

Governance Structures: Committee System

Purpose

To provide examples of lower tier authorities operating the Committee system (4th option). Specifically:

- What committees they operate
- Terms of Reference for policy-type committees

Example Councils

- West Lindsey District Council Pages 2 - 3
- Worcester City Council Pages 4 - 5
- Borough of Wellingborough Page 6
- Malvern Hills District Council Page 7 - 8
- Ribble Valley Borough Council Page 9 -10

Other Councils you might want to explore

- Canterbury City
- Cambridge City
- Purbeck District Council

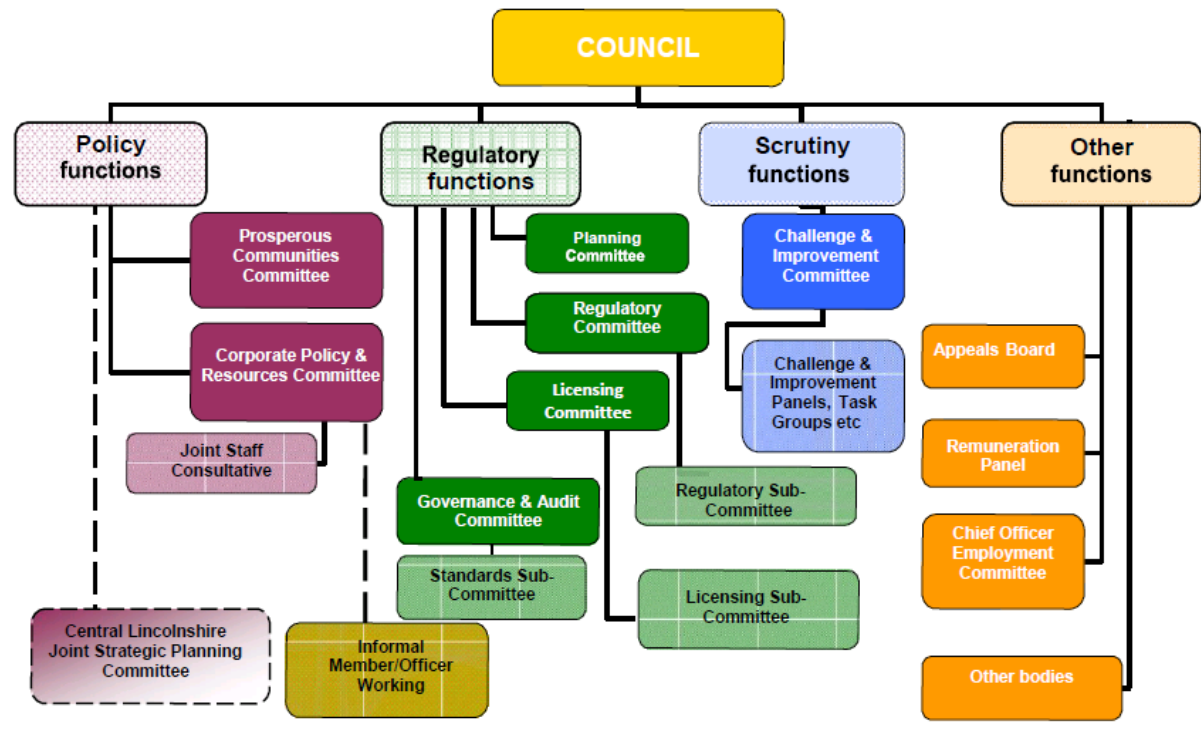
Other Useful Resources

Centre for Public Scrutiny has a number of publications, although the case studies might be somewhat dated, some of the guidance might be useful:

- <http://www.cfps.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Rethinking-Governance.pdf>
- <http://cfps.org.uk.surface3.vm.bytemark.co.uk/domains/cfps.org.uk/local/media/uploads/14.pdf>

West Lindsey District Council

Politc Governance Structure



Types of Committees and Terms of Reference

- Full Council

Regulatory Functions

- Planning
- Licensing – with sub panels
- Regulatory (Taxis) – with sub panels
- Governance and Audit
- Standards Sub

Policy Functions

- Corporate Policy and Resources – See [Terms of Reference](#)
- Prosperous Communities – See [Terms of Reference](#)

Scrutiny Function

- Challenge and Improvement Committee

Other

- Chief Officer Employment Committee

Background

West Lindsey have always operated a Committee System. Due to their size, they were permitted under the Local Government Act 2000 to remain in a committee structure.

They are currently considering removing their Scrutiny Committee as under the Committee Structure it is not required, and it can often struggle to find an effective role, in light of their decisions being made by politically balanced committees.

