

PORTLAND TOWN COUNCIL

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**Terms of Reference for the Portland Town Council
Planning, Highways and Licensing Advisory Committee**

As approved at the meeting of Portland Town Council held on 21st May 2025

Name of Committee: Planning, Highways & Licensing Advisory Committee

Purpose

The purpose of the Planning, Highways and Licensing Advisory Committee is to review and provide feedback on planning issues relative to The Town Council's area of operation. Also, to create, review, comment and report on matters relating to Portland Town Council's Neighbourhood Plan. The Committee will also lead on the consideration of matters or policy relating to Highways and Licensing.

Scope

The Planning, Highways and Licensing Advisory Committee shall have oversight of matters relating to:-

- Planning applications within and affecting the Council's area of operation
- The Neighbourhood Plan
- General Planning Policy, both at County and National level
- Highway issues and Traffic Regulatory Matters
- Licensing matters
- Legal issues relating to Planning matters

Summary of Responsibilities

The Planning, Highways and Licensing Advisory Committee shall have delegated authority to: -

- Within the required time frame, consider and review all planning applications within the parish boundary, as submitted by applicants to Dorset Council and subsequently offered out to Portland Town Council for consultation.
- Agree a collective response from the Town Council in respect of each planning consultation received, framing all such responses within national and local Planning Policies, the Local Plan, and the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Within the consultation deadline, provide a formal Consultee response to Dorset Council on all planning applications received for consideration. This shall include applications for the re-routing footpaths.
- To create, review, comment and report on matters relating to Portland Town Council's Neighbourhood Plan.
- Invite relevant building developers, agencies and associations to present written and in-person reports or presentations to Committee, or full Council meetings to ensure any proposed developments are fully understood by Councillors before planning responses are formulated.

- Where consulted, provide, within the required timeframes, a formal response in respect of pavement licences submitted to Dorset Council by local businesses.
- Bring to the attention of Dorset Council, as the Local Planning Authority, any matter under its jurisdiction relevant to parish, county or national planning matters. This shall include any breaches of planning legislation or permissions granted brought to the attention of Portland Town Council.
- Keep under constant review matters relating to local highways, such matters including designated on-street parking, or amendments to any such permissions or restrictions.
- Consider local parking issues relative to residents, including where there are safety concerns, and bring appropriate matters to the attention of Dorset Council as the Highways Authority.
- When necessary, determine the need for potential (temporary) Traffic Regulation Orders and bring such requests to the attention of Dorset Council, as the Highways Authority.
- Commission traffic surveys (to a maximum total annual budget of £1,000) and recommend 20mph highway speed limit restrictions to Dorset Council.
- Provide a response to any consultation relative to TROs being considered by Dorset Council.
- Lead on matters relating to the development of local transport policies, and to work in partnership with Dorset Council, where possible, to achieve preferred outcomes for local residents.
- Make representations to Dorset Council where alternative arrangements for traffic management are deemed necessary, or desirable, to enable effective control of vehicle numbers and flow.
- Make representation to Dorset Council on licensing matters.
- Report on, or make recommendations to, full Council on relevant matters relating to the Committee's full range of activities.
- To have due consideration of Climate and Ecological impacts including the Town Councils adopted Bio-Diversity Strategy associated with decisions made by the Committee.

Status

The Planning, Highways and Licensing Advisory Committee is a fully constituted Committee. It has elected membership, with one vote per Councillor member. All Councillors are welcome to attend any meetings of the Committee and may speak during public speaking time.

Membership

The Committee will comprise 8 Councillors, elected annually at the Annual Council meeting, or at any other Council meeting should an interim need arise. Where possible, Membership will be spread across the Town's electoral Wards to enable even and fair representation.

Additional members of the public may be co-opted, by full Council resolution, to support the technical aspects of the Planning function and National and local Planning Policy. Any such co-opted members will retain an advisory role and will not be granted voting rights.

Should any Committee Member resign, the Chair will consult with the other members and, if it is deemed necessary, seek another Councillor to fill the vacancy, which shall be decided by election at the subsequent Council meeting.

Operation of the Committee

- The Committee has power to operate only as set out in these Terms of Reference.

- Matters considered by the Committee, where delegated authority does not exist shall be referred, by way of recommendation, to the subsequent Full Council meeting. They shall be enacted only once approved by a formal Council resolution.
- Meetings of the Committee will be monthly (except August) as and when designated by the Chair and subject to availability.
- The Chair of the Committee, and Vice Chair if appropriate will be elected by the Committee at its first meeting following the Annual Meeting of the Council.
- If the Chair is not able to attend a meeting, the Vice , where applicable, shall manage the meeting's proceedings. If the Vice is not present, another Member will be approved, by majority vote, to conduct proceedings for the duration of the meeting in question.
- The Committee will make decisions by consensus demonstrated by a simple majority vote of those members of the Committee present at any meeting.
- In the case of a tied vote, the Chairman will cast the deciding vote.
- The Clerk, Deputy Clerk, or other appropriate staff member will prepare and circulate to Councillors an agenda by email for each meeting, at least 3 clear days prior to meeting, and will publish the agenda on the Council website and noticeboard.
- Minutes of each meeting will be produced by the Clerk, Deputy Clerk, or any other nominated Officer. They will be circulated in draft to the chair of the Committee promptly after each meeting and will be published to the Council's website.
- The Terms of Reference, agendas, and minutes of the Committee's meetings will be made available to Councillors and the public as soon as practicable.
- Any amendments to these Terms of Reference may only be by formal resolution at a full Council meeting.
- The Chair of the Committee will briefly report to the Full Council, as to the progress of any material matters under its consideration.
- Representatives from external groups concerned with planning issues may speak only as members of the public unless invited to make a presentation as part of the formal agenda. A maximum of 3 minutes speaking per person will be allowed, with public speaking time not exceeding 30 minutes in total.
- Members of the public in attendance will be granted the opportunity to address the Committee through standing agenda item for public speaking. This shall be line with the Council's Standing Orders. A maximum of 3 minutes speaking per person will be allowed, with public speaking time not exceeding 30 minutes in total.

Working Groups

As a means of enabling effective working practices, the Planning, Highways and Licensing Advisory Committee may elect to periodically set up specific Working Groups with a defined brief relating to the remit of the Committee. Any such groups will act as informally and meet at a frequency of members' choice between formal Committee meetings, to review ideas and initiatives, formulate plans and create reports for consideration by the Committee.

Working Groups will have advisory status only and will rely on the decisions of the Committee, or full Council where appropriate, to inform actions to be taken. Discussions and recommendations from all Working Groups will be summarised for the attention of the Committee as and when it meets.

General

- The Committee has delegated authority from the Council to incur expenses relating to the commissioning of traffic surveys to a maximum budget of **£1,000** from the relevant approved budget. No other expenditure may be permitted without express approval from the Council.

In the event that more than £1,000 is required, the Committee will seek the express approval of the Council before proceeding.