

Frome Town Council Constitution

Chapter 1 Introduction

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INTRODUCTION

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1. Introduction to the Constitution of Frome Town Council

- 1.1. Frome Town Council is responsible for several local services.
- 1.2. It must provide some of these services by law; others are discretionary.
- 1.3. Frome Town Council is a statutory corporation - that is, a body created by government under an Act of Parliament.
- 1.4. The Constitution is the Council's internal rule book. It sets out how the Council will operate and how decisions are made. Some of the processes are required by law, while others are a matter for the Council to choose.
- 1.5. The Constitution also contains procedural rules which apply to the conduct of meetings of the Council.
- 1.6. In order to ensure the sound management of the Council's financial affairs and good corporate governance, the Constitution includes financial regulations and rules that apply to all contracts for works and the supply of goods and services to the Council.
- 1.7. The Constitution is a living document. It is kept under continual review and is re-examined annually by Council.
- 1.8. The Constitution is split into several different chapters which form the Constitution for Frome Town Council:

Chapter	Content	Reviewed
1	Introduction to Constitution and contents	n/a
2	Standing Orders	Annually
3	Financial Regulations	Annually
4	Staff Handbook	Annually
4a	Organisational Change Policy	Every two years
4b	Staff Expenses Policy	Every two years
5	Training Statement of Intent	Every two years
6	Civic Protocol	Every two years
7	Councillor and Staff Protocol – Principles of Good Practice	Every two years
8	RFO Protocol	Every two years
9	Councillor Code of Conduct	Annually
10	Complaints Policy	Every two years
11	Health and Safety Policy	Every two years
12	Risk Management Strategy	Every two years
12a	Risk Register	Annually
14	Access to Information Policy	Every two years
15	Information Policy	Every two years
16	Publication Scheme	Every two years
17	Information Retention and Disposal Policy	Every two years
18	Data Protection Policy	Every two years
18a	GDPR Privacy Information	Every two years
19	Community Engagement Strategy	Every two years
20	Media Communication Protocol	Every two years
21	Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy	Every two years
22	Volunteer Policy	Every two years

2. Who pays?

- 2.1. Money for services comes from fees and charges, grants and Council tax in the form of a precept.
- 2.2. Frome Town Council receives no income from business rates and its general expenditure is not subsidised through a government grant.
- 2.3. There are no central government controls or “cap” on the Council’s expenditure.
- 2.4. This makes Frome Town Council directly accountable to residents for the financial implication of its actions.

3. Who decides?

- 3.1. Every four years, voters in Frome elect 17 Town Councillors.
- 3.2. They take all major decisions in Council.
- 3.3. Decisions are always collective and voted on unless they have been delegated to the Town Clerk.

4. The Council’s job

- 6.1. Frome Town Council’s role is to deliver its services to the people of Frome in an open, transparent and cost-effective way; acting in the best interests of Frome and its citizens.
- 6.2. This sometimes means that the 'greater good' is more important than individual or group’s interests, but this is what democratic local government is all about.
- 6.3. Taking those decisions, after listening to the community, is the job of the Town Councillors acting collectively as Frome Town Council.

5. How is the Council organised to carry out its job?

- 5.1. The Council makes all policy and other decisions within the powers given to a town council by law.
- 5.2. Committees can make decisions only on those issues the Council has delegated, otherwise a Committee must make a recommendation to Council.
- 5.3. Sub-Committees can make decisions only on those issues the Committee has delegated, otherwise it must make a recommendation.
- 5.4. Panels, Working Parties and Open Forum Groups can be appointed by Council and Committees and can be made up of Councillors and/or staff and/or representatives of other organisations and/or individuals. They can make recommendations to the parent committees or Council as appropriate and cannot decide on matters.
- 5.5. Staff deliver the Council’s services in line with policies or directions as determined by Councillors, collectively in Council, a Committee or a Sub-Committee. They can advise Councillors on policy issues and statutory requirements the Council must meet. They carry out the day to day detailed management of the Council’s services.

6. Further information

The Town Clerk can be contacted using the contact details on the cover page of this document.

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