Governance Committee

Tuesday 30 November 2021 at 3.00 pm

Town Hall, Sheffield, S1 2HH

The Press and Public are Welcome to Attend

Membership

Councillor Julie Grocutt Councillor Penny Baker Councillor Sue Alston Councillor Dawn Dale Councillor Peter Garbutt Councillor Christine Gilligan Councillor Mark Jones Councillor Mary Lea Councillor Mike Levery Councillor Mohammed Mahroof Councillor Sioned-Mair Richards



PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE MEETING

The Governance Committee is leading on work to transition to a committee system of governance from May 2022. It is a politically proportionate Committee which will be tasked with oversight of the transitional work and will approve the recommendations to be made to Full Council.

The Committee will be outward facing. The Council will not be working in isolation on this project but will seek input from outside the organisation, ensuring citizens are engaged and are provided with opportunities to help shape this programme of work The Council will also be engaging the professional support of agencies such as the Local Government Association, the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny and Monitoring Officers from other local authorities which have recently transitioned or are about to transition to a Committee system. This will ensure the Council is supported through this period and learns from best practice to ensure that the system implemented in Sheffield responds to the needs of our City.

A copy of the agenda and reports is available on the Council's website at <u>www.sheffield.gov.uk</u>. You may not be allowed to see some reports because they contain confidential information. These items are usually marked * on the agenda.

Members of the public have the right to ask questions or submit petitions to Governance Committee meetings and recording is allowed under the direction of the Chair. Please see the <u>website</u> or contact Democratic Services for further information regarding public questions and petitions and details of the Council's protocol on audio/visual recording and photography at council meetings.

PLEASE NOTE: Meetings of the Governance Committee have to be held as physical meetings. If you would like to attend the meeting, you must register to attend by emailing committee@sheffield.gov.uk at least 2 clear days in advance of the date of the meeting. This is necessary to facilitate the management of attendance at the meeting to maintain social distancing. In order to ensure safe access and to protect all attendees, you will be asked to wear a face covering (unless you have an exemption) at all times when moving about within the venue.

It is also recommended that you undertake a Covid-19 Rapid Lateral Flow Test within two days of the meeting. You can order tests online to be delivered to your home address, or you can collect tests from a local pharmacy. Further details of these tests and how to obtain them can be accessed here - Order coronavirus (COVID-19) rapid lateral flow tests - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk). We are unable to guarantee entrance to observers, as priority will be given to registered speakers. Alternatively, you can observe the meeting remotely by clicking on the 'view the webcast' link provided on the meeting page of the website.

If you require any further information please contact Jay Bell email jay.bell@sheffield.gov.uk.

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE AGENDA 30 NOVEMBER 2021

Order of Business

1.	Welcome and Housekeeping Arrangements	
2.	Apologies for Absence	
3.	Exclusion of Public and Press To identify items where resolutions may be moved to exclude the press and public.	
4.	Declarations of Interest Members to declare any interests they have in the business to be considered at the meeting.	(Pages 5 - 8)
5.	Minutes of Previous Meeting To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 27 October 2021.	(Pages 9 - 16)
6.	Public Questions and Petitions To receive any questions or petitions from members of the public.	
7.	Review of Draft Design Principles Report of the Director of Legal and Governance.	(Pages 17 - 60)
8.	Transition to a Committee System Inquiry Session 1 Report of the Director of Legal and Governance.	(Pages 61 - 178)
9.	Date of Next Meeting The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 7 December 2021.	

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ADVICE TO MEMBERS ON DECLARING INTERESTS AT MEETINGS

If you are present at a meeting of the Council, of its executive or any committee of the executive, or of any committee, sub-committee, joint committee, or joint sub-committee of the authority, and you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest** (DPI) relating to any business that will be considered at the meeting, you must <u>not</u>:

- participate in any discussion of the business at the meeting, or if you become aware of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interest during the meeting, participate further in any discussion of the business, or
- participate in any vote or further vote taken on the matter at the meeting.

These prohibitions apply to any form of participation, including speaking as a member of the public.

You must:

- leave the room (in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct)
- make a verbal declaration of the existence and nature of any DPI at any meeting at which you are present at which an item of business which affects or relates to the subject matter of that interest is under consideration, at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent.
- declare it to the meeting and notify the Council's Monitoring Officer within 28 days, if the DPI is not already registered.

If you have any of the following pecuniary interests, they are your **disclosable pecuniary interests** under the new national rules. You have a pecuniary interest if you, or your spouse or civil partner, have a pecuniary interest.

- Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain, which you, or your spouse or civil partner undertakes.
- Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from your council or authority) made or provided within the relevant period* in respect of any expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

*The relevant period is the 12 months ending on the day when you tell the Monitoring Officer about your disclosable pecuniary interests.

- Any contract which is made between you, or your spouse or your civil partner (or a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest) and your council or authority –
 - under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and
 - which has not been fully discharged.

- Any beneficial interest in land which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, have and which is within the area of your council or authority.
- Any licence (alone or jointly with others) which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, holds to occupy land in the area of your council or authority for a month or longer.
- Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) -
 - the landlord is your council or authority; and
 - the tenant is a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest.
- Any beneficial interest which you, or your spouse or your civil partner has in securities of a body where -
 - (a) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of your council or authority; and
 - (b) either -
 - the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or
 - if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

If you attend a meeting at which any item of business is to be considered and you are aware that you have a **personal interest** in the matter which does not amount to a DPI, you must make verbal declaration of the existence and nature of that interest at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent. You should leave the room if your continued presence is incompatible with the 7 Principles of Public Life (selflessness; integrity; objectivity; accountability; openness; honesty; and leadership).

You have a personal interest where -

- a decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial standing (including interests in land and easements over land) of you or a member of your family or a person or an organisation with whom you have a close association to a greater extent than it would affect the majority of the Council Tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the ward or electoral area for which you have been elected or otherwise of the Authority's administrative area, or
- it relates to or is likely to affect any of the interests that are defined as DPIs but are in respect of a member of your family (other than a partner) or a person with whom you have a close association.

Guidance on declarations of interest, incorporating regulations published by the Government in relation to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, has been circulated to you previously.

You should identify any potential interest you may have relating to business to be considered at the meeting. This will help you and anyone that you ask for advice to fully consider all the circumstances before deciding what action you should take.

In certain circumstances the Council may grant a **dispensation** to permit a Member to take part in the business of the Authority even if the member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest relating to that business.

To obtain a dispensation, you must write to the Monitoring Officer at least 48 hours before the meeting in question, explaining why a dispensation is sought and desirable, and specifying the period of time for which it is sought. The Monitoring Officer may consult with the Independent Person or the Council's Standards Committee in relation to a request for dispensation.

Further advice can be obtained from Gillian Duckworth, Director of Legal and Governance on 0114 2734018 or email <u>gillian.duckworth@sheffield.gov.uk</u>.

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Agenda Item 5

Governance Committee

Meeting held 27 October 2021

PRESENT: Councillors Julie Grocutt (Chair), Sue Alston, Dawn Dale, Christine Gilligan, Mary Lea, Mike Levery, Mohammed Mahroof and Sioned-Mair Richards

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies for Absence were received by Councillors Penny Baker, Mark Jones and Kaltum Rivers.

2. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

2.1 No items were identified where resolutions may be moved to exclude the press and public.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

4.1 **RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2021 be approved as a correct record.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

5.1 There were no public questions or petitions received.

6. APPROACH TO DESIGNING A COMMITTEE SYSTEM

- 6.1 The Committee received a report of the Director of Legal and Governance concerning the approach to designing a committee system. The Assistant Director (Governance), Alexander Polak, explained the purpose of the report as per the papers.
- 6.2 The Assistant Director (Governance) explained that the Committee System Discussion Framework, highlighted in the report at Appendix 1, was a draft and would be likely to undergo many changes. The Committee was invited to discuss and suggest any alterations before agreeing the framework.
- 6.3 Members were referred to paragraph 4.7 of the report which highlighted that additional meetings of the Committee would need to be included before the end of 2021. These would appear as inquiry style workshops which would be scheduled in consultation with the

Chair and Vice Chair.

- 6.4 The Assistant Director (Governance) explained that two stakeholder engagement events had taken place since the publication of the report. It was mentioned that both events received a relatively high interest and positive feedback from the public, although some attendees felt that not enough had been done to publicise the events.
- 6.5 Members of the Committee raised questions and main points to note were-
- 6.6 A question was asked concerning whether a record had been taken of which wards members of the public were attending from and whether there was an option to change the venues of where stakeholder engagements take place. The Assistant Director (Governance) confirmed that no information had been recorded from the previous sessions and that venues would be alternated to different areas in the city.
- 6.7 A question was asked asked if the stakeholder events had presence from people who didn't vote for the change to a committee system. The Assistant Director (Governance) stated that a wide range of stakeholders from various groups attended, and it wasn't felt that there was a dominant group within each of the sessions.
- 6.8 A Member of the Committee suggested that some form of communication be directed to the business communities within the city, with the aim to improve engagement.
- 6.9 A Member of the Committee suggested that engagement should also be carried out with Sheffield City Partnerships.
- 6.10 A Member of the Committee raised concerns, as Appendix A in the report stated between 3-10 Committees be organised in the new model. It was mentioned that this factor of the new model could be seen as pre-determined, although it is yet to be considered. The Assistant Director (Governance) agreed to remove the numbers referred to in the framework if the Committee wished.
- 6.11 Members discussed the impact on political decision-making of operating a committee system while the Council was in 'no overall control'. It was suggested that there should be an option to call-in and scrutinise decisions even if they had been made by politically proportionate committees. It was also suggested that if a scrutiny function was to be incorporated into the new model, then Sheffield City Council decision-making processes should be made visible and understandable. The Assistant Director (Governance) explained that there was no requirement for an internal 'overview and scrutiny' function (in its specialised local government sense) although a mechanism for holding decision-makers to account would remain

important, as per the design principles previously agreed by members. The inclusion in the future model of 'overview and scrutiny' was a matter for members to decide in due course. It was added that Full Council could be a route of overturning decisions made by Committees, through a system which would need defining. The Director of Legal and Governance acknowledged the request for policies to made available and stated that the Head of Policy and Partnerships, Laurie Brennan, was currently looking to put this together.

- 6.12 A Member of the Committee referred to the Statutory Responsibilities for Members section in Appendix A. It was suggested that the two statements were contradicting. The Assistant Director (Governance) explained that through a quirk of the legislation a Lead Member for Children's Services must continue to be nominated, but in the committee system that person could not lawfully have any individual decision-making authority. The Director of Legal and Governance added that this made it very important for a trust relationship to be established between the Lead Member for Children's Services and the relevant Director.
- 6.13 A Member of the Committee raised concerns that if the Overarching Committee's functions were too similar to the functions of a Cabinet it would not be an acceptable response to the referendum.
- 6.14 A Member of the Committee suggested that a mechanism on how the public could challenge a decision should be included into the system.
- 6.15 **RESOLVED:** That (1) the progress in the five weeks since the Committee's last meeting be noted;

(2) the framework at Appendix A be agreed, subject to the amendment highlighted at the meeting, for immediate public use to support conversations with stakeholders, the public, councillors and officers about the future model of the Council's governance;

(3) that a whole-committee inquiry be conducted between now and Christmas 2021, with the goal of recommending a draft committee governance model to Full Council for endorsement in January. The inquiry will include:

- a. Open, council-led engagement with stakeholders, the public, members and council officers as per the engagement report elsewhere on today's agenda
- Desktop research including review of all relevant material received in the 2019 Scrutiny exercise and since including the Big City Conversation
- c. Research into comparator authorities' experiences and recognised best practice

- d. Lessons learnt from the active experimentation taking place via the Transitional Committees, Local Area Committees and other experiences of decision-making during the 2021/22 transitional year
- e. Whole-committee sessions on 30 November and up to three extraordinary meetings in early December, at which the committee may call expert witnesses as necessary to build on what has already been learned from the above; and

(4) that the approach be endorsed of using the draft governance model (after, and subject to, agreement by Full Council in January):

- a. As one of the starting points for the city-wide engagement exercise taking place in 'phase three' of the project in the new year, supported by Involve
- b. as the basis for progressing decisions about constitutional detail during January-March, subject to input from the simultaneous engagement exercise referred to at 4a, leading to a final agreement by Full Council in March 2022.

7. ENGAGING AND INVOLVING SHEFFIELDERS IN TRANSFORMING THE CITY'S GOVERNANCE

- 7.1 The Committee received a report of the Director of Legal and Governance concerning engaging and involving Sheffielders in transforming the city's governance. The Head of Policy and Partnerships, Laurie Brennan, highlighted that the report provided an overview of the proposed approach to ensure that Sheffielders had a strong and active role in the development of the city's new modern Committee System.
- 7.2 It was mentioned that the report highlighted an engagement approach, including upcoming activities that would interconnect citizens, communities and city partners between October and December 2021. The report also outlined that Sheffield City Council had brought in an independent charity with engagement expertise (Involve) to help the Council define its future ways of working with regard to the engagement of residents in the formulation of policy and decisions.
- 7.3 The Head of Policy and Partnerships asked the Committee to review the draft principles set out at section 10 of the report, which would be integrated with the draft Design Principles going forward.
- 7.4 Sarah Allan, The Director of Capacity Building and Standards at Involve, attended the meeting to give an overview of some work Involve had been part of and to answer any questions the Committee had.

- 7.5 Sarah Allan explained that Involve had worked with the UK Government, UK Parliament, Local Governments, Private Organisations and Community Groups on improving how they engage with members of the public. Sarah explained that a variety of engagement methods were used to ensure the public can contribute to decisions that impact their lives.
- 7.6 Sarah Allan assured the Committee that Involve would work with Sheffield City Council to meet its needs and engage with the people the Council sought to reach.
- 7.7 She gave an insight on how three workstreams would improve engagement with stakeholders. These were-
 - 1. Looking Inwards working with Sheffield City Council to ensure a strong alignment is formed between engagement and the new model.
 - 2. Looking Outwards working with Sheffield City Council to develop and deliver public engagement activities.
 - 3. Training, Mentoring and Support to pass on skills and knowledge to Sheffield City Council for future engagement.
- 7.8 Members of the Committee asked questions and the key points to note were-
- 7.9 Reference was made to the Training, Mentoring and Support workstream and that training needed to be carried out and accessible to both Councillors and Officers.
- 7.10 A question was asked if an example could be given of how Involve intend to reach out to community groups that do not usually engage. Sarah Allan informed the Committee that all of Involve's projects aim to reach out to groups that Sheffield City Council do not usually engage with.
- 7.11 It was asked whether It's Our City had shared insight on how they engaged and carried out so many conversations with the public. The Head of Policy and Partnerships stated that It's Our City had not yet shared their methods with Sheffield City Council however a key aspect of their approach was to carry out a transfer of knowledge to the Council. It was stated that It's Our City were very interested in working with the Council on how they can improve public engagement.

7.12 **RESOLVED:** that the Committee

(1) endorses the proposed approach to engaging communities over the coming months, including the proposed underpinning principles which will become part of our design principles; and (2) endorses the proposed innovative activity with Involve to engage citizens in how we make decisions that are inclusive, accessible and representative in Sheffield.

8. TRANSITIONAL COMMITTEES UPDATE

- 8.1 The Committee received a report of the Director of Legal and Governance concerning an update on Transitional Committees. The Chair, Councillor Julie Grocutt, explained the purpose of the report was to provide an opportunity to share information about the Transitional Committees early composite work plans. Each Transitional Committee Chair also had the opportunity to give initial feedback on their first Transitional Committee meetings.
- 8.2 A Member of the Committee believed the Our Council Transitional Committee first meeting went well. It was mentioned that working groups would be set up to target specific issues within the work programme, although these still needed to be set up in advance of the next Committee meeting.
- 8.3 A Member informed the Committee that the Communities and Neighbourhoods Transitional Committee had looked at Housing Repairs System at their first meeting. They also discussed setting up working groups which tenants would be able to attend. The Communities and Neighbourhoods Transitional Committee agreed to have an item on each agenda which would allow the Committee to review issues that had been referred to them from a Local Area Committee.
- 8.4 It was stated the Education, Health and Care Transitional Committee had been rescheduled due to technical issues therefore this Committee had not met yet.
- 8.5 **RESOLVED:** That the Committee:

(1) notes the Transitional Committee work programmes and verbal feed-back; and

(2) requests that a written update from the Transitional Committee Chairs be brought to the November meeting of the Governance Committee, on cross-party engagement so that a broad view and range of ideas can be considered; in accordance with their terms of reference, and any proposals they have for pilot ways of working that can inform the work of the Governance Committee in its consideration of a future committee model.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

9.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be on 30 November 2021 at 3.00 p.m.

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Agenda Item 7



Governance Committee Report

Report of: Director of Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer)

Date: 30 November 2021

Subject: Review of Draft Design Principles

Author of Report: Alexander Polak, Assistant Director (Governance)

Summary:

The purpose of this report is:

- 1. To present, as requested, feedback from members of the public and stakeholders about the previously-agreed draft design principles.
- 2. To review and update the 'draft design principles' as desired in light of this feedback
- 3. To agree the draft design principles, as amended, to continue to be used for the purpose of guiding the design, and future review, of Sheffield's modern committee governance model.

Recommendations:

- 1. That the feedback from members of the public and stakeholders (Appendix 1) be noted;
- 2. That the draft design principles be amended in light of this feedback, as per Appendix 2 subject to any alterations agreed; and
- 3. That these design principles, as amended, continue to be used for the purpose of guiding the design, and future review, of Sheffield's modern committee governance model, subject to any further review in the course of ongoing public engagement.

Background Papers: N/A

Statutory and Soundin'r Oney Checkinst		
Financial Implications		
NO - Cleared by: Kayleigh Inman		
Legal Implications		
NO - Cleared by: Sarah Bennett		
Equality of Opportunity Implications		
NO - Cleared by: James Henderson		
Tackling Health Inequalities Implications		
raciang ricata noquantos implications		
NO		
Human rights Implications		
NO:		
Environmental and Sustainability implications		
NO		
Economic impact		
NO		
Community safety implications		
NO		
Human resources implications		
NO		
Property implications		
NO		
Area(s) affected		
None		
Relevant Cabinet Portfolio Member		
Councillor Julie Grocutt, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Community Engagement and Governance		
Is the item a matter which is reserved for approval by the City Council?		
NO		
Press release		
NO		

Statutory and Council Policy Checklist

REVIEW OF DRAFT DESIGN PRINCIPLES

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Governance Committee has been appointed by Sheffield City Council to lead the work which will take the Council from a 'Leader and Cabinet' model of Governance to a 'Committee' model. The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny is advising the Council in this process and, in accordance with their published guidance on the subject, the Committee has sought to establish design principles as one of its first steps.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 On 6th May 2021, a Sheffield City Council Governance Referendum was held to determine whether the Council should be run by a leader who is an elected councillor chosen by a vote of the other elected councillors (which is how it is run now), or alternatively, by one or more committees made up of elected councillors. One result of this referendum was a binding resolution by Sheffield City Council on 19 May 2021 that it will, with effect from the start of the 2022/23 Municipal Year, cease to operate executive arrangements and start to operate a committee system of governance. The Governance Committee has been established to lead this process.
- 2.2 Three key parts of the governance change process have been defined as follows:
 - to engage with and listen to a range of stakeholders about the change and about ways of working within the future governance model;
 - to design the governance structure and ways of working within that structure; and
 - to design and implement any necessary changes to the support the council gives to members, officers and the public in order to enable this new structure and ways of working to succeed.
- 2.3 The committee previously noted that the Council doesn't have time between now and May 2022 to finish each of these steps in this order, in isolation from one another. All three are expected to run concurrently to some extent. As well as helping us hit our immovable May 2022 deadline, this 'iterative' approach is expected to provide a good environment in which stakeholder engagement can meaningfully feed into design work, and vice versa.
- 2.4 The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny has produced a range of

materials designed to guide and support local authorities which embark on a change of governance model. Section 4 of their November 2020 report '<u>Rethinking Council Governance for the 20s</u>' describes the importance of agreeing what they call 'design principles' early on in the process. Their advice is that:

"These should not be vague, general aspirations such as making the council operate more democratically or enhancing transparency. They should be tangible aims that you can use for two purposes:

- To reach a judgement on possible new governance models

 seeing whether proposed structures and ways of working
 are likely to live up to your objectives;
- To return to in future to help you to come to a judgment on whether your new systems are working or not."
- 2.5 The CfGS give examples to demonstrate the clarity they suggest is needed in the objectives, such as "involve councillors more in the development of key policies" or "seek to engage more fundamentally with local people and their needs."

3.0 HOW THE CURRENT PRINCIPLES WERE AGREED

- 3.1 A report to the Governance Committee on 20 September 2021 set out the context of a set of proposed draft design principles, which could be adapted from work carried out in 2019 by Sheffield City Council's Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee. That work included a series of evidence gathering sessions in order to hear from a range of witnesses about the ideal operation of any future governance model. This included experts in local governance and decision making, local organisations with an interest in local democracy, partners from business and the Voluntary Community and Faith sector, Youth Cabinet and Youth Advisers. They also invited contributions from citizens through an online call for evidence and attendance at meetings, and undertook site visits and conversations with other local authorities to learn from their experiences of operating different governance models. A full list of witnesses, links to the evidence they considered and webcasts of their meetings can be found in that committee's final report, 'Principles for Governance at Sheffield City Council'.
- 3.2 The 'governance principles' and 'how we do business (ways of working)' from that final report, <u>later endorsed by the entire Council on</u> <u>8 January 2020</u>, were adapted slightly by the Governance Committee and agreed as a set of 'draft design principles' for the move to a committee system, at their <u>20 September 2021</u> meeting.
- 3.3 At its <u>27 October meeting</u>, the Governance Committee agreed to add some further design principles to the list, relating specifically to the council's ambitions for effective engagement. These can be found in

Appendix 2 under the heading 'engagement principles'.

4.0 ONGOING REVIEW ALONGSIDE DESIGN

- 4.1 At the point that the draft design principles were agreed, members also agreed that they would be 'used as the basis for immediate stakeholder engagement' and 'kept under review throughout the planned cycles of stakeholder engagement and design up to and beyond May 2022'.
- 4.2 'Immediate commencement of design work for the new committee governance model on the basis of these design principles' was endorsed, which is why there is a report elsewhere on today's agenda which presents a degree of design progress against the principles as agreed in September. However it was 'noted' by the committee that 'early design work may need to retrospectively take account of any future revisions to the design principles'. In other words, any changes to design principles as the result of this paper, will need to be retrospectively applied to that paper over the course of the ongoing inquiry.

5.0 ENGAGEMENT

- 5.1 Members have been clear that the development of and transition to a committee system in Sheffield will be fundamentally based on the views and ambitions of Sheffielders.
- 5.2 At its 20 September meeting the Governance committee agreed 'the immediate commencement of stakeholder engagement activity' along the following lines:

"Topic-by-topic engagement with internal and external stakeholders on technical questions as they arise for the Committee's consideration, including via an open public invitation for participants to contribute via a stakeholder group made up of interested parties"

- 5.3 At its <u>27 October meeting</u>, the Governance Committee agreed further detail about the approach to engaging the public and stakeholders in this design process.
- 5.4 Accordingly, the draft design principles were used as part of the basis for the first two of the regular, public, stakeholder engagement events which have been taking place since 22 October. Further comments relating to the principles have continued to be gathered since.
- 5.5 **The detail of the events and of the feedback received is set out at Appendix 1.**
- 6.0 REVIEWING THE PRINCIPLES

- 6.1 A revised set of design principles is included at Appendix 2 with changes tracked (and an un-edited version, to aid with comparison), in order to enable members to consider the various options for changes to the principles.
- 6.2 A range of feedback has been received and it is important to remember that the original set of principles, while designed in a different context before the referendum, came from an extremely well-evidenced select-committee style exercise. The proposed changes to the document are intended to strike a path which balances all of the inputs into the design process so far, but in general with a lean towards inclusion of recent suggestions, in light of the time passed since the principles were first authored.

7.0 LEGAL, FINANCIAL AND EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no immediate legal implications to this report.
- 7.2 While a new proposal has been made to include a principle about cost neutrality of the new system, a decision to include this in the list of principles would not, at this stage, have direct financial implications for the authority.
- 7.3 There are no immediate equalities implications to this report. Equalities will be a key consideration in the design and implementation of the engagement programme, the detail of which will return to the October meeting of this committee for agreement. As per section 4.3 above, the Council is committed to ensuring that the development of our governance is inclusive, with involvement from all communities and Sheffielders with protected characteristics, and these views will feed directly into the design of the new governance model. An Equality Impact Assessment is underway and will be kept under review as part of the engagement work.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1. That the feedback from members of the public and stakeholders (Appendix 1) be noted;
- 2. That the draft design principles be amended in light of this feedback, as per Appendix 2 subject to any alterations agreed; and
- 3. That these design principles, as amended, continue to be used for the purpose of guiding the design, and future review, of Sheffield's modern committee governance model, subject to any further review in the course of ongoing public engagement.

9.0 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Summary of feedback received during the public stakeholder engagement work so far which is either implicitly or explicitly about the draft design principles

Appendix 2 – Options for amendments to the design principles, incorporating this feedback

Gillian Duckworth Director of Legal & Governance (and Monitoring Officer)

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2021 Public Engagement – Collated feedback <u>about Design Principles</u>

<u>Overview</u>

Below is the amalgamated feedback based on the public engagement sessions that have been delivered as part of the Transition to Committee Programme, including written submissions.

The aim of the sessions have been to provide early engagement with members of the public on key themes and areas that comprise the move to the committee model of governance whilst it is still being formed and discussed. The sessions have been organised by officers, supported by the Centre for Scrutiny and Governance (CfGS) as independent advisors and overseen by Alexander Polak (Assistant Director of Governance).

Five sessions have been run so far, as follows

Session 1

An invite-only discussion amongst key stakeholders who had previously identified themselves as interested parties, with the purpose of sharing information about plans and progress to date, and importantly asking for input into how to best conduct the council's engagement process over the coming months. This was facilitated and planned with the support of Jacqui McKinley from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny and Nigel Slack, self-described Active Citizen, who provided a continuity link back to the Big City Conversation at this and subsequent events.

Sessions 2 & 3

The remaining sessions 2-5 were open to the public and advertised via Sheffield Council comms channels. At first most attendees were already known to the council as people or organisations with an active interest in local authority governance, but the ratio of new faces has increased over time.

The second session was an in-person event at St Marys on the 22nd October and the third session was a virtual session that was run on Zoom on the evening of the 26th October. Both sessions followed the same agenda;

- 1. <u>Introduction Jacqui McKinlay Centre for Governance and Scrutiny</u>
 - Nigel Slack Active Citizen also introduced the in-person session
- 2. <u>Scene Setting</u> Alex Polak Assistant Director (Governance)
- 3. Facilitated breakout sessions
- 4. Design Principles 1 Facilitator Frances West (SCC)

- SCC...is a trusted organisation where decisions are taken in an open and transparent way, and accountability is clear.
- SCC... is a council where all councillors are involved in and able to influence decision making
- 5. Design Principles 2 Facilitator Jacqui McKinlay (CfGS)
 - SCC...engages, involves and listens to citizens, communities and partners
 - SCC...has a modern and responsive approach to governance which reflects the increasingly complex policy making environment
 - SCC...is a reflective council that is committed to continuously improving governance
- 6. New ways of working (how the committee system works) Discussion around the framework. Facilitator Alex Polak (SCC).
- 7. New ways of working (how citizens get involved). Facilitator Laurie Brennan (SCC)

Session 4

The fourth session was an in-person event on the evening of 8th November at the Vestry Hall in Burngreave.

The session had the following agenda:

- 1. Introduction Jacqui McKinlay Centre for Governance and Scrutiny
- 2. <u>Scene Setting</u> Alex Polak Assistant Director (Governance)
- 3. Facilitated breakout sessions
 - How the Committees should be organised what should each committee focus on? Facilitator - Gillian Duckworth (SCC)
 - How should new committees work and link with Local Area Committees and other democratic decision-making groups?
 Facilitator - Jacqui McKinlay (CfGS)
 - How do we hold decision-makers to account do we need separate scrutiny Committees? Facilitator - Alex Polak (SCC).

Session 5

The fifth session was a virtual event held on the 24th November

At the time of writing, the session was due to focus on the same areas as the inperson event on the 8th, however it was anticipated that the topics may alter at the last minute in light of the publication of committee papers earlier that week. Feedback from this session is not yet incorporated into this document.

Written submissions

A small number of written submissions have been received as part of this exercise, primarily from individuals or organisations who felt there wasn't time at the

workshops to put their full views across, after allowing fair time for other participants to speak. This approach has been most welcome and constructive for the wider listening exercise, and so it is important that the written submissions are given the same weight and attention as the verbal comments captured. All written submissions have been fully incorporated into the summary below, with the exception of the submission from Its Our City, which is of a scale which lends itself better to inclusion in full. Its summary points have been included in this document and then the whole submission is appended.

What we heard about the principles overall:

- The principles should be updated for changed contexts (since 2019) and to include citizen and community perspectives. We believe there are major gaps, some reorientations, and some amendments, to be made to the 'old' principles, and for their operationalisation.
- The over-emphasis on "structures" in the Governance Principles section should be changed (CfGS strongly and consistently advises that, if anything, *culture* is, actually, the broadly crucial element). We recommend that reconsideration be given to what looks like an over-emphasis on simply 'governance structures' or 'decision-making structures'. Potential replacements include: 'governance arrangements', decision-making structures and processes', 'governance structure and culture'.
- More clarity is needed. Do critical ambitions relate to outcomes? Should principles be expressed as aims? Are ways of working the start of objectives? Organising as aims, objectives and outcomes would help clarify the distinctions and help with design, development, alignment, manageability and evaluation (and will begin to meet the intention expressed in ways of working 14)
- Notwithstanding the critical omissions listed elsewhere, the existing principles should be reduced in number (there is quite a lot of overlap/repetition, indicated in the commentary), and to help in manageability
- Recommend opening statement: "Our governance principles [will] inform, and be clearly operationalised in the governance arrangements (structures, processes and procedures) laid down in a new council constitution, and evident in the governance culture of SCC."
- ADD CRITICAL AMBITION: "Sheffield City Council is committed to local democracy; good democratic principles and practices demonstrably underpin our city governance."
- ADD GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLE: "Appropriate democratic checks and balances are in place in the exercise of power, and pluralism and collaboration is valued in our partnership working, decision-making and constitutional arrangements (and consensus sought where possible) - to support the best possible democratic decision-making in a diverse city."
- The principles are too obvious, no one will disagree that trust and accountability are a good thing and they are set out as if the principles are achieved already when they are more aspirational. The principles are statements that should be identified as aspirational I.E SCC will become a trusted organisation.
- All these aspirations are great but if we don't know what the outcomes will be and have no set targets then the straplines are meaningless. The principles themselves need to be meaningful and measurable and acted upon.

- Less vague words and more cause and effect. 'We will do X,Y,Z and this will mean X,Y,Z' with checks and balances in place to ensure the Council are delivering on what they say.
- It isn't clear what values underpin the principles and what other plans or strategies they link to E.G the Sheffield plan. 'If we don't know where we are going there is no point setting out on the journey.'
- Principles should reflect the need for cross party respect, greater collaboration and support a fair distribution of influence They should support improved governance.
- Buzz words in the principles are great but the Council are not there at the moment and hasn't been in the past either.
- The principles do not include 'communication' or 'effective' and there is a role for both of these values.
- People were concerned about inequalities in our governance arrangements that would be a real gap in these principles. There's nothing that says we recognise there are inequalities and we will look to address it.
- Business community not mentioned in the principles (although maybe they count as 'people of Sheffield'?)

What we heard about the individual principles

A. Critical aim: SCC is a trusted organisation where decisions are taken in an open and transparent way, and accountability is clear.

Governance Principles:

- 1. A commitment to openness and transparency must run through our decision-making structure.
- 2. Comprehensive forward planning of decisions being clear about what decisions we are planning to take, when they will be taken, who will be taking them.
- 3. Clear reports from officers that set out the relevant information in an accessible way, and are clear about the reasons for a decision being made.
- 4. Mechanisms for holding decision-makers and other parts of the partnership landscape should be strengthened in any future decision-making structure we must be held accountable for the decisions that we take, and embrace challenge to ensure we're getting the best outcomes for Sheffield.
- 5. Our governance should be underpinned by a commitment to the highest ethical standards as set out in the Nolan Standards on Public Life.

How we do Business (Ways of Working)

16. We need to take a more creative approach to communication between residents and the Council, including about what decisions are being made and why, what they mean to residents and what they mean for the city. This needs to be supported by effective communication and information about how decision-making works.

<u>Feedback</u>

- Governance principle 1 and 6: reconsider/consider removing (a repeat).
- SCC has an air of arrogance that needs to be cast off if it wants to regain any trust.

- Both these principles (trust and transparency) should already exist! "I would worry if transparency and trust were not already part of the existing process."
- SCC need to investigate what the strength and weaknesses are in relation to trust for the council and How people perceive the council post pandemic?
- There is no clarity of the evidence used for decision making. There is no level of policy detail, what the criteria are that are being used for decision making etc
- People don't understand why decisions are made currently you need to have open, honest conversations about this, even if certain decisions are not possible due to money or any strings attached to funding and what can and can't be done.
- More awareness of what is available online for the people in terms of decision making is required and for those who are not as digitally enabled can physical copies be made available of agenda's/minutes etc in a library, Town Hall or public place.
- What does transparent actually mean? What decisions are made behind closed doors or by officer recommendations even before being discussed at a council meeting. Ensuring all meetings are online and papers are accessible would encourage transparency.
- There is a concern that officers have too much delegated authority and that is not representative of elected decision making.
- There is a huge gap between where SCC is and transparency with accountability. If the people who should be accountable in the current system are still present in the new system then what is actually going to change?

B. Critical aim: SCC is a council where all councillors are involved in and able to influence decision making

Governance Principles:

- Our decision-making structure should be designed in a way that creates channels for all 84 Councillors to be involved in, and influence decision making.
- 7. Our decision-making structure should be underpinned by effective ways of working with local communities, including through development of the role and use of Local Area Committees, informed by the Big City Conversation and other, ongoing engagement with Sheffielders.
- 8. We are a member-led authority, where accountability lies with elected councillors. Our decision-making structure must reflect this, and not inappropriately increase delegations to officers.
- 9. Our decision-making structure needs to reflect the practical demands on councillors' time. Need to find a balance between time spent in formal decision-making meetings in the Town Hall against working with and in communities. Time demands shouldn't prohibit people with working/caring commitments from being a Councillor.

How We Do Business (Ways of Working):

- 17. Role of Full Council should be reviewed in the light of changes following the referendum consider how we could make it a more meaningful forum.
- 18. Ensure that the appropriate support, training and skills development is continuously available for councillors so they can take full advantage of the opportunities under the new structure.

19. We need to build a culture in which political disagreement is handled constructively and where members are supported to develop the listening, debating, chairing and committee-membership skills needed for this to happen.

Feedback:

- Rephrase this critical ambition as follows: "Sheffield City Council ensures that all councillors are involved in and able to influence decision-making [ADD] and that citizens can see the contributions their local councillors make to decision-making processes."
- Governance principle 1 and 6: reconsider/consider removing (a repeat).
- Governance principle 7: remove/combine.
- Governance principle 8: [CHANGE] "Council officers play an important role in decision-making via delegated authority and, more generally in our local democracy, as public servants. Accountability, however, lies with elected councillors so, in a new governance system, our decision-making arrangements need to reflect this and not inappropriately increase delegations to officers."
- Governance principle 9: [ADD] "Governance under a new MCS will not increase bureaucracy"
- Ways of Working 18: update to reflect changed context/new cllr roles under a MCS.
- There is a fear that there will be an attempt to marginalise the effect of the change to committee however there was also optimism for this principle vocalised
- We need to ensure that the biggest majority party are not pushing out other parties in areas of interest and cross-party respect needs to be improved
- Will a majority of political parties allow individual members to have their own opinions or will a whip system mean that all councillors don't actually have individual influence?
- How will councillors have their voice heard at every committee if they have an issue to discuss and will every councillor get the agenda for every committee so they can choose which items they want to input into?
- How many members will be on each committee?

C. Critical aim: SCC engages, involves, and listens to citizens, communities, and partners:

Governance Principles:

10. The issues people care about are often local in nature. Our decision-making structure needs to include channels through which people, communities and partners can work with local councillors about what is important to them. We need to strengthen locality arrangements based on the findings of the Big City Conversation and ensure that these arrangements work effectively alongside, and feed into, citywide decision-making processes.

How We Do Business (Ways of Working):

20. We must ensure that a commitment to meaningful engagement, involvement and consultation runs through the organisation. We should renew a commitment to our Consultation Principles, and reflect on how the council's Engagement Standards which are currently in development can improve practice throughout our work.

- 21. We need to constantly demonstrate how engagement activity is shaping decision making, and be honest about the impact it is having, so communities and partners can understand how their views have been responded to.
- 22. We need to make it as easy as possible for people to engage with us the starting point for this should be clear, consistent, accessible communication about what the Council is doing, what decisions we are planning to take and how to get involved.

Feedback:

- Rephrase this Critical ambition as follows: "Sheffield City Council engages, involves and listens to citizens, communities, [ADD] stakeholders and partners with the belief and expectation that this will be influential, and improve our decisions and decision-making."
- Governance principle 10: replace first sentence with "People in Sheffield care about what happens in their local communities" And remove/combine with 7 (do not mention things that could become too dated e.g. BCC).
- Ways of Working 21: [ADD] "The influence/impact of engagement with stakeholders, or consultation, will be made clear and documented (e.g. in minutes) for all significant new policy, decisions and review."
- Ways of Working 22,23,24 repeats and overlaps
- ADD GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLE: "Inequalities and discrimination can play a significant role in capacities and abilities to participate, to be heard, and to exercise influence. Our governance procedures and practices will actively seek to mitigate the impacts of inequality and for inclusive governance and decision-making."
- ADD GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLE (OR INTEGRATE INTO ANOTHER ONE): "Decision-making committees in our MCS will integrate the views of stakeholders into their work, discussions and decision-making (and who will also be able to act as a conduit between their wider networks and the council, so improving connections between council and city networks/groups/communities)."
- ADD GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLE: "SCC welcomes, supports and enables a strong, independent, diverse and cohesive voluntary and community sector (VCS) in working alongside SCC, acting as a critical friend, having influence and impact on policy and decisions, and playing an important role holding the council to account. SCC treats VCS organisations fairly without favouritism."
- ADD GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLE: "We want to increase the connections and safeguard positive and reliable relationships between local councillors and their local communities, citizens, VCS stakeholders, and local businesses through our governance arrangements and procedures."
- Early and inclusive engagement is the most important feature. Consultation (by SCC) is usually giving information with a decision already made rather than meaningful engagement. Move engagement is needed to allow influence for citizens in decisions.
- Communication/engagement principle should show engagement as a priority for the Council, including getting the website to work which it currently doesn't.
- Would be very helpful to understand how SCC will engage. Most people are happy to let the Council to get on with their work but need to know how to engage with SCC if there is a problem. Want to know how does the Council engage with me.
- Communication is key Apple are pretty good at this (commercial examples of good practice) and Bristol is quite good. Often compared to Barnsley but this is a

very different town. Need to compare to cities of the same size and resources such as Bristol

- Engaging and involving a lot of people don't understand the power of the council and the number of areas it covers. Most people engage around bins and potholes as these are things they see. However, most money is spent on children and adults' services. It is difficult to get people to understand the breadth of work of the council and the pressures on the budget.
- Need to engage with everyone about democracy and much more strategically to help people understand the role of the council and how important it is to vote.

D. Critical aim: SCC has a modern and responsive approach to governance which reflects the increasingly complex policy making environment:

Governance Principles:

- 11. Our decision-making structure must avoid silo working both within and outside of the City Council, and enable a joined up approach to tackling issues which need the involvement of a number of organisations in the city
- 12. Our decision-making structure needs to have a mechanism for making urgent decisions openly, transparently and effectively engaging elected councillors.
- 13. Our decision-making structure needs to strengthen our ability to work with our partners in a complex local, sub-regional and national policy environment, and enable us to take a lead on key issues facing the city and the citizens of Sheffield.

How We Do Business (Ways of Working):

23. We need to improve the information we provide about how decision making happens across the City as a whole and how partnerships and structures interconnect.

Feedback:

- Rephrase Critical ambition as follows: [REPLACE] "modern" with "forwardthinking" "strategic" or "outward-facing". Also consider removing altogether.
- Governance principle 13: [REPLACE] "decision-making structure" with "governance arrangements".
- ADD GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLE (OR INTEGRATE/AMEND PRINCIPLE 2 OR 3 OR WAYS OF WORKING 16 OR 23): "Policy development will follow recognised good practice and the basis (e.g. research, evidence, information, expertise, stakeholder views, political priorities etc) on which significant decisions are made will be clear and documented/publicly available."
- Modern has funny connotations potentially re word as 'forward-thinking'
- Modern and responsive approach to governance, but no statement to say that the Council will respond to citizens.
- Ways of Working 22,23,24 repeats and overlaps

E. Critical aim: SCC is a reflective council that is committed to continuously improving governance:

Governance Principles:

- 14. We need to be clear about what we are trying to achieve through our governance arrangements, and build in measures to assess whether it is working
- 15. We need to identify a forum that enables us to reflect, on an ongoing basis, on whether our governance systems are working as anticipated, and if changes need to be made.

How We Do Business (Ways of Working):

24. We need to establish a process of continuous engagement so that Members, partners and citizens can give a view on how the system is working.

Feedback:

- Rephrase critical ambition as follows: [CHANGE/ADD] "Sheffield City Council is a reflective council that is committed to continuously improving governance, including citizen and stakeholder debate, and attention to best practice and innovation elsewhere."
- Governance principle 14: we welcome more clarity and measurability but question the necessity for this as a principle/covered elsewhere.
- Ways of Working 22,23,24 repeats and overlaps
- ADD GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLE: "New governance arrangements, and as laid down in the constitution, will uphold, and look to enhance, citizens rights, and will regularly check these are working well in review."
- ADD GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLE: "New governance arrangements as a result of the referendum will not increase council bureaucracy (e.g. the average councillor will go to around the same number of meetings) or increase costs (following the example of councils that have already changed to a Modern Committee system)"
- More democratic governance and checks and balances is the thing that people in Sheffield want. People want governance to ensure inclusive decision-making and integrate partners and residents into decision-making
- The Council didn't review itself for a long time, how often does the Council reflect? It must happen but usually it's just navel contemplation. The council should be more reflective and less inward looking

Engagement Principles (agreed 27 Oct 2021)

- 25. **Transparency** we want to provide relevant information that demonstrates our intentions and decision-making to citizens in a way that is accessible and understandable
- 26. Diversity We recognise that the city of Sheffield is made up of a broad and diverse group of people encompassing different ethnicities, gender, age, socio-economic backgrounds, values and physical and mental ability. We have a wide range of languages, cultures, digital, literacy and numeracy skills represented across the city and all backgrounds, interests and needs should be considered
- 27. Inclusive participation Provide all citizens with clear routes and opportunities to contribute to and influence outcomes that will directly affect their lives. Schedule meetings at times and in places that are convenient for as many people as possible and provide parallel ways for people to take part in a way that suits them.

