THAME Town Council

Scheme of Delegations

This Scheme of Delegations authorises the Proper Officer (Town Clerk) and Responsible Financial Officer, Standing Committees and Sub-Committees of the Council to act with delegated authority in the specific circumstances detailed[1].

In the absence of the Proper Officer the delegated authority is passed to the Senior Officers acting as deputies to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Town Mayor.

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[1] Local Government Act 1972, Section 101 authorises councils to arrange for the discharge of its functions by a committee, sub-committee or officer of the authority.

Officers

1. Responsible Financial Officer

1.1 The Responsible Financial Officer to the Council shall be responsible for the management of the Council's financial affairs and as such is specifically authorised to:

i) Carry out the Council's accounting procedures in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations in force at any given time.
ii) Carry out the proper administration of the Council's Financial Regulations and submitting revisions to the Council for approval.
iii) Carry out the proper administration of the Council's financial affairs.
iv) Report to External Auditor matters under Local Government Finance Act 1988 s114.
v) Ensure compliance with Financial Regulations.
vi) Ensure compliance with all financial procedures.
vii) Determine accounting policies, records and control systems.
viii) To determine the Council's accounting system and the form of the accounts and supporting accounting records.
ix) Arrange and manage the Council's insurance arrangements.
x) Manage Council salaries in accordance with contracts of employment.
xi) Manage risk management of the Council.
xii) Carry out the day-to-day management of employees within section.
xiii) Carry out matters specifically delegated by Council or Committee
xiv) To act as the Council's designated officer for the purpose of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

2. Proper Officer

2.1 The Town Clerk shall be the Proper Officer of the Council and is specifically authorised to:

i) Receive declarations of acceptance of office.
ii) Receive and record notices disclosing pecuniary interests.
iii) Receive and retain plans and documents.
iv) Sign notices or other documents on behalf of the Council.
v) Receive copies of Bye-laws made by a principle authority.
vi) Certify copies of Bye-laws made by the Council.
vii) Sign summons to attend meetings of the Council.

2.2 In addition, the Town Clerk has the delegated authority to undertake the following matters on behalf of the Council:

i) The day-to-day administration of services, facilities and assets together with routine inspection and control.
ii) The recruitment and day to day supervision and control of all Council employed staff.
iii) Authorisation of routine expenditure within the agreed budget.
iv) To institute, defend and appear in any legal proceedings authorised by the Council.
v) To appear or make representations to any tribunal or public inquiry into any matter in which the Council itself has an interest on behalf of Thame residents.
vi) To agree the terms of any lease, licence, conveyance or transfer.
vii) The granting of easements, wayleaves and licences over Council land.
viii) Variations of restrictive covenants of a routine nature.
ix) To grant dispensations under sections 33(1) and 33(2) of the Localism Act 2011.
x) To grant free use of council facilities and authorise grant application submissions.

2.3 Delegated actions of the Town Clerk shall be in accordance with Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Contracts and Procurement regulations and this scheme of Delegations and with directions given by the Council from time to time.

3. Full Council

Year	2026-27
Reports to:	n/a
Membership	All 16 Councillors
Quorum	6 (one third)
Frequency	Minimum 3 times plus the Annual Meeting
Meeting Duration	2 hours
Delegated spending	n/a
Working Groups	Budget Working Group Capital Project Delivery Team Strategy Working Group
Approved by / on:	12 May 2026 (Full Council)

3.1 The following Powers will only be exercised by the Full Council:

i) The power to issue a precept.
ii) The power to approve schemes for local lotteries.
iii) The determination of borrowing limits.
iv) Consideration of the Auditor's Report.
v) Approving the Financial Risk Assessment.
vi) Making, amending or revoking Standing Orders, Financial Regulations or this scheme of Delegations.
vii) Any proposed new undertakings.
viii) Making of orders under any statutory powers.
ix) Matters of principle or policy.
x) Making, amending or revoking Bye-laws.
xi) Nominating or appointment of representatives of the Council at any inquiry on matters affecting the Town, excluding those matters specific to a committee.