They do find themselves referring things between the two policy committees, as a scheme can be approved by Prosperous Communities Committee, but may require additional funds and this would be in the remit of Corporate Policy and Resources. Again this is an area they continue to try and refine, with some Members wishing to see the two Committees merged.

Further Information

The Constitution can be downloaded [here](#). The relevant sections are:

- Part 2 : Articles

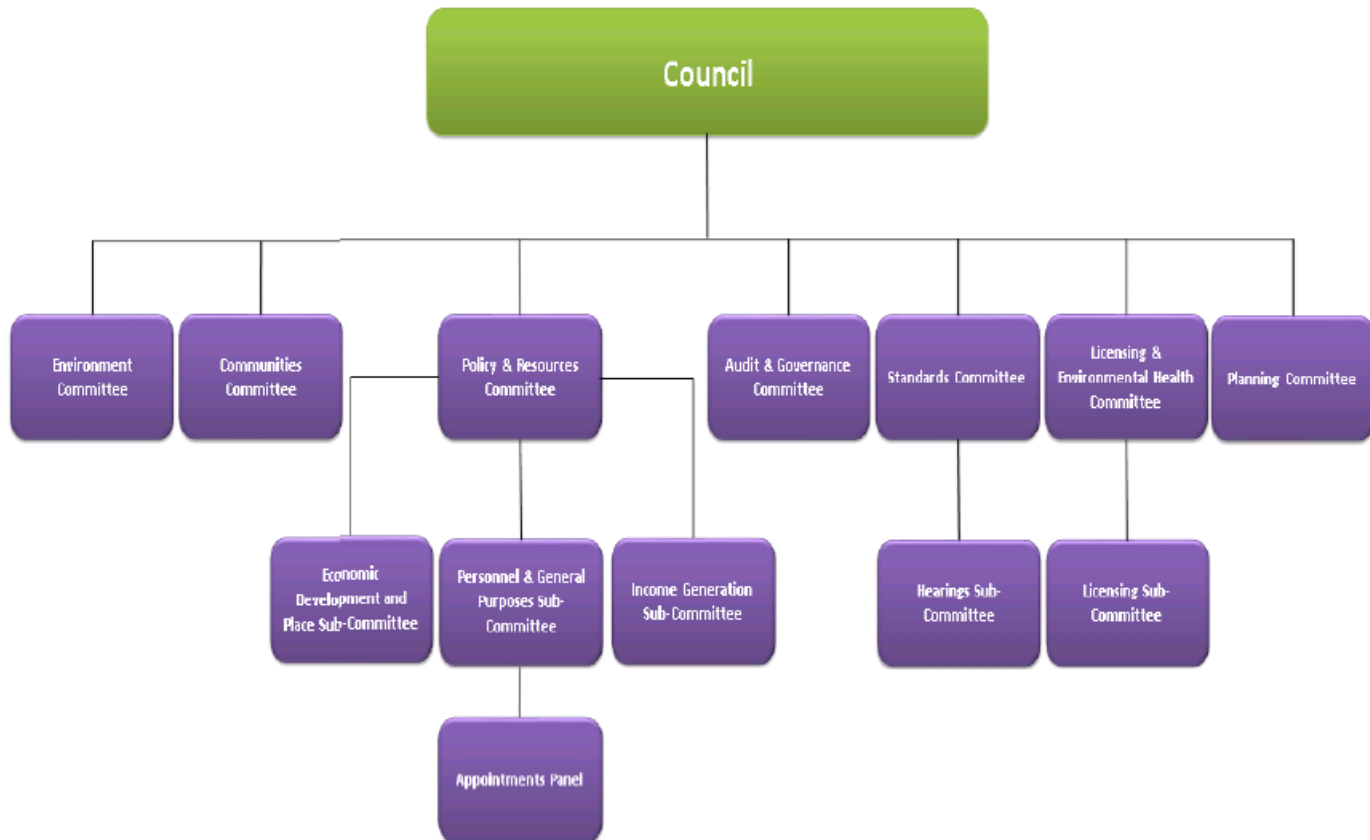
Article 8 sets out the decision making structure (see above diagram).

- Part 4: Responsibilities and Functions

This lists the responsibility of functions for each of the above listed committees.

Worcester City Council

Politic Governance Structure



Types of Committees and Terms of Reference

- Full Council

Policy Committees

- Communities Committee - [Terms of Reference](#)
- Environment Committee - [Terms of Reference](#)
- Policy and Resources Committee - [Terms of Reference](#)
 - Income Generation Sub Committee
 - Personnel and General Purposes Sub Committee
 - Place and Economic Development Sub Committee

Regulatory Committees

- Audit and Governance Committee
- Standards Committee
 - Standards Committee - Assessment Sub-Committee
 - Standards Committee - Hearings Sub-Committee
 - Standards Committee - Review Sub-Committee

- Licensing and Environmental Health Committee
 - Licensing Sub Committee - Licensing Act 2003
 - Licensing Sub Committee - Taxis
 - Licensing Sub-Committee - Gambling Act 2005
 - Licensing Sub-Committee - Sex Establishments
 - Licensing Sub-Committee - Street Trading
- Planning Committee

Background

The council originally had a committee system in place until 2001, adopting a leader and cabinet system in 2002, as required by national legislation. However the Council reverted back to the Committee System in May 2017.

