

Halstead Town Council

Staff Advisory Committee

Terms of Reference

Adopted by Council: 10/08/2026 Version: [1.0]

Advisory Role — Recommendations Only

The Staff Advisory Committee does not have delegated authority to make binding decisions. All resolutions passed by the Committee are in the form of recommendations only and must be referred to the full Council (or the Chief Executive Officer where authority is delegated) for consideration and formal determination. No recommendation of the Committee shall take effect until formally adopted by the relevant decision-maker.

Important — Scope of Matters

The Staff Advisory Committee is not an industrial tribunal and does not have jurisdiction over individual employment disputes, grievances, disciplinary matters, or enterprise bargaining negotiations. Such matters are governed by the relevant legislation, and Council's Human Resources policies. The Committee's role is limited to providing advice on organisational policy and workforce matters at a strategic level.

1. Purpose and Function

The Staff Advisory Committee (the Committee) is an advisory committee of Halstead Town Council. The Committee is established to provide a structured and inclusive forum through which staff representatives, elected Councillors, and management can engage on workforce and organisational matters, and to make recommendations to the Council or the Town Clerk on such matters within the scope defined in these Terms of Reference.

The objectives of the Committee are to:

- Foster open, constructive, and transparent communication between staff, management, and Council;
- Support a positive, safe, and inclusive workplace culture consistent with the Council's values;
- Provide staff with a meaningful voice in the development of policies and practices that affect their employment;
- Advise on matters relating to the workforce, organisational development, and employee wellbeing at a strategic level.

The Committee's functions include making recommendations to the Council or the Chief Executive Officer in relation to:

- Workplace policies and procedures that affect staff conditions, culture, or wellbeing, including but not limited to flexible working, health and safety, equal opportunity, and respectful workplace policies;
- Workforce planning strategies, including matters relating to recruitment, retention, succession planning, and organisational structure at a strategic level;
- Staff learning, development, and professional growth programs;
- Employee recognition programs and initiatives to promote staff engagement and morale;
- Workplace health, safety, and wellbeing programs and strategies;
- Diversity, inclusion, and accessibility initiatives within the workforce;
- The results of staff surveys, culture reviews, or other organisational assessments, and proposed responses to findings;
- Any other workforce or organisational matter referred to the Committee by the Council or by the Town Clerk.

The Committee does not exercise any executive or decision-making authority. All recommendations of the Committee are advisory only and require formal adoption by the Council or the Town Clerk (within their respective areas of delegated authority) before taking effect.

2. Committee Membership

2.1 Composition

The Committee shall comprise the following members:

- 6 elected Councillors, appointed by the Council by resolution
- Members of the Committee are expected to have completed training in HR for Councillors or be prepared to do so within one year of appointment

The Clerk shall attend Committee meetings in an advisory capacity and to take Minutes.

The Chairman or any other councillor may attend meeting of the Staff Advisory Committee, as an observer.

Neither the Clerk nor any other councillors attending are members of the Committee and shall not vote on any recommendation.

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2.2 Current Members

Member	Category / Role	Appointed / Elected By	Term Expires
Janet Atkinson	Elected Councillor	Halstead Town Council	May 2027
Malcolm Fincken	Elected Councillor	Halstead Town Council	May 2027
Linda Hilton	Elected Councillor	Halstead Town Council	May 2027
Grahame McCoyd	Elected Councillor	Halstead Town Council	May 2027
Andy Munday	Elected Councillor	Halstead Town Council	May 2027
Jackie Pell	Elected Councillor	Halstead Town Council	May 2027

2.3 Quorum

A quorum for any meeting of the Committee shall be 3 members. No business may be transacted unless a quorum is present.

2.4 Vacancies and Casual Appointments

Where a casual vacancy arises among the Councillor or independent members, the Council shall appoint a replacement at the next practicable ordinary meeting of the Council.. Casual appointments hold office for the remainder of the original member's term.

2.5 Term of Appointment

Elected Councillor members hold office for the duration of their term as a Councillor, or until the Council resolves otherwise.

2.6 Confidentiality

Members of the Committee are required to treat as confidential any information disclosed in Committee meetings that is identified as confidential, including any information relating to individual staff members, personnel matters, legal proceedings, or commercial-in-confidence matters. A breach of confidentiality obligations may result in the member's removal from the Committee by resolution of the Council.

2.7 Conflicts of Interest

Members must declare any conflict of interest, whether actual, perceived, or potential, at the commencement of any meeting at which the relevant matter is to be considered. A member with a material conflict of interest in a matter shall not take part in deliberations or vote on any recommendation relating to that matter. The Clerk shall not participate in discussions or recommendations that relate directly to their own terms and conditions of employment.

3. Officer Positions

The Committee shall elect the following officers from among its elected Councillor members at the first meeting following each general appointment to the Committee:

Position	Responsibilities	Incumbent
Chairperson	Chairs all meetings; sets agendas in consultation with the Clerk; presents Committee recommendations to Council or the Chairman; acts as primary liaison between the Committee and Council leadership	Janet Atkinson
Deputy Chairperson	Acts in the absence of the Chairperson; assists with agenda preparation; may represent the Committee at Council or staff forums	Malcolm Fincken

Officers hold their positions for the duration of their term of appointment unless they resign from the officer position, cease to be a member of the Committee, or are removed by resolution of the Committee.

In the absence of both the Chairperson and the Deputy Chairperson from a meeting, the Councillor members present shall elect a Chairperson for that meeting from among themselves.

4. Meeting Times

4.1 Ordinary Meetings

Ordinary meetings of the Committee shall be held at such time and place as the Committee may determine by resolution. Meetings shall be scheduled during ordinary working hours wherever practicable to facilitate staff representative attendance.

The schedule of ordinary meeting dates for each calendar year shall be confirmed by resolution at the October meeting of Full Council in each year and communicated via the Council's internal communications channels, and the website.

Date	Time	Venue
7/09/2026	16.00	Queens Hall
30/11/26	16.00	Queens Hall
08/03/2027	16.00	Queens Hall

4.2 Special Meetings

A special meeting of the Committee may be convened at any time by the Chairperson, or the Clerk, to consider a matter of urgency. Notice of a special meeting shall be given to all members with a minimum of 3 clear days' notice. The minimum three clear days' public notice for a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting. An agenda must be issued specifying the business to be transacted.

4.3 Meeting Procedures

Unless otherwise specified in these Terms of Reference, Committee meetings shall be conducted in accordance with Standing Orders. In recognition of the confidential nature of some workforce matters, ordinary meetings of the Staff Advisory Committee shall be held in closed session unless the Committee resolves otherwise.

All voting on recommendations shall be by show of hands unless a division is requested by a member. Minutes recording all recommendations made by the Committee shall be prepared by the Clerk and confirmed at the following meeting. Confirmed minutes shall be approved at full Council with consideration of any recommendations requiring Council determination.

4.4 Meeting Location

Meetings will normally be held in Queens Hall.

5. Reporting to Council and the Clerk

Following each ordinary or special meeting, the Chairperson (or their nominee) shall present any recommendations requiring Council determination to the full Council at the Council's next ordinary meeting. Recommendations within the Clerk's delegated authority shall be referred directly to the Clerk.

6. Review of Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference shall be reviewed after every Full Council election, or whenever the Council considers a review to be necessary. The Committee may make recommendations to the Council regarding proposed amendments. Any amendment to these Terms of Reference requires a resolution of the full Council.

7. Document Control

Version	Date Adopted	Approved By	Summary of Changes
1.0	10/8/2026	Council	Initial adoption