Baughurst Parish Council

IT Working Group – Terms of Reference

INTRODUCTION BY BAUGHURST PARISH COUNCIL

Baughurst Parish Council in line with many other parish/town councils will appoint working groups (or advisory groups) to assist them in their work and these can be very helpful in doing the background work to enable a council or committee to decide on a particular project/idea.
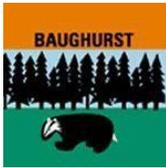
Working groups are not committees or sub committees and are not empowered to make decisions on behalf of the council. They are 'task and finish' groups so they are appointed to carry out a particular task and, once that task is complete, they should be disbanded. The working group is an informal advisory group and any decisions made by the group cannot bind the council. The council will consider the advice provided by the working group but are under no obligation to accept the advice as a basis for any decisions made by full council.

Often a council or committee will need to carry out some investigative work prior to making a decision. A working group could be appointed at a meeting with the specific task of doing the investigative work and reporting back to council with their recommendations by a specified date.

This Terms of Reference for the IT Working group was adopted by the Baughurst Parish Council at its meeting held on 23rd March 2023.

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1. Purpose of the IT Working Group

In order to carry out its functions effectively and efficiently, Baughurst Parish Council has requested the IT Working Group to review the use of its IT by councillors, the clerk and members of the public and make recommendations about improvements that could be made to enable improved communications and better decision making by the council.

2. Membership of the IT Working Group

Membership of the IT Working Group will be Richard Cockle, Colin Cooper, Janette Hewitt and Russ Clark, as agreed at the council meeting of 11 May 2023.
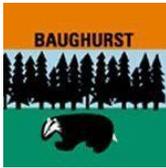
The IT Working Group may invite members of the public to join the efforts of the group and to attend meetings in an advisory capacity.

Colin Cooper has been appointed as Lead Member who will ensure all members of the IT Working Group are involved and informed and will act as the primary contact to the full council.

3. Remit of the IT Working Group

In line with the purpose set by the full council the remit of the IT Working Group is to:

- Review the use of email by the council and establish how this should be used most effectively and provide tools to help councils in their use of this system;
- Review the use of shares (specifically Microsoft OneDrive) within the council and propose how this technology should be used by the council to maximise information availability and improve council decisions;
- Review the council website and its operation and propose how this channel could be more effective in communicating with our residents and businesses and contribute towards community engagement, within the limits of the technical capability of the systems and services the council employs. The IT Working Group will make recommendations on systems to be used to meet the Integrated Communications Working Group's requirements for multi-channel operation;

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- Review and propose how IT should be used within the council process for appraising planning applications;
- Review how any other IT platforms, such as Parish Online, are used by the council and make recommendations as to their future role.

The working group does not have any delegated powers to make decisions for or on behalf of the council and must not exceed its purpose or remit without the council's permission.

The working group reports to the council and should provide reports on progress and recommendations during 2023 as appropriate in order for the council/committee to make decisions on IT. The first report made will include a plan for the deliverables from the IT Working Group.

Meetings of the working group are informal and therefore do not need to be held in public and may be held remotely.

Meetings of the working group do not need to be minuted, but minutes are considered best practice to allow for accurate reporting to the council. A formal written report should be made to the council at each meeting with a final report on progress, recommendations, achievements and issues outstanding to be made to the November 2023 meeting of council.

Once this final report has been accepted by council the IT Working Group will be disbanded.

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APPENDIX 1 AMENDMENT HISTORY

These are the amendments to the version one of the IT Working Group Terms of Reference.

Reference	Amendment
Version 2.1	Updated with revised members from council meeting 11 May 2023.
Version 2	Amended by comments from M Slatford
Version 1	The first version