



# NORTH WALSHAM TOWN COUNCIL

## Roles within the Council

### Councillors

---

A Councillors main role is to represent the views and interests of the residents within their elected ward, and to help provide, maintain and develop the facilities within the Community. Councillors are elected for a 4 year period or by-elected/co-opted within this 4 year period.

Being a Town Councillor is a voluntary position and is both rewarding and a privilege. Councillors have a statutory duty to attend a minimum of 3 Full Council meetings within a 12-month period. If a Councillor fails to attend any Council meetings for 6 months, they cease to be a Councillor (unless apologies given have been accepted). Individual Councillors cannot make any decisions outside the Full Council or Committee meetings, unless it is with the Clerk and permitted by the Councils Standing Orders.

Councillors should ensure the Council is properly controlled, by reading and abiding by the Councils Code of Conduct and Standing Orders. All agenda's and related documentation should be read prior to the meetings, so Councillors can participate and make fair decisions based on the facts. At the meetings they should listen to others and vote democratically by a show of hand. Councillors can abstain from decisions if they do not have a view or cannot decide. Councillors should only speak once during a debate unless, it's a right of reply, to make an amendment to the motion, a point of order, a personal explanation or to comment on an amendment made by another councillor, and for no longer than 5 minutes.

All new Councillors are legally required to sign a *Declaration of Acceptance of Office* form before taking up their position of Councillor and legally attending their first Council meeting. They must also complete a register of interest form within 28 days. and abide by the Councils Code of Conduct which is in line with the 7 Nolan principals – ***Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty and Leadership.***

### The Council

---

The Council was first created by statute and it is a corporate body, a legal entity separating it from its members. The Council has **duties** (what a Council must do legally) and **powers** (what a Council can do by an act of parliament), some of its duties & powers may be delegated to a committee, sub-committee or the Proper Officer but not to an individual Councillor.

#### Duties:-

- Elect a Chairman of the Council
- Appoint a Responsible Finance Office
- Appoint an internal Auditor
- Hold an annual Full Council Meeting
- Adopt a code of Conduct
- Provide more allotments if demand is unsatisfied and it is reasonable to do so

#### Powers include:-

- Hold an annual Town meeting
- Maintain public footpaths
- Provide and maintain seats and bins
- Provide and maintain Cemeteries
- Provide and maintain Street lights
- Provide and maintain Bus shelters

The Council represents the Town. It works for the good of the local community representing their interests, providing, maintaining, and allocating facilities within that community. It works closely with volunteer and community groups to develop and facilitate projects for the benefit of the local community. It also works in partnership with other local authorities and agencies to get the best outcomes.

A Council has a duty to hold an annual Council meeting each year in May, where a new Chairman is elected by the serving Councillors, it also has a duty to have at least 3 other Council meetings during the year. The Council has the power to hold an annual Town meeting between 1 March and 1 June every year, this is not a

Council meeting but a meeting for the Town's residents to inform them of what the Council has achieved during the year.

## The Chair/Mayor

---

The Mayor is elected each year by serving Councillors at the Annual Council meeting, this must take place during the month of May, it should be the first order of business on the agenda and the newly elected Chair must sign the '*Declaration of Acceptance Office Order 1990*' before they can take up office.

The Mayor presides as Chair of the Full Council meetings, leading the meeting by introducing the agenda items, deciding in which order members speak, preserving the order and making clear the resolutions/decisions made. If an agenda vote is tied the Chair can have the casting vote by voting again. The Chair's decision on a point of order is final and they also have the power to adjourn/suspend the meeting if necessary.

The Mayor liaises with the Town Clerk about items to be placed on the Council meeting agenda and must make sure the Council meeting is quorate (1/3 of total Councillors), this means for NWTC that at least 6 Councillors must attend. They can also call an extraordinary Council meeting at any time if they think it is necessary, and should personally sign the summons.

The Town Mayor represents the Council by being its public face. They promote the Town and can speak on behalf of the Council, attending and hosting Civic functions like the Civic Service and Civic Dinner.

## The Clerk

---

The Clerk is the Proper Officer of the Council, in law, appointed by the Council. They provide advice and administrative support, ensuring that the Council conducts its business lawfully, carrying out the day-day running of the Council and implementing the decisions made by Council or Committee. They are not a secretary and remain answerable to the Council as a whole, not any individual Councillor.

Legally the Council can delegate decisions to the Clerk, this is because they are a trusted professional officer, whose objectivity allows them to act for the Council. The Clerk should attend all Council meetings where possible and ensure all agendas, minutes, members' attendance records and annual accounts are available for public inspection and published on the Council's website for transparency.

Any proposed agenda items need to be received by the Clerk, 7 clear days before the meeting, the Clerk liaises with the appropriate Chair on agenda items but retains the final decision. The Clerk signs the agenda summons, noting the time, date & place and makes sure the notice is publicly displayed three clear days before the meeting. The Minutes are the Clerk's record of decisions made at the meeting along with any declarations of interest, these should be approved and signed at the following meeting by the Chair. Extraordinary meeting agendas should be signed by the person who calls the extraordinary meeting.

## The Responsible Finance Officer

---

The Responsible Finance Officer is responsible for the finances of the Town Council. It is their responsibility to report all financial details to the full Council and external auditor. Roles include:

- Day to day financial management of the Town Council
- Monitoring and balancing the Council's accounts and preparing records for audit purposes and VAT.
- Preparing the Town Council's annual Financial Statements in accordance with applicable legislation and guidelines
- Preparing monthly income and expenditure for presentation to Council meetings
- To ensure that the Town Council complies with the Financial Regulations