

Atherstone Town Council



COUNCIL STRUCTURE

Including Appendix 1: Working Group Plan

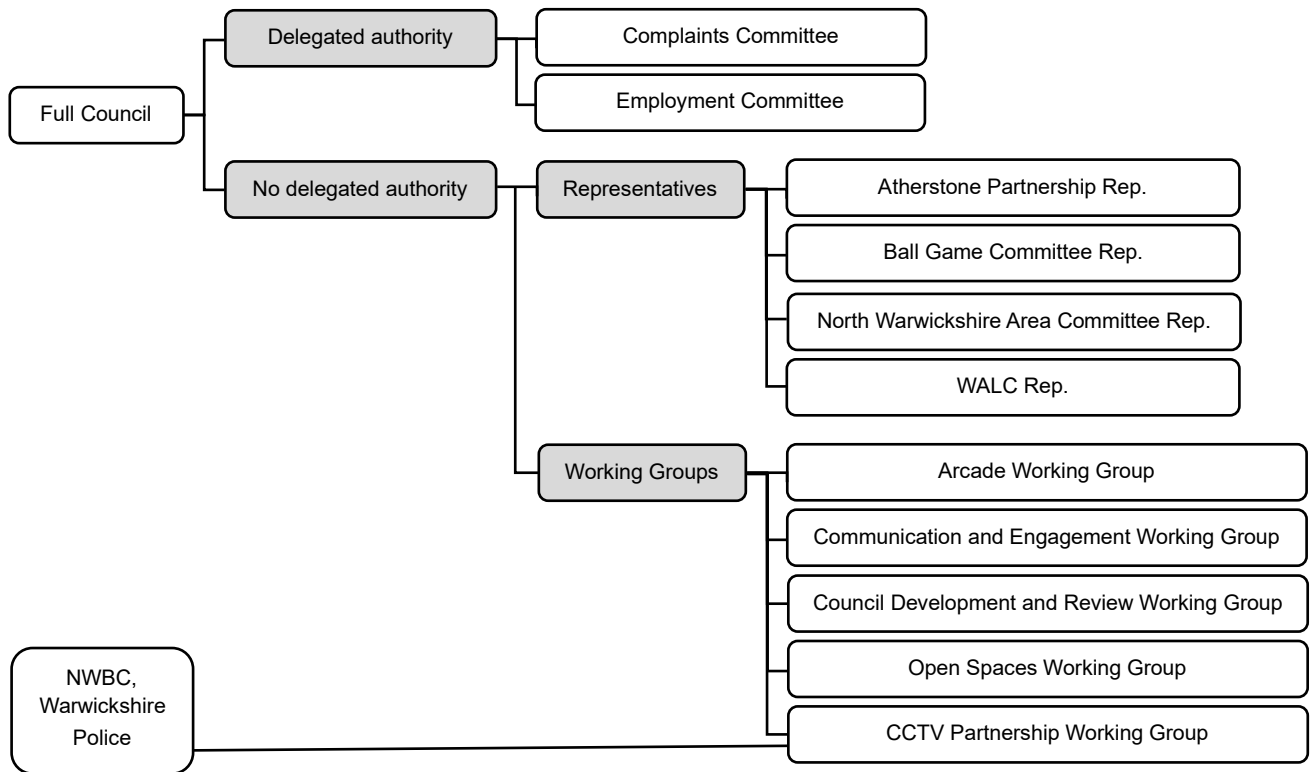
Adopted: 25th June 2025

(Revised 18th February 2026)

Next Review: May 2026



Council Structure 2025-26



Councillors

S. Bishop (Town Mayor), J. Chambers (Deputy Mayor), K. Barnett, J. Braithwaite, G. Chamberlain, R. Collins, O. Dipple, C. Evans, C. Jones, N. Pritchett, G. Short, M. Short, T. Short, D. Wilkinson, and D. Wright.

Committees

Complaints: 3 Cllrs TBA on a rotational basis depending on availability, excluding the Chair

Employment: Cllrs S. Bishop (Chair), J. Chambers (Deputy), K. Barnett, C. Evans, D. Wright

Working Groups

Arcade Working Group: Cllrs S. Bishop (lead), G. Chamberlain, R. Collins, G. Short, D. Wilkinson + up to 3 non-voting members

Communication and Engagement Working Group: Cllrs J. Chambers, (lead), K. Barnett, S. Bishop, O. Dipple, C. Jones, T. Short, D. Wilkinson, M Thomas + up to 3 non-voting members

Council Development and Review Working Group: Cllrs D. Wilkinson (lead), J. Braithwaite, K. Barnett, R. Collins, G. Short + up to 3 non-voting members

Open Spaces Working Group: Cllrs M. Short (lead), J. Chambers, R. Collins, C. Jones, T. Short, M Thomas + up to 3 non-voting members

CCTV Partnership Working Group: G. Short (lead), G. Chamberlain, J. Chambers, C. Evans, C. Jones

Representatives

Atherstone Partnership: Cllr D. Wilkinson

Ball Game: Cllr G. Chamberlain

North Warwickshire Area Committee: Cllr K. Barnett

Warwickshire Association of Local Councils (WALC): Cllr S. Bishop

Terms of Reference

Full Council

Members of the Town Council meet once a month, where members of the public & press are welcome to observe. The Council discuss all aspects of Council business and make decisions on financial, planning and governance aspects of the Council. Meetings are run in accordance with the council's adopted Standing Orders.

The following matters are reserved for decision by Full Council, but the appropriate Committee or Working Group may make recommendations for the Council's consideration:

- The setting of the precept
- Borrowing money
- Making, amending, or revoking Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and the Scheme of delegated authority to the Clerk
- Making, amending, or revoking by-laws
- Making of Orders under Statutory Powers
- Matters of principle or policy
- Addressing recommendations in any report from the Internal and External Auditors
- Nomination or appointment of representatives of the Parish Council on an authority, organisation, or body
- Nomination of members of all standing committees
- New powers or duties
- Nomination or appointment of representatives of the Town Council to any enquiry on matters affecting the Town.
- To receive and adopt the Annual Governance and Accountability Return
- To receive and sign off the Annual External Audit and Return
- To receive reports and recommendations referred to Full Council from the General Purpose Committee (or various sub-committees as appropriate)
- To authorise the sealing of various documents with signatures of two Town Councillors
- To appoint representatives on outside bodies or joint bodies
- To confirm the schedule of meetings of Full Council and the standing committees for the ensuing year
- To receive petitions and deputations from members of the public or any organisations
- Any other matters not delegated to a committee or officer or that has been referred to Full Council by a committee or officer.

Committees

Complaints Committee Terms of Reference

- The Committee shall comprise 14 Town Councillors (excluding the Chair of the Town Council), of which
- 3 members will be chosen by the Clerk / or Council as appropriate on a rotational basis, based upon their availability and to avoid potential conflicts of interest
- The Chair of the Committee shall be appointed at its first meeting
- The quorum for a meeting of the Committee shall be 3 members
- Meetings will be convened as and when required to review a formal complaint
- Notice to complainants shall be in accordance with the adopted Complaints Policy
- Meetings shall be open to the public unless the committee decides that the press and public should be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that the information to be discussed is of a confidential nature and the public interest would not be served in disclosing the information
- A record of each meeting will be made, and the findings and recommendation of the committee made known at the next appropriate Town Council meeting
- Findings and recommendations from the Committee should be made within a report to Full Council and contain all relevant background information for a decision to be made
- Where the nature of the complaint is confidential, the report to the Council should be marked as confidential

N.B. Under the Council's Complaint's Policy, complaints against individual members of the Town Council shall not be considered by this Committee; complaints of this nature must be made to the Monitoring Officer at North Warwickshire Borough Council.

The terms of reference were agreed by Full Council on 25.06.25

Employment Committee Terms of Reference

- The Committee shall comprise 5 Town Councillors, and must include the Chair and Deputy of the Town Council
- Only named Council members appointed by Full Council may sit on the Employment Committee
- The Chair of the Committee shall NOT be the Chair of the Town Council
- The quorum for a meeting of the Committee shall be 3 members
- Meetings should be held in private with no public present
- Members of the Employment Committee will also act as an Interview Panel when required to do so and other staffing matters as required
- Meetings can be held as and when required with all recommendations reported back to Full Council for agreement