- 28. **Equality** Encourage open discussion so that no sections of the community are left out and all ideas are treated with respect. Decisions should not be controlled be one particular section of a community.
- 29. **Responsiveness** Listen to views, opinions, concerns, complaints and opportunities and be clear how we will use this insight gathered to inform our decision-making.

Themes

Throughout all the breakout discussions various cross cutting themes emerged and have been collated below. Some refer to part of the principles but were so strongly vocalised by the groups they have been organised into the themes below. The headings for these themes were not predetermined, they have emerged from the feedback.

Engagement

- Engaging and involving a lot of people don't understand the power of the council and the number of areas it covers. Most people engage around bins and potholes as these are things they see. However, most money is spent on children and adults' services. It's difficult to get people to understand the breadth of work of the council and the pressures on the budget.
- Need to engage much more strategically to help people understand the role of the council and how important it is vote.
- Positive that these current engagement sessions are focused on thinking and suggestions from the public rather than just an information session where people are talked at.
- There was a large focus on ensuring that the council are working to engage with communities across the city and that engagement should happen out in the communities and the council should 'go out to them' where it is easiest for those people to get involved who want to. This included the potential use of existing community spaces and organising events at times that would not exclude people with work or other commitments i.e. don't just run things Monday to Friday, 9 5.
- The council take advantage of the strong existing BAME, disability, LGBT sectors and organisations that are in the city to access key groups.
- It was felt that some communities have been left behind in decision making, such as the Deaf community and that more can be done to support them in engaging (use of BSL interpreters for events etc)
- It was felt that the members also had a role to play as they are out on the streets and talking to their communities and this should be seen as a opportunity to reach out to some new voices - especially in postcodes with lowest level voter turnouts.
- There is concern about the lack of youth engagement "you need to think of ways to include people of a diverse background, particularly people who are digitally excluded. Young people work shifts or people who can't afford a computer – how do we engage with these sections of the community?"
- Knowing the role of organisations like VAS and how they can help to prepare organisations to put their case to the council via Councillors, officers or questions. Not all have the wherewithal and funding to do that. I don't think SCC does enough with VAS to generate that feedback.
- People also concerned between gap between rhetoric and reality.... the crucial thing is seeing the influence and impact that that engagement has.

Involving

- All meetings should be accessible to the public (either physically or online)
- There is a community of disability across the city that need to be considered when meetings are organised.
- When you get more people in the room, how are you going to educate them in advance so that by the time they turn up they are equipped to contribute? Previous consultation processes (flood prevention was provided as an example) did not provide enough information to make an informed decision.
- Does everyone who the Council apparently represents understand the points of access and how to bring forward a question or problem?

Listening

- 'Two ears and one mouth and need to use these in this proportion' communication is listening and not talking.
- Council never really wanted to listen, it's been "we'll do it our way" and consultation in name only.
- Challenge in Sheffield is that people are used to not being listened to or if it does listen it doesn't reflect back so it leaves people feeling unheard building trust will take quite a while. Cabinet members are taking things into account, listening, and putting together a response which is new, this is a start.
- No point in listening if it doesn't make a difference. There should be an expectation that people and organisations will improve what the council can do, and the sense we can work alongside each other
- Listen to people. It feels as though those who shout the loudest get heard and the majority of people are not listened to.

Communication

- Feel that public don't know what is happening you need to get out there!
- One thing that could be improved is if people got regular updates from the Council. Often only find out about a decision after it has been made, and not even then.
- Some people receive the Council newsletter which is good but don't know who the local councillors are or hear from them not enough communication with citizens generally.
- Updates on the budget and key projects should be available to everyone, not just people who are active citizens. This would help people understand the role of the council.
- Councillors could provide a weekly/monthly update similar to the Lord Mayor's blog, which highlights what are the priorities and what actions have taken place.
- Communication should be two-way but council does a lot unilaterally.
- The Council's relations with the local press is not good and this is where Sheffielders go for their information not everybody is online and digital exclusion is a risk here.
- Those who are online have a mixed experience and usually find council information only if it is shared through other online community groups rather than from the council directly.

• The website needs to be clearer about how council does things, how it works, what it does and is responsible for. A way of explaining governance, infographics etc - currently it is very unfriendly.

Trust

- SCC is not a trusted organisation currently. There are many causes of this from the way certain issues have been handled (Trees) and the way that trust is broken at the most basic level. The average citizen has no response or action from a basic enquiry (something needs fixing or reporting etc)
- Trusted is a word used a lot. Trusted by who rich white people or the people in Page Hall?
- There is a lot of distrust in the leadership in the town hall. The council need some wins to get people to trust again.
- Challenge in Sheffield is that people are used to not being listened to building trust will take quite a while. Lots of people don't get involved because they feel there is no point, when working with It's Our City there were recurring themes, people would say "good luck with that" "it doesn't matter what you say, they won't do it. You have got to get this started and then tweak. Think it will change the views of people once they know they will be listened to.
- It's more than perception it's the reality, easy to understand why people feel that way like public questions at Full Council; all too often the question isn't answered, maybe they don't want to answer, or you get an email response. This is easily countered by giving the questioner 2 mins to comment after the answer to see if they're satisfied. That would be a massive and simple change and would change the dynamic so when people give input it's being listened to.
- It's about trust communities need to trust the committees, committees need to trust the community's opinions

Transparency

- Walkley library engagement was not transparent with its decision making and there was a lack of consistency with its transparency. It felt like there were meetings that had taken place behind closed doors before the public meetings.
- Lots of spin used by the council and in its language.
- The decisions that are made and brought to committee by councillors are also a way of being transparent. I.e will items only be brought to committees after they have been thoroughly discussed beforehand behind closed doors?
- Can the public observe all the committees in the new system?
- The information behind any decision making does need to be transparent.
- It is easier to accept bad decisions if the reasoning behind the decision is clear and transparent

Officer Behaviour

- Officer behaviour is key officers support political behaviour. Key to driving changing culture will be the officers and the support they offer the councillors.
- Councillors and officers need to be a visible presence and not hide in the offices
- Key issue is accessibility to officers, if members of public have more phone numbers for relevant areas it breaks down barriers when people can talk to someone

- Officers are making decisions and advising Councillors. Officers come up with spurious excuses (to not act), so Councillors need to be wise to this. Need to be forthright and get a clear reason for a decision.
- Some officers just waiting for retirement, disinterested. Councillors need skills to see through this.
- SCC officers sometimes have to put barriers up against decision making for legal reasons, but these reasons aren't communicated to the public

The Council – How people feel and what they believe needs to change

• Council and its services are not accessible, all moving online. There's still a large % of the city which is not digitally literate/enabled.

[Report continues overleaf]

IT'S OUR CITY - RESPONSE TO SCC'S DRAFT GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

Introductory note:

This response document to the draft governance principles updates our initial response (sent 22nd October) following consultation across our networks.

The response draws on the extensive citizen-to-citizen work carried out across Sheffield by *It's Our City!*, (and via public meetings, and through community/vcs networks). It supplements (but does not replace) the evidence *It's Our City!* provided at the 2019 Governance Review https://itsoursheffield.co.uk/2215-2/

What we know about the 26,500 Sheffield People's Petition signatories is that they came from all wards, with circa. 40% of signatories from those designated poorer city wards (as reported by Cllr. Dore in full council) and this balance would have been reflected in the approximate 20,000 citizen conversations about local governance. We also made dedicated efforts on other aspects of diversity/inequality, to ensure we included and engaged a full range of citizens and communities. (Further details on approach and methodology are in the evidence paper submitted to Governance Review.)

In line with the work of *It's Our City!* our response comes from a citizen and community perspective and the overall call for, and claim to, meaningful change to more democratic local governance under a modern committee system. However, it is also informed by our understanding of practice elsewhere, research evidence, and national good practice guidance e.g. the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) work on local governance.

There is a 2 side summary that identifies the critical omissions and summarises recommended changes to the 2019 governance principles that the Governance Committee is now consulting on to support governance change. This is followed by the supporting commentary and rationale.

20.11.21

IT'S OUR CITY - SUMMARY OF CRITICAL OMISSIONS AND RECOMMENDED CHANGES

Critical omissions

1. Commitment to democracy and good democratic practices/procedures

ADD CRITICAL AMBITION: "Sheffield City Council is committed to local democracy; good democratic principles and practices demonstrably underpin our city governance." ADD GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLE: "Appropriate democratic checks and balances are in place in the exercise of power, and pluralism and collaboration is valued in our partnership working, decision-making and constitutional arrangements (and consensus sought where possible) - to support the best possible democratic decision-making in a diverse city."

2. Inequalities and governance arrangements

ADD GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLE: "Inequalities and discrimination can play a significant role in capacities and abilities to participate, to be heard, and to exercise influence. Our governance procedures and practices will actively seek to mitigate the impacts of inequality and for inclusive governance and decision-making."

3. Stakeholder voices integrated into committees ADD GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLE (OR INTEGRATE INTO ANOTHER ONE): "Decision-making committees in our MCS will integrate the views of stakeholders into their work, discussions and decision-making (and who will also be able to act as a conduit between their wider networks and the council, so improving connections between council and city networks/groups/communities)."

4. Policy development and the basis of decisions ADD GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLE (OR INTEGRATE/AMEND PRINCIPLE 2 OR 3 OR WAYS OF WORKING 16 OR 23): "Policy development will follow recognised good practice and the basis (e.g. research, evidence, information, expertise, stakeholder views, political priorities etc) on

which significant decisions are made will be clear and documented/publicly available." 5. A strong and independent voluntary and community sector (VCS)

ADD GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLE: "SCC welcomes, supports and enables a strong, independent, diverse and cohesive voluntary and community sector (VCS) in working alongside SCC, acting as a critical friend, having influence and impact on policy and decisions, and playing an important role holding the council to account. SCC treats VCS organisations fairly without favouritism."

6. Citizens rights

ADD GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLE: "New governance arrangements, and as laid down in the constitution, will uphold, and look to enhance, citizens rights, and will regularly check these are working well in review."

7. Relationship between councillors and communities

ADD GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLE: "We want to increase the connections and safeguard positive and reliable relationships between local councillors and their local communities, citizens, VCS stakeholders, and local businesses through our governance arrangements and procedures."

