



SANDGATE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Agreed on 19th May 2025

For review May 2026

Governance and Committee Structure Review

1. Introduction

This report outlines recent considerations and decisions regarding the governance structure, committee composition, and representation arrangements of the Parish Council. While the core governance and decision-making framework has remained largely stable over many years, a number of refinements have been proposed and agreed to improve efficiency, maintain accountability, and ensure broad participation.

2. Governance Arrangements

The governance arrangements and overall decision-making structure of the Parish Council have remained largely unchanged, with only minor evolutions over time. This continuity has provided a stable foundation, although there is recognition of the need for ongoing review to reflect the Council's operational needs.

3. Committee Structure and Membership

It was agreed that the sizes of standing committees should be moderated, as membership had increased to the extent that some committees were approaching full Council representation. To ensure committees remain agile and effective, the following membership limits and quorum requirements have been established:

| Committee | Membership | Quorum |
|---------------------------------|------------|-----------|
| Environment Committee | 5 members | 3 members |
| Planning Committee | 6 members | 3 members |
| Finance Committee | 6 members | 3 members |
| Library Committee | 5 members | 3 members |
| Sea Festival / Events Committee | 5 members | 3 members |
| Personnel Committee | 3 members | 3 members |

4. Councillor Participation

Each councillor shall be appointed to serve on at least one committee. This measure is intended to distribute responsibilities equitably and to draw on the full breadth of councillor expertise.

5. Substitute Membership Protocol

To maintain the function of committees in the event of member absences, all councillors will be appointed as eligible voting substitutes for all committees. This system will be administered by the clerks, who may approach non-standing councillors to fill absences where a significant number of apologies are received. This arrangement should be employed as a measure of last resort and not as routine practice, in order to preserve the continuity and expertise of standing members.

The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council will continue to serve as ex officio members of all committees and shall be counted towards the quorum when present.

6. Involvement of Non-Councillors

It is proposed that non-councillors be invited to participate in the work of all committees except the Finance and Personnel Committees. While they will not possess voting rights, their contributions will be welcomed and encouraged, particularly where relevant expertise or community representation is valuable.

7. Review of Lead Roles and External Representation

KALC – Shepway Area Committee: A councillor should be appointed to attend all meetings to ensure effective and consistent Council representation.