3.2 In addition, the Town Council's Financial Regulations stipulate that the following must only be exercised by the Council:

i) Approving the Accounting Statements and Annual Governance Statement.
ii) Writing off bad debts.
iii) Declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence.
iv) Addressing recommendations in any report from the internal or external auditors
v) Determining, and keeping under regular review, the bank mandate for all council bank accounts;
vi) Approving any grant or single commitment in excess of £5000.
vii) Having regard to recommendations about annual salaries of employees made by the relevant committee in accordance with its terms of reference.
viii) Reporting of emergency / urgent expenditure under Financial Regulation 5.18 as soon as possible.
ix) Authorising termination payments (Financial Regulation 11.7)
x) Approving financial arrangements (Hire Purchase or Leasing) as recommended by the Corporate Governance Committee.

3.3 Developing and reviewing the Council's strategic plan taking into consideration other relevant documents such as the Thame Neighbourhood Plan and Local Plan

3.4 The council will receive annual updates on the Mayor of Thame's Charity Trust.

4. Committees

4.1 Delegated powers and decisions made by the committees are determined by the Terms of Reference for each Standing Committee. Any decision made by a Committee outside of delegated powers is subject to confirmation by the Council.

4.2 All decisions taken by Committee which have full delegated powers will be recorded as "RESOLVED". At all other Committee meetings the minutes will show the decisions as "RECOMMENDED" and will then be subject to confirmation.

4.3 Committee Members may be expected to attend relevant training and to keep up to date on relevant legislation / policies / best practice to support them in their role.

5. Sub-Committees and Working Groups

5.1 Working Groups / Sub-Committees may be formed by resolution of the Council or a committee at any time subject to full regard being given to the implications on the Officer and Member workload of such creation, and its conformance with the Council's wider strategic aims. Working Groups / Sub-Committees shall only be established following consideration of a written report outlining the purposes of such body, why the matters in question cannot be dealt with direct by the main committee, and proposed Terms of Reference.

5.2 The work, membership, and duration of such a working group / sub-committee will be decided upon at the time it is formed by means of a minute detailing the terms of reference.

5.3 Decisions taken by Working Groups and Advisory Bodies must be endorsed by their appointing Committee and by the Council. Sub-committees may be given delegated powers from their appointing committee / the council.

5.4 Each working group will report back with recommendations to the Council or appointing committee.

5.5 The regulations covering committees apply to sub-committees, in terms of publication of agendas, minutes and public participation. Therefore, sub-committees are useful for progressing time-limited projects which require financial decisions but without convening a full committee. Working groups cannot be delegated spending authority but can appoint non-Councillors so are useful for engaging the community and other bodies in discussions and utilise their expertise.

5.6 The Working Group / Sub-Committee will be dissolved once the Town Council considers its services are no longer required. At dissolution, any remaining funds will be used by the Town Council for the best interest of the Community.

6. Urgent and Routine Matters

6.1 The Delegation of Urgent and Routine Matters are set out in Standing Order 25.

7. Corporate Governance Committee

Year	2026-27
Purpose:	To oversee the management of the Council's finances, policies, procedures, offices, information, and legal matters.
Reports to:	Full Council
Membership	8 plus Mayor and Deputy Mayor (Ex Officio - Voting) Elected annually at the Annual Meeting of the Council
Quorum	4 (one third of the membership as per Standing Order 4)
Frequency	Minimum 4 times a year
Meeting Duration	2 hours
Delegated spending	£15,000 from existing reserves
Working Groups	Investments Working Group.
Approved by / on:	12 May 2026 (Full Council)

7.1 Approval of its Minutes as true and correct records.

7.2 Considering and making recommendations to the Council on any **policy documents** received from other organisations that are outside of the scope of other Committees and affect the area.