8. Resources and bureaucracy

ADD GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLE: "New governance arrangements as a result of the referendum will not increase council bureaucracy (e.g. the average councillor will go to around the same number of meetings) or increase costs (following the example of councils that have already changed to a Modern Committee system)"

General recommendations

- The principles should be updated for changed contexts (since 2019) and to include citizen and community perspectives.
- The over-emphasis on "structures" in the Governance Principles section should be changed
- More clarity is needed. Do critical ambitions relate to outcomes? Should principles be expressed as aims? Are ways of working the start of objectives? Organising as aims, objectives and outcomes would help clarify the distinctions and help with design, development, alignment, manageability and evaluation (and will begin to meet the intention expressed in ways of working 14)
- Notwithstanding the critical omissions above, the existing principles should be reduced in number (there is quite a lot of overlap/repetition, indicated in the commentary), and to help in manageability
- Recommend opening statement: "Our governance principles [will] inform, and be clearly operationalised in the governance arrangements (structures, processes and procedures) laid down in a new council constitution, and evident in the governance culture of SCC."

Recommendations on existing principles

- Critical ambition 2: "Sheffield City Council ensures that all councillors are involved in and able to influence decision-making [ADD] and that citizens can see the contributions their local councillors make to decision-making processes."
- Critical ambition 3: "Sheffield City Council engages, involves and listens to citizens, communities, [ADD] stakeholders and partners with the belief and expectation that this will be influential, and improve our decisions and decision-making."
- Critical ambition 4: [REPLACE] "modern" with "forward-thinking" "strategic" or "outward-facing". Also consider removing altogether.
- Critical ambition 5: [CHANGE/ADD] "Sheffield City Council is a reflective council that is committed to continuously improving governance, including citizen and stakeholder debate, and attention to best practice and innovation elsewhere."
- Governance principle 1 and 6: reconsider/consider removing (a repeat).
- Governance principle 7: remove/combine.
- Governance principle 8: [CHANGE] "Council officers play an important role in decisionmaking via delegated authority and, more generally in our local democracy, as public servants. Accountability, however, lies with elected councillors so, in a new governance system, our decision-making arrangements need to reflect this and not inappropriately increase delegations to officers."
- Governance principle 9: [ADD] "Governance under a new MCS will not increase bureaucracy"
- Governance principle 10: replace first sentence with "People in Sheffield care about what happens in their local communities" And remove/combine with 7 (do not mention things that could become too dated e.g. BCC).
- Governance principle 13: [REPLACE] "decision-making structure" with "governance arrangements".
- Governance principle 14: we welcome more clarity and measurability but question the necessity for this as a principle/covered elsewhere.
- Ways of Working 18: update to reflect changed context/new cllr roles under a MCS.

- Ways of Working 21: [ADD] "The influence/impact of engagement with stakeholders, or consultation, will be made clear and documented (e.g. in minutes) for all significant new policy, decisions and review."
- Ways of Working 22,23,24 repeats and overlaps

IT'S OUR CITY - SUPPORTING COMMENTARY AND RATIONALE

1. General comments

1.1 The draft principles are essentially the same as those articulated in 2019 from the Governance Review (GR). However, we think the GR report was largely based on the assumption of a continuing strong leader model.

1.2 Hence, for example, a Governance Review primary concern was formal scrutiny. However, scrutiny was specifically 'invented' to work as part of, and alongside, strong leadership - intended to check the power of that strong leader governance. Under a modern committee system the artificial separation between 'decisions' and later 'scrutiny' becomes somewhat redundant. New thinking about (what is) good policy and decision-making is required (notwithstanding a statutory requirement for retention of a formal/designated scrutiny role in a couple of specific areas).

1.3 Perhaps the assumption of continuing strong leadership is also, in part, why some national expert, local stakeholder, and the detailed evidence *It's Our City!* presented to the GR on 20,000 citizen conversations, did not appear to have any impact on the GR commentary or principles at that time. This included the 'community principles for modern committee governance' collated from citizen and community conversations and presented as part of our detailed evidence paper.

1.4 The citizen and community-led campaign and referendum result significantly changes the landscape of council governance going forward compared to the approach and focus of the Governance Review in 2019. (In some respects we think the 'old' principles hamper the work of the Governance Committee now.)

1.5 Further, the concentration in the GR was largely on decision-making (alongside scrutiny) rather than on overall governance approach and functions (as expressed in the council constitution). Governance, however, does not only cover decision-making but also incorporates related aspects that are embedded in the constitution, and that are contextually and operationally very important to that decision-making, and for citizens and communities. For example, council constitutions lay out citizens rights, describe, shape and regulate relationships with external partners and stakeholders such as the VCS, incorporate code of conduct, and embed participatory approaches and mechanisms. Some council constitutions also include details of place-based contexts and/or identify particular place-based values within which to situate specific governance emphases and procedures.

1.6 Inevitably, then, we believe there are major gaps, some reorientations, and some amendments, to be made to the 'old' principles, and for their operationalisation.

1.7 In addition, the council has since introduced its Community Empowerment Policy (LACs). Whilst this represents a further changed context since 2019, the introduction of the LACs is not a result of governance model change, nor a substitute for the arrangements that need to be put in place in a new modern committee system. Our comments therefore mostly concentrate on the core governance change required by the referendum and the views of local citizens for these arrangements, rather than on the LACs. However, in general terms, we recommend the LACs be

seen as part and parcel of SCC's commitment to embedding principles of good democratic governance; in this instance about (enhancing) ongoing participatory elements of its governance overall, and the devolution of powers where possible and appropriate.

1.8 Along with articulating the critical omissions, we have made specific comments, and suggested changes and additions on the 2019 principles. Overall, in writing this feedback, we have worked *very hard* to try to 'build bridges' between what we heard from so many citizens across Sheffield, and the draft principles as currently presented. This is quite difficult because the gaps in some areas remain quite large and there are significant omissions, as explained.

1.9 Two further general comments:

1. In the section on 'Governance Principles' there are 10 mentions of 'governance structures' or 'decision-making structures' and we question whether *structure* is the emphasis that the council wants going forward (CfGS strongly and consistently advises that, if anything, *culture* is, actually, the broadly crucial element). We, at least, think both structures and cultures are important, and also interact.

We recommend that reconsideration be given to what looks like an over-emphasis on simply 'governance structures' or 'decision-making structures'. Potential replacements include: 'governance arrangements', decision-making structures and processes', 'governance structure and culture'.

Related to this, the section 'How we do Business (Ways of Working)' seems to involve an arbitrary separation e.g. many of the Governance Principles are clearly also about Ways of Working but not in the relevant WoW section. We recommend the two sections be combined as the distinction seems arbitrary and confusing. Alternatively, the WoW section can be seen as the start of a list of objectives ie the *how*, related to aims (though the principles are not written strictly as aims). And are the critical ambitions meant to be related to outcomes? Greater clarity is needed in relation to aims, objectives and outcomes (not least so that ongoing review and evaluation can be effective).

We also think there is quite a lot of overlap overall and that there could be some reductions and combining that will help for manageability.

2. Principles are fine, but words are quite difficult. An overwhelming set of comments from Sheffielders was about the hollowness of some council claims, and the gap between rhetoric and reality. For example, the claim that Sheffield is 'open', 'transparent' and 'accountability is clear' is very far indeed from what citizens and communities told us (and has also been evidenced extensively by many others over recent years, besides ongoing concerns such as those relating to FOIs). The governance principles need to be seen to be meaningful and to build confidence.

We recommend that an opening statement be included that reads something like: "Our governance principles [will] inform, and be clearly operationalised in the governance arrangements (structures, processes and procedures) laid down in a new council constitution and evident in the governance culture of SCC."

We also recommend that new constitutional drafts (or sections) be evaluated in an ongoing way against whatever the final principles look like, to help with active alignment and so that change might be more meaningful (and we would likely welcome opportunity to comment on constitutional developments in this way, and as they emerge).

2. Critical omissions

2.1 Perhaps the biggest omission in council discussions on governance change relates to the overall (and overwhelming) call by citizens and communities for more democratic governance under a modern committee system. This is related to the perception of significant democratic deficit, and widespread loss of overall confidence and trust in the way the council works. From the citizen and community-led work undertaken across Sheffield, the need is to create governance arrangements underpinned by democratic commitments, a visibly more democratic constitutional framework and associated practices and, as part of this, to help build overall council legitimacy. Critical omissions 1-7 presented in this response speak directly to this broad and critical footprint.

2.2 There is certainly hard evidence of significant democratic deficit (that is particular and marked in Sheffield's case) that lends support to the overall citizen claim that this needs addressing, and also as expressed in their views and experiences. Some of this evidence was presented in a series of graphs in our previous evidence paper to the 2019 GR; it was also referred to by the INLOGOV expert who gave evidence. However this did not lead to a discussion at that time about the relationship of political power to democratic governance arrangements.

2.3 The overall citizen call for more democratic local governance appears to be challenging for political parties perhaps because it is an appeal to embed visible democratic governance practices beyond (and before) party allegiances and narrower interests of party political power. However, we think any perception of direct conflict between party politics and good democratic governance is a misperception as all parties would state a commitment to democracy (and not just when it suits their own party purposes). It is a question of articulating what this means and looks like in, and for, local governance.

2.4 Nor is this a rejection of the realities of political power – though a small proportion did express a strong belief that party politics should be taken out of local councils, and there was a strong belief that decision-making powers should much more closely reflect political balance and diversity (and take into account the majority non-voters). Proportional voting or allocation to committees may be beyond immediate reach in governance change (although democratically progressive councils could choose to make representation to the Secretary of State on this matter). This means a ruling group (even with a very small electoral mandate) will always ultimately be able to impose its political will should it wish to. However, no one we spoke to took the view that the only thing that mattered in local democracy and governance was your vote (and that was an end to it). A narrow view of (merely) electoral local democracy was completely rejected (and this is in line with policy and practice-related, and academic, literature on democracy where narrow electoral democracy is regarded as significantly diminishing – or even dangerous – to democracy and good governance).

2.5 The question in Sheffield, however, is whether *any ruling group party* with, for example, a less than 10% electoral mandate (or indeed a 30% vote share) seeks governance arrangements that mean it has all decision making power, all other leadership roles (e.g. chairing of scrutiny committees), no evident influence allowed by others, nor any effective participatory mechanisms.

Citizens and communities almost unanimously rejected this across the city (and nor does it follow recognised good governance practice or concerns and recommendations of successive government Select Committees over 20 years). However, this was broadly what was in place leading up to the referendum. The question is how political power (e.g. with extreme minority electoral mandates) is exercised and managed through governance arrangements that take democracy seriously.

2.5 What this requires is an embrace of governance structures, procedures and practices (alongside cultural shifts) that, for example, build in checks and balances, pluralism/diversity, the protection of minorities, good practice, deliberation and power-sharing, stakeholder influence, participatory mechanisms, and that supports strong civil society/VCS voices and meaningful collaborative practices/partnership working with demonstrable influence.