The terms of reference were agreed by Full Council on 25.06.25

Working Groups

General Terms of Reference for all Working Groups

- The Working Group shall comprise 5 Town Councillors appointed by Full Council on an annual basis, unless otherwise agreed by Full Council
- The Working Group may decide to appoint up to three non-voting members for advisory purposes
- The quorum for a meeting of the Working Group shall be 3 members
- The Working Group is to be non-executive and is to make recommendations in writing to Full Council
- Reports and recommendations from the Working Group requiring Full Council approval shall be discussed with the Clerks before being placed on the agenda for a Full Council Meeting
- The Working Group will operate within the budget set for it – reports and recommendations are expected to work within this budget, or to request additional funds from Full Council
- The Working Group shall determine how often it needs to meet and will report progress to Full Council as and when required
- The Working Group shall appoint a person to take notes at each meeting, which should accurately record the agreed actions
- The Working Group shall appoint a Chairperson at their first meeting or subsequent meetings
- The Chair of the Working Group will set the agenda for meetings
- Meetings of the Working Group need not be open to the public, and statutory notice does not have to be given
- The Clerks are not required to attend meetings or distribute minutes, but may attend meetings at the request of Full Council
- Recommendations by the Working Group shall not make additional demands on Clerks' time until approved by Full Council
- New Working Groups can be set up for specific purposes only by agreement of Full Council

The general terms of reference were agreed by Full Council on 25.06.25

Additional Terms of Reference

Arcade Working Group

- The Working Group shall receive support from the Clerks for operational matters but not development matters

Communication and Engagement Working Group

- In 2025-26, the Working Group shall comprise 8 Town Councillors appointed by Full Council
- The Working Group shall balance the use of Clerks' time with the commissioning of external providers to achieve specific objectives

Open Spaces Working Group

- The Clerks shall be responsible for operational matters relating to the Cemetery, Allotments, and Play Areas
- The group comprises 6 Town Councillors.

CCTV Partnership Working Group

- The Town Council shall send up to five Town Councillors as representatives to quarterly CCTV Partnership meetings (with NWBC and Police)
- See CCTV Partnership Agreement for additional Terms of Reference

Representatives

- Representatives shall be appointed by Full Council to attend meetings of external organisations
- Representatives shall be the point of contact between the Town Council and their nominated organisation
- Representatives shall not commit the Town Council to anything which has not already been agreed by Full Council
- Representatives shall feed back relevant information to Full Council from time to time

Appendix 1: Working Group Plan 2025-26

Arcade Working Group

Purpose

- Ensure the provision of a safe and well-maintained building for shoppers, visitors and tenants of The Arcade, Long Street, Atherstone
- Appraise options with respect to future use of the Arcade as a community asset
- Promote the Arcade, and ensure that the income generated from rents is sufficient to cover the costs of maintenance and repair, and benefits local residents and start-up businesses

Scope of activities

- Deal with operational matters referred by the Clerks in relation to the day-to-day management of the Arcade
- Ensure compliance with health and safety regulations
- Review and recommend rent and service charges as part of an annual budget review process
- Consult with tenants and other stakeholders
- Assist the revising and updating of current lease agreements
- Appraise options, feasibility and costs of restoring the upstairs area as a multipurpose community space

Key results and metrics

- Occupancy and sustained level of income (taking account of inflation) from Arcade units
- Health and safety requirements met and up to date
- Successful grant applications to maintain or restore the Arcade as a community asset

Communications and Engagement Working Group for Social Media, Public Relations Community Grants, and Community Events

Purpose

- Sponsor and support an annual programme of community led events and initiatives which benefit the Town
- Work collaboratively with other organisations to organize the annual Remembrance Day events (Parade and Service)
- Promote use of the Market Square and other services and facilities managed by the Town Council
- Enable the Town Council to better understand and serve the interests of local people through public engagement and social media.
- Celebrate achievements and foster pride in the town and its communities
- Consult with rate payers about how their money is spent.

