



INTRODUCTION

Andover Town Council and any of its committees can set up a working group, or groups, to carry out tasks as defined by the Council or the Committee. **(SO 4f)**

Andover Town Council is committed to engaging with and listening to residents, tax payers and business and will therefore provide and widely promote the opportunity for non-councillors to join any working groups. The advantage of working groups is the ability to give particular topics much more time outside agenda-driven meetings.

PURPOSE OF WORKING GROUPS

The purpose of working groups formed from both councillors and members of the public is to discuss issues, explore options and develop plans, and then report back to the Council or sponsoring Committee with recommendations. Subsequently, Council or the sponsoring Committee may task a working group to deliver its plans.

As the role of a working group is simply to present the Council or sponsoring Committee with findings and recommendations, working groups have no decision-making powers nor budget.

Once a working group's work has been completed, the working group will be disbanded.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

When setting up a working group, the Council or Committee will task the sponsoring Committee Chair to set the working group with clear terms of reference for it regarding objectives, scope, outcome(s) and timeframe.

A working group's terms of reference will refer to this protocol and the name of the Committee to which the working group reports.

All members of the working group will sign the terms of reference to confirm acceptance.

The Council will publish the terms of reference and membership on the Council's website.

The number of councillors able to join a working group will be decided at the time of its formation but it must consist of at least two councillors. A quorum for any meeting of a working group will be three members, at least one of whom must be a councillor.

The working group will notify the Council or Committee of the name of the Chair once appointed at the first meeting.

A model terms of reference is set out below.

ROLE OF THE SPONSORING COMMITTEE

The role of the Council or sponsoring Committee is to consider and question the recommendations put to it by the working group before making any decision. The onus is on the working group to provide the Council or sponsoring Committee with as much information as possible to ensure it can make an informed decision on recommendations.

A working group will be accountable to its sponsoring Committee unless agreement is made, due to expediency and subject to agreement via email of a majority of members of that sponsoring Committee, for recommendations to be made directly to Council.

CONDUCT



Working groups do not meet in public and therefore the Council’s Standing Orders are not applicable. However, the Code of Conduct still applies, and declarations of pecuniary and other interests will be required at each meeting.

All working groups will follow all relevant Council policies.

The Town Clerk will provide officer support as appropriate. All documents, records produced and emails relating to the work of the working group will be retained in accordance with council policy and procedure.

MODEL TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A WORKING GROUP

Xxxx Working Group

Terms of reference

The xxxx Working Group will research options and develop plans for xxxxxx.

The xxx Working Group is sponsored by the xxxx Committee. It will operate in accordance with Andover Town Council’s Working Group Protocol.

The xxx Working Group will report its findings and make recommendations to xxx Committee by xx xxxx 2024.

Membership is as follows:

Chair	Name	Signature	Date
Chair			
Councillors			
Non-councillors			
Officer support as appropriate			