2.6 All these themes were ever-present and multiple in the experiences, views, values, critique, ideas and insights relayed in conversation by many thousands of Sheffield citizens and across communities and from community and voluntary groups and organisations. These (see also our evidence presented at GR) included:

- ways in which governance might mitigate (multiple) inequalities
- the integration of stakeholder influence, impact and expertise in decision-making
- the importance of good practice, visible competence, and use of evidence including local and wider expertise
- the importance of (valued and influential) strong and independent civil society/vcs as critical friends working alongside the council, and better partnership working with external partners and networks
- relationship building and greater positive connections between elected representatives and communities/citizens
- working together cross-party (collaboration, deliberation and consensus-building where possible, respect and good conduct)

2.7 Ultimately, and integral to the claim for more democratic local governance, citizens wanted to see governance practices that could lead to (trusted and) *better* decisions; this was overwhelmingly linked to more inclusive/collaborative and informed/competent decision-making.

2.8 Importantly, our 'critical omissions' (as well as some recommended changes to existing principles) mention stakeholders, as these are otherwise absent – council constitutions describe, shape and regulate relationships with VCS, stakeholders, civil society and partners in some way. It is notable that Sheffield citizens believed that SCC had a particular problem engaging and working positively and collaboratively with stakeholder groups (and were more comfortable with generic and limited public 'consultations' largely under their control and sometimes carried out after decisions appeared to have been made). Citizens would like to see some rebalancing from standard/generic consultation approaches that they largely did not trust (and were sometimes seen as simply serving the council and/or a waste of resources), with greater demonstrable and meaningful inclusion of stakeholder groups who often also bring considerable expertise and experience. Many of these groups are also often dependent in some way upon the council e.g. funding, hence it is important for councils to promote the independent voices of the sector and upon which a vibrant local democracy at least partly depends. Note: there is no mention anywhere in the principles draft document of the VCS (or even of stakeholders) but lots of mention of citizens and communities, with the odd mention of 'partners' - it is not clear where the VCS fits in, nor other stakeholders e.g. local businesses and civil society groups.

2.9 The final critical omission identified (no.8) in this response relates to council bureaucracy and costs in, and for, a new modern committee governance model. All councils who have changed governance model to a committee system (and where information is publicly available) have outlined clear parameters at the outset to ensure that new governance arrangements do not create more bureaucracy nor increase governance costs (indeed, research indicates that it is even possible to reduce bureaucracy, and our own calculations also show how it might be possible to make cost savings). These parameters help to identify, clarify and shape overall design and reflect a balancing of governance needs with other considerations such as constrained budgets. Hence, for example, all councils changing to or operating modern committee governance (including big cities like Glasgow) have a maximum of 6 service/decision-making committees.

2.10 SCC has not set these clear parameters (although these issues have long been the subject of political debate and contestation and the council was advised by the LGA pre-referendum to remove its claims that a modern committee system cost more). Recently the Governance Committee has even seemed to be going backwards in these respects. It is, of course, the council's *choice* as to whether it wishes to create more governance bureaucracy and/or significantly increase governance spending – but that *is a choice*. However, we suggest that the council cut its (governance) coat according to its cloth and, in line with all other councils, immediately put these parameters in place. We also advise there has already been some citizen concerns raised as to the amount of money that this substantive work has largely already been done if only the council would listen and use this - backed up by significant actual numbers e.g. petition signers, referendum voters, citizen conversations, and previous council survey on governance.

3. Recommendations on existing principles

3.1 Critical ambitions

• Sheffield City Council is a trusted organisation where decisions are taken in an open and transparent way, and accountability is clear

Comment: this needs much work in consideration and operationalisation (also see general comment above).

For example, if 'open' means, simply, that documents can be found by the public, we would argue this is not very meaningful (and are councils not obliged to make documentation public anyway?). One meaning of 'open' given, and that we have seen embedded in council constitutions elsewhere (at the level of principle), is 'the process of decision-making is as important as the product'. This goes straight to the heart of governance ie the way things are run and decisions are made. It suggests that real attention will be paid in governance arrangements to a broad set of considerations (procedures, relationships, who is included/excluded etc).

Talk about 'accountability' exercised huge numbers of Sheffielders and citizens overall believe there is no accountability at SCC. So the meaning and operationalisation of this is very important and needs to be clear. Actually, people were quite sophisticated in their understanding, in discussion.... Whilst there were very clear areas (all across the city) where citizens said there should be visible action taken on harder forms of accountability (e.g. resignations, disciplinary action), notably in relation to the street tree scandal, the emphasis was also slightly different. People know that 'mistakes' and errors happen all the time in complex, under pressure services for example – the emphasis here was not on accountability-for-everything, it was on <u>honesty</u> – and on swift apologies and resolutions/changing tack.

So there is much to be considered here.

• Sheffield City Council is a council where all councillors are involved in and able to influence decision making

Comment and suggestion: this is the direct change that the referendum has brought – in a structural sense, under a MCS. So, in some senses this is now no longer a critical ambition and might arguably not be needed – it simply is the situation that will be directly brought about with the implementation of the required governance model change. It is good to highlight this change, however (even if it could be moved to the principles section, rather than the critical ambitions section).

From a citizens point of view we suggest, if retained, an addition that also connects the work of councillors with citizens:

"Sheffield City Council ensures that all councillors are involved in and able to influence decisionmaking, and that citizens can see the contributions their local councillors make to decision-making processes."

Whilst this critical ambition highlights the direct change now made by the referendum (and maybe will also be relevant to LACs), which is good. It also signals, perhaps, (more) open deliberation and decision-making for potential operationalisation in governance arrangements.

• Sheffield City Council engages, involves and listens to citizens, communities and partners

Comment and suggestion: From a citizens point of view this is a very controversial one as it is not believed this happens meaningfully. We think there is a crucial change to be made here, that we believe could really help going forward and for governance arrangements:

Suggest: "Sheffield City Council engages, involves and listens to citizens, communities, stakeholders and partners with the belief and expectation that this will be influential, and improve our decisions and decision-making."

This is also clearly related to CfGS advice (their 'risk and resilience' framework for local governance, p.12) that describes positive behaviour in this area as: "The council invites challenge on its plans – by engaging in dialogue on those plans in a way that feels meaningful and relevant.....This often results in a significant change in approach." They describe negative behaviour as "....mainly about broadcasting the council's 'line' on an issue, with no real interest in changing the council's approach other than on minor operational points..."

Clearly a commitment to engagement, listening etc is not the crucial point, then, it is about the influence/impact this has. (And engagement/listening with no influence or impact can obviously be damaging and turn people off.)

This 'ambition' also has obvious relevance in relation to LACs – is further amendment/addition needed in light of these?

• Sheffield City Council has a modern and responsive approach to governance which reflects the increasingly complex policy making environment

Comment and suggestion: We are unsure what the word 'modern' adds here – in fact it seems, ironically, rather old-fashioned! It also might confuse in relation to a modern committee system that will now be implemented. A minor suggestion then: replace modern with 'forward-thinking' or even 'strategic' or 'outward-facing' (or combinations). Again, 'responsive' has lots of potential meanings – this would be good to explore, and for operationalisation purposes. Overall, we are unsure what the council intends by this ambition and also think it could be removed altogether.

• Sheffield City Council is a reflective council that is committed to continuously improving governance

Comment and suggestion: This is welcome in light of the many years SCC did not examine and review its governance (that is recommended by advisory bodies to be a regular/built in occurrence) and so we welcome its operationalisation in new constitutional arrangements, including what is understood by reflection and how this is made meaningful.

We suggest an addition: "Sheffield City Council is a reflective council that is committed to continuously improving governance, including citizen and stakeholder debate, and attention to best practice and innovation elsewhere."

We have added this because it was a strong belief amongst Sheffield citizens that SCC is insular ("in its own bubble", "closed off" etc) and a bit old-fashioned ("in the dark ages").

3.2 Governance Principles

1. A commitment to openness and transparency must run through our decision making structure.

Comment: operationalisation/what this means – needs to be clear, and is vital (see general comment 2). Largely a repeat of a critical ambition, reconsider/consider removing.

Comment: is this only about "structure"? – we think not, it's very much about ways of working too (see general comment 1)

2. Comprehensive forward planning of decisions – being clear about what decisions we are planning to take, when they will be taken, who will be taking them.

Comment: this relates to an important critical omission (4).

3. Clear reports from officers that set out the relevant information in an accessible way, and are clear about the reasons for a decision being made.

Comment: this relates to an important critical omission (4).

4. Mechanisms for holding decision-makers and other parts of the wider partnership landscape to account should be strengthened in any future decision-making structure – we must be held accountable for the decisions that we take, and embrace challenge to ensure we're getting the best outcomes for Sheffield.

Comment: see comment on 'critical principle 1' above in relation to citizen views about 'accountability'.

5. Our governance should be underpinned by a commitment to the highest ethical standards as set out in the Nolan Standards on Public Life.

Comment: there were extensive and wide-ranging comments from Sheffielders that were very negative about how ethical standards/Nolan Principles were abused, and calling for these to be put

into practice in meaningful ways. So this is important.. The issue of trust in this is also underlying. Also note comments under 'critical principle 1' about the importance of 'honesty' (integrity).

Again, surely this principle is about Ways of Working too, and we note that a new Code of Conduct (underpinned by the Nolan Principles) has recently been adopted/is already in place.

6. Our decision-making structure should be designed in a way that creates channels for all 84 Councillors to be involved in, and influence decision making.

This is almost a direct repeat of 'critical ambition 2' and see our comments on this, above. Is this direct repeat needed? Should it be one or the other? Or we suggest the critical ambition and the principle should be made different. Reconsider/remove.

7. Our decision-making structure should be underpinned by effective ways of working with local communities, including through development of the role and use of Local Area Committees, informed by the Big City Conversation and other, ongoing engagement with Sheffielders.

Comment and suggestion: this principle overlaps significantly with principle 10 and we suggest the two are combined (see comment on principle 10) – remove/combine. Also do not mention BCC and LACs as could become dated.

8. We are a member-led authority, where accountability lies with elected councillors. Our decisionmaking structure must reflect this, and not inappropriately increase delegations to officers.

Comment and suggestion: this could be put more positively and recognise the important role of council officers e.g. "Council officers play an important role in decision-making via delegated authority and, more generally in our local democracy, as public servants. Accountability, however, lies with elected councillors so, in a new governance system, our decision-making arrangements need to reflect this and not inappropriately increase delegations to officers."

9. Our decision-making structure needs to reflect the practical demands on councillors' time. Need to find a balance between time spent in formal decision-making meetings in the Town Hall against working with and in communities. Time demands shouldn't prohibit people with working/caring commitments from being a Councillor.

Comment and suggestion: all councils changing to a MCS stipulate at the outset that the new structure will not be more bureaucratic, and successfully implement this. We are unsure why SCC has not yet clearly outlined this parameter (see accompanying slides). It would also draw attention to creative ways of working and engagement that we have learnt a lot about during covid. We recommend a stipulation of 'no more bureaucratic' be added to this principle, to aid design and implementation.

