

Alwoodley Parish Council – Scheme of Delegation

Draft presented 3rd November 2025

1. Introduction

This Scheme of Delegation is made under the provisions of Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 and the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. It defines the authority delegated by the Council to its Committees, Working Groups, the Clerk, and Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) to enable efficient decision-making and lawful discharge of functions.

Delegation does not remove accountability; the Council retains overall responsibility for all decisions.

2. Principles of Delegation

- The Council may arrange for the discharge of any of its functions by a Committee, Sub-Committee, Officer, or another local authority.
- All decisions must be made in accordance with law, Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, and approved Council policy.
- The Clerk, as Proper Officer, and the RFO are authorised to take all routine administrative and operational actions necessary for the effective running of the Council, within approved budgets.
- Any decision taken under delegated authority shall be reported to the next available meeting of the Council or relevant Committee.
- The Council may at any time resolve to amend, withdraw, or reclaim any delegation.

3. Matters Reserved to Full Council

The following matters are retained by the Council and may not be delegated:

1. Setting the Precept and approving the Annual Budget.
2. Adopting or amending Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, and this Scheme of Delegation.
3. Approving or amending key policies, strategies, and procedures.

4. Borrowing, acquiring, or disposing of land or major assets.
5. Appointing the Chair and Vice-Chair.
6. Approving the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR).
7. Co-option of councillors.
8. Appointment or dismissal of the Clerk or RFO.
9. Making responses to consultations or matters of major community significance.
10. Approving the structure, terms of reference, and membership of Committees and Working Groups.
11. Any matter required by statute or Standing Order to be determined by full Council.

4. Delegation to Committees

Committees are established by the Council under Standing Orders 4–6 and Section 101(1) of the Local Government Act 1972.

Each Committee operates within its approved Terms of Reference, which shall specify:

- Membership and quorum,
- Functions and powers delegated,
- Financial limits,
- Reporting requirements, and
- Review arrangements.

Committees may appoint Sub-Committees to assist them and may further delegate specific powers if authorised by the Council.

All Committee decisions are subject to:

- Council policy and approved budget limits; and
- Reporting to the next full Council meeting.

5. Delegation to Working Groups

Working Groups are advisory bodies created by resolution of the Council or a Committee to carry out research, consultation, or project development.

Working Groups:

- Have no decision-making or spending powers unless explicitly delegated by resolution.
- May liaise with residents, organisations, and agencies, gather evidence, and prepare reports or recommendations.
- Must report to the parent Committee or Council for decisions.

Any limited spending authority must be agreed in advance and recorded in the minutes.

6. Delegation to the Clerk

The Parish Clerk is the Council's Proper Officer and is authorised to:

1. Carry out all duties as required by law, Standing Orders, and Financial Regulations.
2. Manage day-to-day operations, administration, correspondence, and implementation of Council decisions.
3. Authorise routine expenditure within budget headings, up to the limit set in Financial Regulations (currently £1,000 or as amended).
4. Pay salaries, HMRC, and pension contributions as approved in the budget.
5. Respond to correspondence and consultation requests (including planning applications) when deadlines fall before the next meeting, reporting outcomes to Council.
6. Manage staff, including recruitment (within budget), supervision, appraisals, and training, consistent with HR policy.
7. Act in emergencies, in consultation with the Chair or Vice-Chair, to protect property, finances, or public safety — reporting any actions to the next meeting.
8. Maintain official records, including the Register of Delegated Decisions.
9. Issue agendas, publish notices, and ensure the lawful conduct of meetings.

7. Delegation to the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)

The RFO (whether a separate officer or the Clerk) is authorised to:

1. Administer the Council's financial affairs in accordance with Financial Regulations.

2. Prepare the budget, monitor income and expenditure, and report variances.
3. Maintain the accounts, bank reconciliations, and asset register.
4. Prepare and submit the AGAR and coordinate the internal and external audits.
5. Implement the Council's financial controls and manage payroll and supplier payments.

8. Delegation to the Chair / Vice-Chair

The Chair (or in their absence the Vice-Chair) may act jointly with the Clerk in cases of urgent necessity, subject to:

- The matter being so urgent that it cannot await the next scheduled meeting;
- Any action taken being consistent with Council policy and within the approved budget;
- Any financial commitment not exceeding £500 unless otherwise authorised by resolution; and
- A full report being made to the next meeting of the Council.

No individual councillor (including the Chair) may issue instructions to the Clerk or act on behalf of the Council except as authorised above.

9. Emergency Powers

In the event of a major incident or emergency affecting the Council's property, staff, or services, the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair (or Vice-Chair), is authorised to take all necessary action to protect the Council's interests.

Any such actions must be reported to the next Council meeting.

10. Recording and Reporting

- The Clerk will maintain a Register of Delegated Decisions, including date, decision-maker, subject, and reference.
- The Register will be reported to Council or the relevant Committee and made available for public inspection under the Transparency Code.

11. Review

This Scheme of Delegation shall be reviewed annually at the Annual Meeting of the Council, or sooner if legislative, structural, or policy changes make it necessary. Any amendments must be approved by the full Council and recorded in the minutes.

Adopted: [insert date]

Next Review: May [insert year]