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**Warwick Town Council**

Terms of Reference – Plans Committee

The Plans Committee is a standing committee of Warwick Town Council and will operate in accordance with the Council’s Standing Orders and current legislation.

1. **Membership & Voting**

* The Plans Committee will comprise of six elected Members of Warwick Town Council appointed by the full Council at the Annual Meeting of the Council.
* The Committee will elect its Chair and Deputy Chair at its first meeting of the Council year.
* The Mayor will have automatic membership as Ex Officio but no voting rights.
* The Assistant Town Clerk will attend the Plans Committee meetings in an advisory capacity.
* Any vacancies on the Committee can be filled by the full Council at one of its meetings.
* Each Member of the Committee has a vote and can move or second a motion.
* The Chair has an original vote and an additional casting vote which he or she can but does not have to use.
* Other non-Members may be invited to join the Committee. These persons do not have the right to vote or to move or second a motion.

1. **Purpose of the Committee**

The Plans Committee will debate issues in detail concerning planning and local planning applications and will make observations to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) in accordance with planning guidance and policy on behalf of the Council, which is a statutory consultee.

1. **Aims and Objectives**

The role of the Committee is to ensure the long-term interests of Warwick are taken into account where planning issues are concerned.

The Committee will:

* Consider and agree responses to all planning applications submitted within the Warwick Town boundary, and any pertinent cross-boundary planning applications as received from the LPA which is Warwick District Council.
* Make representations at the LPA’s Planning Committee where the Council’s response to a planning application has been contrary to that of the LPA.
* Respond if necessary to any relevant planning appeals submitted within the Warwick Town boundary or cross-boundary.
* Draft the Council’s response in relation to the ongoing Part 1 South Warwickshire Local Plan and any other proposed changes to existing Development Plan Documents or Supplementary Planning Guidance, as and when the Council’s observations are sought.
* Draft the Council’s response in relation to public consultations on the National Planning Policy Framework and any other relevant planning legislation.
* Carry out a planning enforcement role locally, by reporting to the LPA any alleged incidents of unauthorised development, or any alleged contraventions of conditions associated with authorised developments.
* Consider applications relating to trees and tree preservation orders and convey comments to the LPA.
* Review annually these Terms of Reference for approval at the Annual Meeting of the Council
* Keep abreast of proposed and incoming changes to planning legislation.

1. **Meeting Arrangements and Frequency**

* The Committee will meet monthly with meetings scheduled for each year at the beginning of the calendar year in question.
* In the absence of the Chair and the Deputy Chair, a Member must be elected to chair the meeting.
* Each meeting must be quorate before going ahead (minimum of three Members to be present).
* Other elected Members may attend meetings to make representations on agenda items but shall not be entitled to vote.

1. **Responses**

* The Assistant Town Clerk will communicate to the LPA via their planning portal the Plans Committee’s responses in respect of planning applications considered.
* Wherever possible, a member of the Committee is to be delegated to attend the LPA’s Planning Committee to make representations as necessary.
* Where an application is subject to appeal, the Committee is authorised to make written representation or to elect a member of the Committee to attend the hearing.

1. **Reporting and Accountability**

Planning applications shall be circulated to Plans Committee members as they are received and at least five days before the next scheduled Plans Committee meeting.

As a Standing Committee of Warwick Town Council, the Plans Committee will publish minutes of its meetings on the Council’s website. The Committee will refer matters to the Council which are outside its Terms of Reference together with any recommendations.

Members of the public have the right of public participation at meetings of this Committee as set out in in the Standing Orders and in line with the Council’s Guidance on Public Speaking at Council Meetings: <https://www.warwicktowncouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/Public-Speaking-2020.pdf>

1. **Urgent Matters**

The Committee will provide two elected Members (normally the Chair and the Deputy Chair) to be consulted by the Town Clerk to deal with urgent matters which may have a legal or financial implication for the Council and time restraints prevent the normal arrangement of a Council or Committee meeting.

Katherine Geddes – Assistant Town Clerk

18th August 2023