Further Information

- [Responsibilities and Functions](#) set out in the Constituion.
- [Report to Full Council agreeing Committee Structure February 2017](#) sets out the functions of each Committee and rationale for change.

Borough Council of Wellingborough

Politic Governance Structure

They do not have a diagram of their committee structure.

Types of Committees and Terms of Reference

- Council

Policy Committees – [Terms of Reference](#) are on pages 34-37 the Constituion.

- Resources Committee
- Services Committee
- Development Committee

Regulatory

- Licensing Full Committee
 - Licensing sub-committee
- Planning Committee

Scrutiny

- Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Other

- Partnerships and Performance Committee
- Standards Committee
- Audit Committee

Background

- [List of Committees](#)
- [Constituion](#)

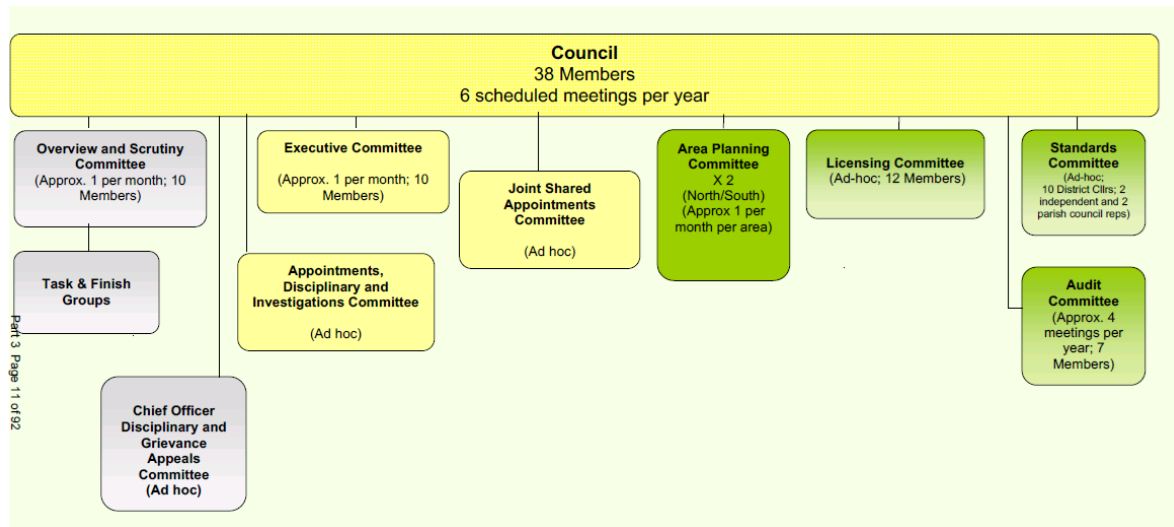
Further Information

There are currently have three policy committees; Services, Resources and Development. However the constitution is currently under review so this is subject to change.

Each committee has a manager (currently a Director/Assistant Director), who has overall responsibility for the committee. Each committee also has a chairman and vice-chairman who is generally a member of the councils current administration.

Malvern Hills District Council

Politic Governance Structure



Types of Committees and Terms of Reference

- Council

Policy Committees

- Executive - [Terms of Reference](#) (page 57)

Regulatory

- Licensing and Appeals Committee
- Area Planning Committee - [Terms of Reference](#) (page 74)

Overview and Scrutiny

- Overview and Scrutiny

Other

- Standards Committee
- Audit Committee

Background

Whilst Council approves the overall policy framework, most policy decisions are made by one or other of the following two policy committees, both of which exercise executive powers on behalf of the Council:

- Executive Committee - implements policy and takes executive decisions (collectively) in respect of all Council matters and services which are not specifically reserved for Council or delegated to another Committee of the Council or to Officers.
- Planning Committee - deals with all matters of planning policy and advises Council in relation to the adoption of the Local Plan.

