policy document “Code of Practice for Local Councils in Handling Complaints.doc” contains full end-to-end details for managing the complaint process.

2.9 OTHER COMMITTEES ETC.

From time-to-time The PC may create further Standing Committees, Advisory panels, etc. likewise these bodies can create off-spring for specific purposes.

2.10 REPORT OF ACTIVITIES

All Councillors should be in possession of current minutes from each Committee/Panel and it should only be necessary for each Standing Committee, Advisory Panel Chairperson or nominee to report to

The PC, GP&F or PA&S as appropriate), on matters of clarification or issues arising in response to questions from members. It should not be necessary to give a verbatim account of activities.

2.11 BUDGETTING & FINANCIAL AUTHORITY

Each Executive Committee and Advisory Panel will produce a work/activity programme for the forthcoming financial year together with a recommended budget to support that programme. This programme & budget will be passed to the GP&F Committee at least 6 days before its December meeting.

At its December meeting, the GP&F Committee will consider all budgets and recommend a precept for the forthcoming financial year for approval at the January meeting of the PC.

Executive Committee and Advisory Panel Chairpersons can authorise expenditure after approval of their Committee/ Advisory Panel budgets, but within the constraints of the agreed annual budget **[**D P**]**.

3.0 POLICY ON REPRESENTATIVES, OFFICERS & BOARDS

3.1 APPLICATION

This section applies to the Parish Council's

- [i] Community Emergency Adviser.
- [ii] Representative on the Suffolk Association of Local Councils.
- [iii] Public Transport Liaison Officer.
- [iv] Representatives on the Parish Halls-Rushmere St Andrew, Management Committee.
- [v] Public Footpath Liaison Officer.
- [vi] Parish Tree Warden.
- [vii] Registrar of Burials
- [viii] SCDC Woodbridge & District ASB Tasking Meeting representative

3.2 PC APPOINTEES

- a) Each post may be supported by more than one person.
- b) Positions [i], [ii], [iii] [iv] & [vi] must be held by Parish Councillors.
- c) Deputy Community Emergency Advisers may be members of the public.
- d) Potential appointees are invited to make known their interests in a particular position to The Clerk to The Parish Council
- e) Nominees or re-appointees to each position shall be confirmed each year by The PC at the Annual Meeting of The PC.

3.3 BRIEFING OF APPOINTEES

Each appointee [or Board] shall seek guidance in their activities on behalf of The PC as follows.

- a) Positions [i], [ii] & [vii] from the General Purposes and Finance Committee.
- b) Positions [iii], [v] & [vi] from the Parish Amenities & Service Committee.
- c) Positions [iv] & [viii] from the Parish Council.

3.4 REPORTING OF APPOINTEES

Appointees [or Boards] shall report at appropriate times on activity within their remit to their guiding body [Section 3.3].

REFERENCES

- References:**
- [1] 2013 NALC Model Standing Orders for Local Councils – Updated & Adopted by the PC 14th April 2016
 - [2] Local Council Administration, Tenth Edition. Charles Arnold-Baker OBE. LexisNexis
 - [3] NALC 2016 Financial Regulations – Adopted by the PC 10th March 2016

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| Doc. | Issue 1 | 07/05/07 | New Draft document to supercede document PCNOTE01.DOC, Dated 11/09/07 |
| History: | Issue 2 | 14/08/08 | New document to supercede PCNOTE01 and PCNOTE 02. Reworded some sections. Adopted by PC |
| | Issue 3 | Mar'11 | New Draft document to supersede all of the above documents and align with the new PC Standing Orders. |
| | Issue 4 | 14/04/11 | New document adopted and approved for issue |
| | Issue 5 | 06/11/12 | Corrections and clarifications to sections 2.1 and 2.6 & other minor anomalies |
| | Issue 6 | 12/11/12 | Approved at PC meeting 08/11/12 with one further change to Sect 2.6 (add - frequency of meetings |
| | Issue 7 | 14/05/15 | Additions to section 1 regarding warding and devolved powers plus references throughout to DPs. Changes to remit of NWEAP |
| | Issue 8 | 12/05/16 | Updated references to SO and Finance Regs. Corrected S2.1 1 st bullet point & S2.4d. |
| | Issue 9 | 28/02/17 | Re-written section 2.7 Newsletter & Website Editorial Advisory Panel (NWEAP) |
| | V 9.1 | | Updated reference [2] Updated 2.11 with revised dates for budget & precept approvals |
| | V 9.2 | 02/03/17 | Updated 3.1&3.2 Removed ref to 12PT & added SCDC ASB. Further changes to 2.7a |