7.3 Ensuring the Council's **strategies, policies and procedures** are undertaken in accordance with **statutory and legislative requirements**. Advising the Council as required on all matters affecting its **scheme of administration** (e.g. Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Scheme of Delegations, Risk Management) and the procedures applying to the Council and its Committees.

7.4 Keeping under review the **policies and resources** of the Council in relation to services and to advise the Council on the future developments of existing or the introduction of new services and resources including **IT, telephones and broadband**.

7.5 Making recommendations to the Council on the **annual financial estimates and the Council's precept** as to how these should be determined consistently with the Council's general priorities and policies.

7.6 Making recommendations to the Council on the **capital programme** – content, phasing and monitoring.

7.7 Directing and controlling **insurance** in respect of the Council's property, members and employees. Reviewing annually all insurances in line with Financial Regulations.

7.8 Determining the making to individuals and organisations of all **allowances, and loans**. Receiving reports from organisations who have received an annual Devolved Services grant from the Town Council, in line with the Council's Grant Award Policy.

7.9 Reviewing the Council's **financial and treasury management activities** and supervising **the investment of funds** within the Council's control.

7.10 **Making lettings or grant leases for the use of Council's facilities**, including the Town Hall, by any such suitable applicants for appropriate purposes, subject to any covenants applicable and to any bye-laws, rules or regulations which the Council make or may adopt. Reviewing annually the rates to hire the Council's facilities. **Monitoring free use** granted by the Town Clerk through Free Use / De Minimis delegated authority. **Monitoring utilisation of Town Hall hire**.

7.11 Handling of any matters relating to **information management** in accordance with the Council's Freedom of Information Policy and Information & Data Protection Policy.

7.12 Handling of any matters relating to **elections and democratic representation**, such as Boundary Commission reviews and Community Governance reviews.

7.13 Overseeing any **legal documents and partnership agreements** and authorising the signing and sealing of any such document not covered by the Town Clerk's delegations and that fall under the remit of this committee as authorised by Standing Order 20.0.

7.14 Receiving annual updates with regards to the Council's **Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 allocations**.

7.15 Agreeing the sale price for any **land disposals or acquisitions**.

7.16 Receiving quarterly **budget summaries**, having oversight of all budget lines and making recommendations to Council where necessary.

7.17 Receiving updates on **utility usage and charges**.

7.18 Overseeing all **risk management** including **emergency planning** and the Business Continuity Action Plan.

7.19 Overseeing and regulating all health and safety matters relating to Town Council offices and equipment (Town Hall and Depot).

7.20 Receiving evidence of verification of 6-monthly bank reconciliations, in line with Financial Regulations.

7.21 Receiving a schedule of regular payments, in line with Financial Regulations.

8. Community Services Committee

Year	2026-27
Purpose:	Community, events, communications, town vibrancy, and customer service
Reports to:	Full Council
Membership	10 plus Mayor and Deputy Mayor (Ex Officio – Voting) Elected annually at the Annual Meeting of the Council
Quorum	4 (one third of the membership as per Standing Order 4)
Frequency	Minimum 3 times a year
Meeting Duration	2 hours
Delegated spending	£15,000 from existing reserves
Working Groups	Town Awards Panel Town Centre Working Group
Approved by / on:	12 May 2026 (Full Council)

8.1 Approval of its Minutes as true and correct records.

8.2 Receiving budget summaries relating to the committee's budget lines.

8.3 Keeping under review the policies and resources of the Council in relation to this Committee and to advise the Council on the future developments of existing or introduction of new services under this Committee.

8.4 The organisation and monitoring of community events within the programme and budget (supported by sponsorship where suitable and available) agreed by the Council including, but not limited to the: Charities Fair; Christmas Event; Civic Events & Activities; Markets (Themed & Street Food); Music in the Park; Remembrance; Royal / Ceremonial events (Freedom Parade, coronation, funerals); Senior Citizen's Christmas Party; Taste of Thame; Thame Fairs; Thame Art Crawl; and Town Awards.

