

Sleaford Town Council

CONSTITUTION

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE CONSTITUTION OF SLEAFORD TOWN COUNCIL



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1. RESPONSIBILITIES

Sleaford Town Council is responsible for a number of local services. It must provide some of these services by law; others are discretionary. It is a statutory corporation - that is, a body created by government under an Act of Parliament.

2. THE SLEAFORD TOWN COUNCIL CONSTITUTION

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.

The Constitution also contains procedural rules which apply to the conduct of meetings of the Council and Panels.

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.

3. THE CONTENT OF THE CONSTITUTION

The Constitution is a living document. It is kept under continual review and is re-examined annually by the Council

The Constitution is split into a number of different chapters and articles and the following documents form the Constitution for Sleaford Town Council:

1. Constitution Contents and Introduction
2. Organisation of the Council
3. Standing Orders
4. Financial Regulations
5. Staff Handbook (Currently being reviewed)
6. Training Statement of Intent
7. Civic Protocol
8. Member and Employee Protocol – Principles of Good Practice
9. RFO Protocol
10. Member Code of Conduct - Localism Act 2011
11. Health and Safety Policy
12. Corporate Governance Policy
13. Risk Management Strategy
14. Accessibility Policy
15. Information Policy – Freedom of Information and Data Protection
16. Publication Scheme
17. Community Engagement Strategy
18. Media Communications Protocol
19. Volunteers' Policy
20. Complaints Procedures Policy
21. Grant Aid Policy
22. Bullying and Harassment Policy
23. Bullying and Harassment by Members of the Public Policy
24. Filling a Casual Vacancy

25. Child & Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy
26. Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy
27. Confidential Reporting Policy
28. Whistle-Blowing Policy
29. Display Screen Equipment Policy
30. Lone Working Policy
31. Tree Strategy Policy
32. Street Naming Policy
33. Mayor/Chairman's Handbook and Civic Protocol

4. WHO PAYS?

Money for services comes from the following sources:

1. Fees and charges
2. Grants
3. Council Tax

Sleaford Town Council receives no income from business rates and its general expenditure is not subsidised through a government grant. There are no central government controls or "cap" on the Council's expenditure. This makes Sleaford Town Council directly accountable to residents for the financial implication of its actions.

5. WHO DECIDES?

Every four years, voters in Sleaford elect eighteen Town Councillors. They take all major decisions in Council. Decisions are always collective and voted on unless they have been delegated to the Proper Officer.

6. THE COUNCIL'S JOB

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

7. HOW IS THE COUNCIL ORGANISED TO CARRY OUT ITS JOB?

The Council makes all policy and other decisions within the powers given to a town Council by law.

Panels can be appointed and can be made up solely of Councillors. They can make recommendations to the Council as appropriate and cannot decide on matters.

Officers deliver the Council's services in line with policies or directions as determined by Councillors. They can advise Councillors on policy issues and statutory requirements the Council has to meet. They carry out the day to day detailed management of the Council's services.

8. FURTHER INFORMATION

The Town Clerk can be contacted on 01529 303456 or townclerk@sleaford.gov.uk