



WORKING GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

These terms of reference are in conjunction with South Woodham Ferrers Town Council Standing Orders.

The purpose of the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Working Party is to monitor, assess, and report on the potential implications of local government reorganisation for South Woodham Ferrers Town Council, ensuring the Council is informed and prepared while avoiding premature commitments.

Scope

The Working Party is advisory only and shall:

- Monitor national and local developments relating to Essex County Council elections and local government reorganisation
- Consider implications for governance, service delivery interfaces, assets, and funding
- Identify opportunities and risks arising from reorganisation
- Act as a focal point for consultations and briefings
- Provide factual updates to Full Council

Exclusions

The Working Party shall not:

- Make decisions that commit the Council financially or legally
- Negotiate or agree asset or service transfers
- Act as a decision-making body
- Represent the Council publicly without authorisation.

Membership

Up to six Town Councillors.

The Town Clerk to attend in an advisory capacity.

The Chair to be appointed by Full Council.

Meetings

Meetings will be held as required.

Formal minutes are not required.

Meetings are not subject to public access requirements.

Reporting

The Working Party will report to Full Council through written updates or agenda items.

Any recommendations must be referred to Council for decision.

Duration

The Working Party is time-limited and will operate until 31 March 2027 unless extended or dissolved by Council.

Review

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually or earlier if required.

4. QUORUM

4.1 There is no quorum for meetings as the Group is not a delegated (decision making) committee.

5. CONDUCT OF THE MEETING

5.1 As an undelegated Working Group, the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 section 1 (1)), The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 and Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12, para 41(1) shall not apply.

5.2 In accordance with paragraph 5.1, no formal agenda, nor minutes, are required of the meeting.

5.3 In consideration of paragraph 5.1, the Group is free to operate as it feels appropriate, which may include meeting face-to-face, meeting virtually, collaboration on email etc.

5.4 Any information shared that is commercially sensitive should be kept within the membership of the Group.

5.5 Any communications to be shared by the Group must go through the usual Town Council channels, via the Town Clerk, and must comply with the Town Council communications and social media policies.

6. AREA OF OPERATIONS

The Group is set up with the following objectives:

6.1 To generate all ideas at Champions Manor Hall

6.2 To investigate the requirements, constraints and resources for recommended ideas.

6.3 To identify resource requirements for proposed actions. This may include staff resource and financial resources.

6.4 To recommend any public engagement exercises that may be considered necessary or beneficial (see 5.5 above).

7. POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

7.1 The working group has no delegated authority, so no power to make decisions or representations on behalf of the Council.

7.2 Making recommendations to Council on ideas, investigations and discussions within the Working party for a potential improvements on the land at Champions Manor Hall. This will include budget, design and location.

8. HEALTH AND SAFETY

8.1 To satisfy itself that Health and Safety and governance procedures are being followed in relation to the Working Group's remit.

9. ENVIRONMENT

9.1 To consider environmental, conservation and climate change matters in conducting the functions of the Working Group and in reaching all decisions.

10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

10.1 To consider equality and diversity (race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status and disability), tackling disadvantage, reducing social exclusion, and supporting society's most vulnerable groups, in conducting the functions of this Working Group.

11. FURTHER INFORMATION

11.1 The Working Group shall be report to Full Council for approval on all action.

11.2 The Working Group make recommendations to Full Council regarding its own Terms of Reference.

11.3 The Town Council may not always be able to act on all advice offered and there is no formal obligation to do so.