8.5 Arranging or overseeing entertainment on / in Town Council owned land or facilities at the discretion of the Council.

8.6 Developing community projects, initiatives and strong links with other organisations, and supporting them in their own initiatives.

8.7 Developing the Council's policy towards youth and elderly and the promotion of facilities for young and elderly people in the town.

8.8 Monitoring CCTV data and working with South Oxfordshire District Council on the provision of CCTV in Thame. Working with Thames Valley Police on the areas covered by the Public Space Protection Order in Thame.

8.9 Enhancing the Town Council's relations with the community, through monitoring external compliments and complaints and community engagement. Deciding on initiatives to publicise the Council utilising its communication channels including social media, newsletter, websites, printed materials, and consultation events including the Councillor Drop-In.

8.10 Initiating and participating in economic development initiatives, connecting with local businesses and supporting town centre vitality and vibrancy. This may be through a range of schemes, including Christmas lighting, flag flying, town twinning, blue plaques, supporting improvements to town council infrastructure, and monitoring town centre signage.

8.11 Overseeing and monitoring services provided by the Information Centre, including visitor information, leaflets and the Thame Good Neighbour Scheme.

8.12 Promoting and monitoring the Tuesday Charter Market and monthly Local Produce Market.

8.13 Responding to consultations from other organisations on community issues.

8.14 Overseeing and regulating all health and safety matters relating to Town Council events and communications. Having concern for community welfare and safety including emergency planning.

8.15 Delivering the objectives of the Communications Strategy

8.16 Determining the policy and making of grants to organisations through the Grants Awards scheme, in line with the Council's Grant Award Policy. Receiving reports from organisations who have received a grant from the Town Council, exceeding £2,000, in line with the Council's Grant Award Policy.

8.17 Overseeing and authorising the signing and sealing of any legal documents and partnership agreements not covered by the Town Clerk's delegations and that fall under the remit of this committee as authorised by Standing Order 20.0.

9. Environment & Assets Committee

Year	2026-27
Purpose:	Developing and maintaining the Council's assets and open spaces and progressing environmental projects.
Reports to:	Full Council
Membership	10 plus Mayor and Deputy Mayor (Ex Officio - Voting) Elected annually at the Annual Meeting of the Council
Quorum	4 (one third of the membership as per Standing Order 4)
Frequency	Minimum 3 times a year
Meeting Duration	2 hours
Delegated spending	£15,000
Working Groups	Green Living Plan Working Group Asset Management Working Group Public Art Working Group
Approved by / on:	12 May 2026 (Full Council)

9.1 Approval of its Minutes as true and correct records.

9.2 Receiving budget summaries relating to the committee's budget lines.

9.3 Determining the overall strategic asset management priorities by maintaining an asset management plan and considering acquisition or disposal of assets in line with the Land Acquisition & Disposal Policy.

9.4 Leading on environmental (natural or built) projects and receiving updates from the Environmental Forum and on projects within the scope of the adopted Thame Green Living Plan.

9.5 Encouraging and introducing proportionate sustainable practices and green initiatives within the council.

9.6 Dealing with all matters relating to the amenities of the Council including recreation areas, parks, and public open spaces including horticulture. This includes the management of Dog Waste Bins and the contract for emptying them.

9.7 Having the care, maintenance, regulation and control in line with the council's duties of all the Council's buildings including the Town Hall, Museum, Meadow View Park, Cricket Club, Thame Barns Centre, the Scout & Guide Headquarters.

9.8 Having the care, maintenance, regulation and control in line with the council's duties of all the Council's physical assets including the War Memorials & Memorial Gardens, Youth Memorial, Skate Park, Flag Poles, benches, bus stops, street furniture and public art.

9.9 The formation, regulation and management in line with the council's duties of the parks and recreation grounds and to take such steps as it may think desirable for carrying into effect arrangements for the layout and maintenance of lands for public parks and recreation grounds.

9.10 Making recommendations on the acquisition and renewal of vehicles, equipment and plant and the discharge of all statutory duties relating to their maintenance and condition.

9.11 Overseeing the management, regulation and control of any allotments provided by the Council, and to manage the transfer of new allotments subject to approval by Council

9.12 Overseeing the management, regulation and control of any burial ground provided by the Council, and to manage the transfer of new burial ground subject to approval by Council.

9.13 Overseeing the management of the Cuttle Brook Nature Reserve, Ham Wood and Rycote Meadow.

9.14 Receiving regular updates on the work of the Maintenance Team.

9.15 Overseeing the management of grass cutting and re-wilding areas including areas cut on behalf of other authorities, and considering the maintenance of any natural or man-made feature within the Parish of Thame which may be owned by other authorities.

9.16 Overseeing and regulating all health and safety matters relating to Town Council assets and public spaces.

9.17 Overseeing and authorising the signing and sealing of any legal documents and partnership agreements not covered by the Town Clerk's delegations and that fall under the remit of this committee as authorised by Standing Order 20.0.

9.18 Overseeing the installation of Public Art in Thame.

10. Planning Committee

Year	2026-27
Purpose:	Leading on planning, the built environment and related policy. Monitoring the impact and delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan.
Reports to:	Full Council
Membership	6 plus Mayor or Deputy Mayor (Ex Officio - Voting) Elected annually at the Annual Meeting of the Council
Quorum	3 (one third of the membership as per Standing Order 4)
Frequency	Every 4 weeks
Meeting Duration	1 hour
Delegated spending	None
Sub-Committees	None
Working Groups	Travel Plan Working Group (likely to be reinstated in 2026/27)
Advisory Committees	Conservation Area Advisory Committee
Approved by / on:	12 May 2026 (Full Council)

10.1 Responding on behalf of the Council in relation to planning applications.

10.2 Referring to Full Council any major planning application, consultation, or matter, within this committee's Terms of Reference, deemed to impinge on the town to a significant degree.

10.3 Approval of its Minutes as true and correct records.

10.4 Authorising Officers, in discussion & agreement with the Chair and Deputy Chair of this Committee, to progress any decision within this committee's terms of reference which due to time restrictions or otherwise cannot be brought to a committee / council meeting. Any decision progressed via this delegation will be reported at the next available meeting.

10.5 Making recommendations on Planning Applications, where the Council is consulted, in line with the adopted Neighbourhood Plan policies, and where applicable, the District Council's Local Plan and Design Guidance, County Council policies and National Standards.

10.6 Representing the Town Council's views in respect of controversial planning applications by requesting, if resolved by the committee, that the application(s) be called in by Thame's District Councillors. A Town Councillor will attend the appropriate South Oxfordshire District Council Planning meeting. Representing the Town Council's views at planning appeals.

10.7 Responding to consultations and/or making appropriate representations to the relevant agency, on matters within the parish boundary in relation to the following:

- Pavement & Premises Licences
- Tree Preservation Orders
- Highways matters (parking, transport / travel, traffic calming measures, speed limits, pedestrian crossings, road safety)
- Active travel (cycle network, footpaths, pavements, rights of way)
- Environment Health
- Enforcement
- Development / Building Control
- Street lighting

10.8 Receiving notifications of permitted / lawful development and telecommunications applications.

10.9 Monitoring contrary decisions and windfall / infill development.

10.10 Considering and responding to any planning policy consultation (including Local Plans, Minerals & Waste Plans, National Planning Policy Framework) where there may be an impact on Thame.

10.11 Suggesting names for new streets.

10.12 Overseeing adherence to the District's conservation area management plan and note minutes from the Conservation Area Advisory Committee.

