



Andover Town Council

Approve recommendations 1 to 3 inclusive below.

Item
No.
10

To: Full Council

From: Town Mayor and Acting Town Clerk

Date of Report: 10 June 2025

Decisions - to approve:

1. a small Policies Working Group be established to:
 - 1.1. carry out a strategic review of Andover Town Council policies, procedures, protocols, schemes and statements;
 - 1.2. make recommendations to the relevant Committee about streamlining documents, ensuring they are simple, straightforward, and not unduly bureaucratic;
 - 1.3. determine priority policies for immediate review; and
2. the alignment of policies to relevant Committees; and
3. draft Terms of Reference for the Policies Working Group shown at **Appendix B**.

Background:

At Full Council on 7 May 2025, it was resolved that a policy review is undertaken by a small working group, in line with the commitment “to ensure they are simple, straightforward and not unduly bureaucratic”. Members noted that a detailed report would be brought to this meeting, 18 June 2025 ([C043/05/25](#) and [C044/05/25](#)).

Advice:

According to advice from Hampshire Association of Local Councils (HALC), a town council should have core policies and procedures in place to help carry out functions effectively, such as meeting procedures, financial processes, training, complaints, and employment.

The adopted [Andover Town Business Plan 2025-27](#) includes setting justifiable budgets to deliver cost effective services as a priority goal. This includes, at 3.9, reviewing our policies, procedures and protocols to ensure they are simple, straightforward, and not unduly bureaucratic. This will, in turn, support efficient service delivery.

Furthermore, our ambition to sign the Civility and Respect Pledge and apply to the Local Council Award Scheme, also set out in the Business Plan at priority goal 5, means we will need to demonstrate good governance through up-to-date policies and procedures.

Andover Town Council has core documents reviewed annually by Full Council. These include Standing orders, Financial Regulations, Scheme of Delegation, Code of Conduct and corporate risk assessments.

Andover Town Council currently has a mixture of policies, procedures, protocols, schemes and statements, some of which are overdue for review. Some of these documents are complex and require considerable officer knowledge and expertise to ensure they are fit for purpose. Our policies also need to protect the Council from challenge in the light of continually changing legislation. The current process of reviewing documents in date order and initially by a single officer is therefore unsustainable.

When compared with HALC’s recommended core policies and procedures, as set out in **Appendix A**, there are some duplicates and gaps.

Appendix A also sets out which Committee should have oversight of which policy for approval. Some overarching policies should be reviewed at Full Council rather than at Committee.

Noting that the grants policy is currently under review, it is recommended that a small Policies Working Group be established to:

- carry out a strategic review of our policies, procedures, protocols, schemes and statements;
- make recommendations to the relevant Committee about streamlining documents, ensuring they are simple, straightforward, and not unduly bureaucratic; and
- determine priority policies for immediate review.

Draft Terms of Reference are set out in Appendix B, in line with the Council's [Working Group Protocol](#).

Legal implications

Some policies are driven by legislative requirements, such as data protection, freedom of information, and equality. Others relate to our statutory functions, governance and behaviour.

Pertinent legislation:

Local Government Act 1972¹, Local Government and Rating Act 1997², Freedom of Information Act 2000^{3,4}
Data Protection Act 2018 (incorporating GDPR)⁵, Equality Act 2010⁶, Localism Act 2011⁷

Financial implications

There are no financial implications of establishing a Policies Working Group to help officers carry out a strategic review of our policies.

Recommendations:

To approve:

1. a small Policies Working Group be established to:
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¹ [Local Government Act 1972](#)

² [Local Government and Rating Act 1997](#)

³ [Freedom of Information Act 2000](#)

⁴ [The Freedom of Information Act 2000 \(Amendment\) \(EU Exit\) Regulations 2018](#)

⁵ [Data Protection Act 2018](#)

⁶ [Equality Act 2010](#)

⁷ [Localism Act 2011](#)

Appendix A

Policies, procedures, protocols, schemes and statements

HALC recommended core policies and procedures mapped against Andover Town Council's policies

HALC recommended core policies	ATC policies	Recommended responsible Committee
Publication Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Freedom of Information policy Publication scheme 	Full Council
Grant aid policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defibrillator policy Grants policy 	Community and Events
Complaints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaints procedure and policy Officer and customer policy Office policy 	Policy and Resources
Data protection and Freedom of Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data Protection policy Privacy and cookie policy Privacy statement Freedom of Information Policy 	Full Council
Meetings policies and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recording meetings policy Working Group protocol 	Full Council
Officer / Member protocol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Officer / Member protocol Protocol policy Civic protocol Employee / Councillor protocol 	Full Council
Training and development policy		Policy and Resources
Publicity and social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Media policy Publication policy 	Community and Events
Human resources documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capability policy Dignity at work policy Disciplinary policy Equality and Diversity policy Expenses policy Flexible working policy Grievance procedure 	HR Sub- Committee

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maternity leave and pay policy • Parental leave policy • Pay policy • Pension policy • Whistleblowing policy • Sickness and absence 	
Health and safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and safety policy 	Full Council
Terms of Reference for committees and sub-committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allotments Committee • Communities and Events Committee • HR Sub-Committee • Planning Committee • Policy and Resources Committee • Wardens ToR • Pride 2025 WG 	Relevant Committees
Other HALC recommendations		
Statement of community engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication and involvement policy 	Community and Events
Communication strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website accessibility statement 	Community and Events
Procedures for emergencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding 	Full Council
Equal opportunities policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	Policy and Resources
Other Andover Town Council policies		
Allotments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allotment rules and regulations • Allotment allocation policy • Bee keeping policy • Chicken keeping policy • Out of hours for response to allotment issues 	Allotments
Business Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ATC Business Plan 2025-27 	Full Council
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning observations 	Planning
SIDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SIDS policy 	Planning
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-fraud and corruption • Risk policy • Asset loan policy 	Policy and Resources

Appendix B

Policies Working Group

Terms of reference

The Policies Working Group will

1. carry out a strategic review of our policies, procedures, protocols, schemes and statements;
2. make recommendations to the relevant Committee about streamlining documents, ensuring they are simple, straightforward, and not unduly bureaucratic;
3. determine priority policies for immediate review;

The Policies Working Group is sponsored by the Full Council. It will operate in accordance with [Andover Town Council's Working Group Protocol](#).

The Policies Working Group will report its findings and make recommendations to Full Council by **17 September 2025**.

Membership is as follows:

Chair:

Councillors:

Non-councillors:

Officer support as appropriate: