

OPTIONS FOR ROLES AND FUNCTIONS OF COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES

COUNCIL		
ROLE & FUNCTIONS	POSITIVES	NEGATIVES
Status Quo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Members familiar with the system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not well structured ▪ Not consistent
Do Statutory Minimum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 3 meetings / year ▪ "Call in" where necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Minimum interaction ▪ Minimal awareness ▪ Lose camaraderie ▪ Few opportunities for Policy debates
More Frequent/ Shorter/ Formal Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Efficient and business like ▪ More opportunities to come together ▪ Receive minutes of Policy Committees ▪ Selection of minimum number of key issues to debate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policy Committees would have to meet as regularly as Council ▪ Huge increase in total number of meetings per cycle ▪ Knock-on effect on frequency of meetings and role of Scrutiny ▪ Insufficient time for Policy debates
Statutory Minimum + Policy Development Debates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Opportunity for all Members to be involved in development of policies ▪ Concentrates on the development of the Council, rather than the historical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ May not engage all Members ▪ Timing of debate during meeting crucial to maintain attendance levels ▪ Have to adjourn meeting if public to be excluded from the debate
Public Advocacy Role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Less formal ▪ Invited guests can provide breadth and diversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lose sense of purpose ▪ Too informal

COMMITTEES		
ROLE & FUNCTIONS	POSITIVES	NEGATIVES
Executive Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Makes Policy decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ "Back Benchers" and opposition feel side-lined from discussion/decision making
Executive Committee + Member Panels (based on Executive Units) + Task Groups to move issues/projects forward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As above ▪ Member Panels debate and put forward policy to EC ▪ All Member involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ "Back Benchers" and opposition feel side-lined from discussion/decision making
Service Based Committees (reflecting the new Executive Units e.g. Housing, Environment & Culture, Development Services, Corporate Resources) As opposed to Theme Based Policy Committees e.g. Cross-cutting Services such as Older People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Current system requires in-put from across a number of units e.g. Environment Committee ▪ More consistent and efficient management of service & financial planning ▪ Clearer definition of Committee responsibilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Services unlikely to fit neatly into cross-cutting theme ▪ Some services fit under a number of themes ▪ Not easy to define boundaries of responsibility of Committees ▪ In-put would be required from across a number of units
Area Based Committees (see note below)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deals locally with local issues and concerns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase in the number of meetings in total ▪ Tendency to be too parochial – lose sight of the bigger picture ▪ Resource implications

SCRUTINY & OVERVIEW		
ROLE & FUNCTIONS	POSITIVES	NEGATIVES
1 or 2 "Scrutiny and Overview" Committee(s)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Need to strengthen purpose / intent ▪ Each function is diluted by combining them
1 Scrutiny Committee and 1 Overview Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Emphasises importance of the role and function of each committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Need to ensure there is not an overlap of Overview's role i.e. its role depends on the rest of the structure

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Area Committees:-

- Deal with local issues
- If membership is limited to local Members need not be politically balanced provided the area covered does not exceed 2/5 of the area of the district or contain more than 2/5 of the electorate of the district
- Can be limited to a debating forum which makes representations to the Council or its committees
- Can have a local budget in which case it may take decisions affecting its area consistent with Council policy and within the local budget of the committee – unlike parishes cannot precept, budget set by Council.
- Can be given delegated authority to deal with local planning applications (generally limited to non-strategic applications with strategic reserved to DC). Unless the committee meets frequently however there could be an adverse effect on Planning's PIs and query how many applications would they get given the delegation scheme.
- Would be resource implications in that:-
 - Area Committees would meet locally and accommodation for the meetings would need to be hired.
 - Currently there are insufficient staff within Democratic Services to service Area Committees
 - Legal Services and Development Services do not have the resources to service Area Committees if they were to have a planning function