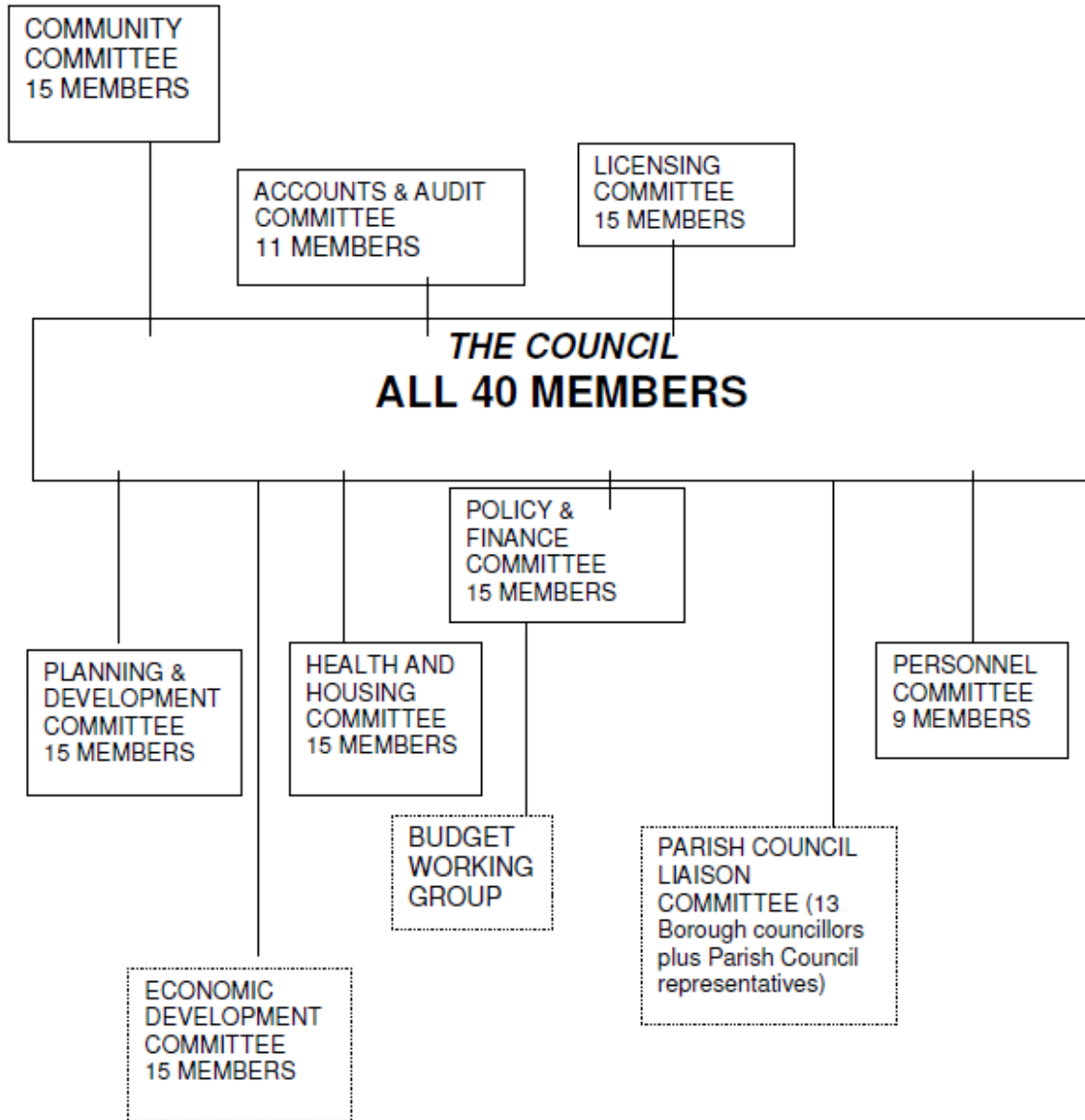
- It is a small district with only 60,000 electorate and about 78,000 population. The Committee system allows for quite straight forward decision making in a relatively small council.
- The leader is elected every year by the whole council, as well as the 9 specific portfolio holder roles which make up the Executive Committee. 5 are filled by the ruling administration and 4 posts filled by opposition members. In reality however Council makes most decisions and reports are taken through the executive more as a matter of course/for reference rather than for decision.

Further Information

[List of Committees](#)

Ribble Valley

Politic Governance Structure



Types of Committees and Terms of Reference

- Council

Policy Committees - [Terms of Reference](#) (Page 6 onwards)

- Community
- Economic Development
- Health and Housing
- Policy and Finance

Regulatory Committees

- Licensing
- Planning and Development

Other

- Standards Committee
- Accounts and Audit
- Parish Councils Liaison
- Personnel

Background

The Council have always operated the Committee system. Cindy Lowthian recently led a CPC there and found it worked quite well.

They have recently reviewed their structures to include a new Economic Development committee that can focus more on their economic development priorities. Report on this can be found: [here](#).