Scope of activities

- Ensure that the processes by which funds are allocated through the community grants scheme are open, transparent and provide value for money.
- Assess and recommend grant allocations within the budget identified the community grant scheme

- Engage and work with local groups and volunteers who wish to take part in or contribute to the organization of the service, parade and management of Remembrance Day.
[These organisations include the Royal British Legion (Atherstone Branch), St Marys Church, uniformed groups (Scouts and Guides), Phantom Knights, Girls Friendly Society]
- Prepare an event plan, issue invitations, lead and coordinate management of community events
- Prepare an outline communications plan and budget for 2025/26
- Draw up a specification for campaigns and social media management
- Develop and manage a contract(s) for social media management and campaigns with an external provider
- Make use of the suite of tools available through Microsoft 365 to facilitate online meetings, forums and support community consultation
- Take forward those actions required as a priority to enable the Town Council to achieve the Local Council Award quality standards for community and public engagement
- Ensure that community activities and partnership events are regularly posted on the Council website, Facebook page and other social media platforms
- Advise on content creation for specific campaigns
- Organise public consultations about priorities, services and issues of concern
- Promote and support the civic role of the Mayor in relation to community engagement

Key results and metrics

- Annual programme of major community events supported financially by the Town Council – Ball Game, Dickens, and Car Show
- Revised procedures and suggested policy for handling grant applications
- Community participation in and satisfaction with Remembrance Day
- Increased engagement with local Facebook pages, as measured by page views, reach, and organic vs paid adverts
- Increased population reach – general and targeted
- Collation of evidence which fulfils the Local Council Award Scheme criteria for community engagement, for grant applications, and to inform budget setting for 2026/27

Council Development and Review Working Group for Policy Review, Action planning, and LCAS Accreditation

Purpose

- Periodically review, suggest, or draft new Council policies (except where other WGs have a specific responsibility) to ensure these are fit for purpose, up to date, and comply with legislation as advised by WALC/NALC
- Review and amend the Town Council Action Plan at least biannually
- Prepare and outline a list of proposals which the Council wishes to achieve as part of the Action Plan but for which external funding is needed
- Lead and oversee the audit and preparation of the Council's application for Local Council Award Scheme accreditation

Scope of activities

- Work with the Clerks to review, update, and recommend amendments to Council policies
- Provide regular monitoring reports on progress with implementing the Action Plan 2024-26
- Develop and promote the Councillor training plan
- Assess feasibility and steps required to achieve the highest LCAS standard possible

Key results and metrics

- Council policies up to date and auditable
- Monitoring reports on Action Plan to Full Council from Working Group in a summary format useable for the Annual Report
- Councillor training plan for understanding and skills development in Microsoft 365 and social media – with evidence of use
- Application for LCAS award prepared and drafted ready for Full Council approval

Open Spaces Working Group for Allotments, Cemetery, and Play Area sites

Purpose

- Respond to matters directly affecting open spaces managed by the Council (Atherstone Cemetery, Allotments, and Play Areas) at the request of the Clerks or Full Council
- Recommend improvements to the existing management, policies, or controls over these open spaces
- Take forward development projects identified in the Town Councils Action Plan 2024-2026, namely:
 - the cemetery extension
 - refurbishment of the St Mary's Play Area
 - improvements to Anker Valley footpath network

Scope of activities

- Improving the Anker Valley footpath network – securing permissions from landowners and investment
- Securing planning approval for the Cemetery extension
- Judge and recommend winners for the annual Allotment Awards
- Budget proposals to improve the Open Spaces managed by the Town Council as part of the annual budget review process
- Complaints by Allotment tenants will not be handled by Councillors unless asked by the Clerks

Key results and metrics

- Improvements to the Anker Valley footpath which take account of public consultation and recommendations of the feasibility study
- Planning application for the cemetery extension approved
- Costed project plan for taking this development forward submitted as part of the annual budget review process
- Completed grant application to refurbish the St Mary's Play Area

CCTV Partnership Working Group

Purpose

- See [Atherstone CCTV Scheme](#) Code of Practice, Section 2

Scope of activities

- See [Atherstone CCTV Scheme](#) Code of Practice, Section 1

Key results and metrics

- Produce plan to raise public awareness of the CCTV scheme to pass to the Communications Working Group
- Provide regular reports of Partnership meetings to Full Council, with minutes as appropriate
- Ensure the Partnership maintain 24 hour recorded surveillance of the area covered by the CCTV Scheme
- Produce a plan to bring shoplifting offences in Atherstone (18 per 1000 residents in October 2024) down to the County average (around 4-5/1000 residents)