10.13 Undertake site visits before considering planning applications where all or one of the following criteria are relevant:

- Illustrative material is insufficient to convey the issues or likely effects of a proposed development.
- A judgement is required as to the visual impact of a development or the effect on neighbouring properties and/or land.
- It is necessary to experience similar/comparable conditions at another location/sites.
- The proposal relates to new or novel forms of development and which may require a visit to an existing establishment as well as to the site of the proposal in order to appreciate the potential planning implications.
- Developments considered to have a town-wide impact.
- Developments where the Council have received more than five representations and those representations raise specific amenity issues. Representations received up to the Friday preceding the meeting will be sent out with the meeting papers.
- Developments where the Town Council's officer's recommendation is to object.

10.14 Monitoring the impact and delivery of the adopted Neighbourhood Plan and any future revisions, including consultation events / feedback, evidence gathering, and land allocations. Receiving updates from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group[2].

10.15 Receiving updates on the provision / delivery of affordable housing in Thame.

Appendix: Procedure for handling planning applications on Planning Committee agendas

Application received & reviewed by Officers. Is the application considered controversial*?

- YES: A report is prepared and presented to the committee
- NO: No report prepared and the planning committee is asked to receive and approve the officer recommendation(s) as set out on the agenda – additional comments can be made.

**Definition of controversial*

- *any FUL, Outline or Reserved Matters application*
- *any application where the recommendation is to object due to non-conformance with TNP/TNP2 policies, Local Plan, or national standards*
- *any application where there has been (or expected to be) local objection*
- *Any application where an amendment changes the Town Council's original recommendation.*
- *Any application which proposes significant changes to a listed building or a property within the Thame or Moreton Conservation Area.*

[2] Terms of Reference to be agreed. The scope of this steering group may cover some functions of the Planning Committee with regards to the Neighbourhood Plan.

11. Personnel Committee

Year	2026-27
Purpose:	Making decisions about all staffing matters, subject to budget and expenditure limits decided by Council. Developing and agreeing personnel policies and practices relating to salaries, recruitment, grades, conditions, health & safety, and pensions.
Reports to:	Full Council
Membership	6 – Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and Chairs of the 4 Committees. Elected annually at the Annual Meeting of the Council.
Quorum[3]	3
Frequency	Minimum 4 times a year
Meeting Duration	2 hours
Delegated spending	None
Sub-Committees	Grievance & Disciplinary (as required)
Advisory Committees	Complaints Panel (for internal complaints, as required)
Approved by / on:	

11.1 Approval of its Minutes as true and correct records.

11.2 Handling all staffing matters not delegated to officers or Sub-Committees.

11.3 Determining and making an appointment for the Town Clerk's position.

11.4 To establish a smaller briefing panel to support, supervise and performance manage the Clerk's work, to administer their leave requests, record and monitor their absences, and feedback to the personnel committee.

11.5 To establish and keep under review the staffing structure in consultation with the Clerk. Amending staff structure to reflect the Council's performance needs so long as within budget. Any changes requiring additional budget require Council approval.

11.6 Developing and agreeing personnel policies and practices in relation to salaries, grades, training, welfare, conditions, health & safety issues and pensions. To consider approving any incremental pay rises following staff appraisals. Reviewing annually the salary budget.

11.7 Monitoring spend against the budget in regard to Training and Development for staff and Councillors. Agreeing the Induction pack and training programme for staff and councillors, in line with agreed budgets.

11.8 Authorise adjustments to employees Terms & Conditions of employment.

11.9 Monitoring staff data such as sickness, TOIL, long service awards.

11.10 As necessary establish a sub-committee to handle any grievance and disciplinary matters or pay disputes in accordance with the Council's Disciplinary and Grievance Policies and Procedures.

11.11 Determining appeals under the Council's Appeal Process.

11.12 Convening a Complaints Panel when complaints are unable to be resolved and are progressed through the complaint's procedure.

11.13 Supporting officers in the procurement and review of any HR consultant and liaise with them as required on any HR matters unresolved by the Town Clerk or other line managers.

[3] Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12, Para 12 states that quorum must be at least one third and not less than 3.