10. The issues people care about are often local in nature. Our decision-making structure needs to include channels through which people, communities and partners can work with local councillors about what is important to them. We need to strengthen locality arrangements based on the findings of the Big City Conversation and ensure that these arrangements work effectively alongside, and feed into, citywide decision-making processes.

Comment and suggestion: If you ask questions that have closed lists of possible choices, and if you ask people about their local area, it is not quite right to then interpret this as people being mostly concerned about 'local' issues as this first sentence of this principle might suggest. Of course, people do have 'local concerns' and do care deeply about their local (geographical) community – we found this too across the city. However, we also found huge interest (and expertise/experience) in lots of

(political and other) issues (even when people did not generally vote in local elections) e.g. public `transport, climate change, housing, heritage, poverty, SEN, the city centre, and all kinds of inequalities. Whilst these interests might well have local relevance, they were definitely not confined to the 'local' by any means - involvement was often cross-city or even beyond. In addition, people facing inequality and discrimination often had very important 'communities' and networks beyond the local e.g. BAME, disabled people, lgbt+

So, we do not think the assertion "The issues people care about are often local in nature' is accurate and it should not be elevated to point of principle – it also suggests people might mostly or only want to contribute (or be mostly only permitted to contribute) input on local issues and this is not the case.

We think this sentence should be replaced with "People in Sheffield care about what happens in their local communities"

We also think this principle overlaps very significantly with principle 7 and suggest they be combined, and that reference to things that could become dated (and are controversial) are removed i.e. BCC.

11.Our decision-making structure must avoid silo working both within and outside of the City Council, and enable a joined up approach to tackling issues which need the involvement of a number of organisations in the city.

12.Our decision-making structure needs to have a mechanism for making urgent decisions openly, transparently and effectively engaging elected councillors.

Comment: all those who change to a MCS express some concern about this (based on the overhang from the 'old' committee system and an assertion these were slow/bureaucratic) and all put in place a system for urgent decisions. The evidence available shows that these systems are, in reality, very rarely used, and that decision-making in a MCS can actually be quicker. (Some also make the point that decision-making in a strong leader system is not necessarily quick either.)

13.Our decision-making structure needs to strengthen our ability to work with our partners in a complex local, sub-regional and national policy environment, and enable us to take a lead on key issues facing the city and the citizens of Sheffield.

Comment and suggestion: we think 'decision-making structure' should be replaced with 'governance arrangements' here.

From our citizen conversations we think the ability to 'take a lead' is very much linked to everyone's confidence in governance arrangements and perceptions of the overall 'legitimacy' of SCC. One of the main reasons councils can 'take a lead' with partners in a broad policy environment is because they have (unique) 'democratic' legitimacy and hold the widespread confidence of citizens, stakeholders and partners that is supportive of positive relationship building, collaborative working, and in exercising influence. The problem is that citizens almost unanimously told us they had little confidence, and that SCC was undemocratic (in a whole variety of ways).

So we think it is difficult for SCC to play the powerful and strategic role needed without addressing and securing more democratic legitimacy/confidence i.e. addressing key democratic concerns that citizens and communities identified e.g. checks and balances, a commitment to pluralism. The change of governance model should help and we should champion our city commitment to 'democracy'. This comment points to what we think is one critical omission in the principles and this is addressed below in suggestions for additional principles. 14.We need to be clear about what we are trying to achieve through our governance arrangements, and build in measures to assess whether it is working

Comment: we welcome a commitment to greater clarity and a shared articulation of aims, objectives and outcomes for new governance arrangements that can be effectively evaluated/measured, including by citizens and communities. How will this be developed? Are we at least a bit of the way there if critical ambitions are treated as outcomes, one adapts the principles to aims, and treats the ways of working points as the start of an objectives list? Is this as a principle actually needed?

We note that the 'Ways of Working' section is essentially 'objectives' (but think there is only a partial list here).

Aim	Objectives	Operationalisation notes e.g. location/s in constitution	Outcomes
1.	1.		
	2. etc.		
2.			
3.			

One way of articulating/aligning all this for planning and development purposes.....

15.We need to identify a forum that enables us to reflect and review, on an ongoing basis, on whether our governance systems are working as anticipated, and if changes need to be made.

Comment: this principle could be combined with 14. And, does SCC actually want to identify what sounds like a separate forum for reflection and review, or to make this in some way ongoing and integral to its governance structures/processes? (Considerations of efficiency might suggest the latter, notwithstanding that more formal governance review points will need consideration.)

3.3 How we do Business (Ways of Working) `

16.We need to take a more creative approach to communication between residents and the Council, including about what decisions are being made and why, what they mean to residents and what they mean for the city. This needs to be supported by effective communication and information about how decision-making works.

Comment: we think there is considerable overlap between this and principles 7 and 10. Is this an objective? Consider combining/clarifying. (And where are stakeholders, VCS, business, partners?)

Also relates to critical omissions (e.g.3,5,7)

17.Role of Full Council – should be reviewed in the light of changes following the referendum – consider how we could make it a more meaningful forum.

Comment: see slide comment about typical full council meeting frequency.

18.Ensure that the appropriate support, training and skills development is continuously available for councillors so they can take full advantage of the opportunities under the new structure.

Comment: An objective. MCS governance also gives (most) councillors significant new roles as decision-makers - we think this principle could be updated to reflect the changed context following the referendum result.

19.We need to build a culture in which political disagreement is handled constructively and where members are supported to develop the listening, debating, chairing and committee-membership skills needed for this to happen.

20.We must ensure that a commitment to meaningful engagement, involvement and consultation runs through the organisation. We should renew a commitment to our Consultation Principles, and reflect on how the council's Engagement Standards which are currently in development can improve practice throughout our work.

Where are the Consultation Principles? Do the Engagement Standards now exist/where are these?

21.We need to constantly demonstrate how engagement activity is shaping decision making, and be honest about the impact it is having, so communities and partners can understand how their views have been responded to.

We suggest this is tightened in operationalisation, and in line with the comment on critical ambition 3. E.g. "The influence/impact of engagement with stakeholders, or consultation, will be made clear and documented (e.g. in minutes) for all significant new policy and decisions." This approach could be vital to building confidence/trust and to break the widespread perception that consultations are "sham" (and/or constructed to merely support council audit trails), that people are not listened to, that decisions are made before consultation, and that contributions are pointless.

22.We need to make it as easy as possible for people to engage with us – the starting point for this should to be clear, consistent, accessible communication about what the Council is doing, what decisions we are planning to take and how to get involved.

23.We need to improve the information we provide about how decision making happens across the City as a whole and how partnerships and structures interconnect.

Some overlap between 22 and 23

24.We need to establish a process of continuous engagement so that Members, partners and citizens can give a view on how the system is working.

Overlap/repetitive? with principles 14 and 15 – is this actually an objective?

Ruth Hubbard and Woll Newall, *It's Our City!* 20.11.21

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Appendix 2

The 'critical aims', 'governance principles', 'how we do business' (ways of working) and 'engagement principles' have been numbered for convenient reference.

The first set of principles presented incorporate a range of potential changes in response to the public and stakeholder feedback received (see Appendix 1).

The principles are then reprinted un an unchanged state, to aid with comparison.

Design Principles – as amended, for consideration

Critical governance ambitions

Our critical governance ambitions are enabled by a set of governance principles. These principles were created to inform the design of the Council's new committee-led governance arrangements. These principles should be reflected in the Council's structures, processes and procedures (as set out in the constitution), and in the decision-making culture of the Council.

- <u>A.</u> Sheffield City Council is a trusted organisation where decisions are taken in an open and transparent way, and accountability is clear.
- <u>B.</u> Sheffield City Council is a council where all councillors are involved in and able to influence decision making and that citizens can see the contributions their local councillors make to decision-making processes.
- <u>C.</u> Sheffield City Council engages, involves and listens to citizens, communities, <u>stakeholders and partners with the belief and expectation</u> <u>that this will be influential, and improve our decisions and decision-</u> <u>making.and partners.</u>
- D. Sheffield City Council has a <u>forward-thinking-modern</u> and responsive approach to governance which reflects the increasingly complex policy making environment.
- <u>E.</u> Sheffield City Council is a reflective council that is committed to continuously improving governance in light of feedback and best practice
- F. Sheffield City Council is committed to local democracy; good democratic principles and practices demonstrably underpin our city governance.

Design Principles

- 1. A commitment to openness and transparency <u>of formal decision-making</u> must run through our decision-making <u>arrangementsstructure</u>.
- 2. Our decision-making arrangements should minimise unnecessary bureaucracy, and implementation of the new committee-led governance model should as far as possible be kept cost-neutral

- 2.3. Comprehensive forward planning of decisions being clear about what decisions we are planning to take, when they will be taken, who will be taking them.
- 3.4. Clear, <u>publicly available</u> reports from officers that set out the relevant information in an accessible way and which are clear about the <u>way a</u> <u>proposal has been developed</u> and the reasons for a decision being made.
- 4.5. Mechanisms for holding decision-makers and other parts of the partnership landscape to account should be strengthened in any future decision-making <u>arrangementsstructure</u> we must be held accountable for the decisions that we take, and embrace challenge to ensure we're getting the best outcomes for Sheffield.
- 5.6. Our governance should be underpinned by a commitment to the highest ethical standards as set out in the Nolan Standards on Public Life.
- 6.7. Our decision-making <u>arrangementsstructure</u> should be designed in a way that creates channels for all 84 Councillors to be involved in, and influence decision making.
- 7. Our decision-making structure should be underpinned by effective ways of working with local communities, including through development of the role and use of Local Area Committees, informed by the Big City Conversation and other, ongoing engagement with Sheffielders.
- 8. Council officers play an important role in decision-making via delegated authority and, more generally in our local democracy, as public servants. Accountability, however, lies with elected councillors so, in a new governance system, our decision-making arrangements need to reflect this and not inappropriately increase delegations to officersWe are a member-led authority, where accountability lies with elected councillors. Our decisionmaking structure must reflect this, and not inappropriately increase delegations to officers.

<u>8.</u>

- 9. Our decision-making structurearrangements need to reflect the practical demands on councillors' time. Need to find a balance between time spent in formal decision-making meetings in the Town Hall against working with and in communities. Time demands shouldn't prohibit people with working/caring commitments from being a Councillor.
- 10. The issues people care about are often local in nature. Our decision-making structure needs to include channels through which people, communities and partners can work with local councillors about what is important to them. Our decision-making arrangements should increase the connections and safeguard positive relationships with local people, communities and partners, underpinned by effective ways of working in localities (such as Local Area Committees) and by recognition of the role of the VCS, partners and stakeholders in representing key groups, networks and communities, all of whose voices are equally valued. We need to strengthen locality arrangements based on the findings of the Big City Conversation and ensure that tThese arrangements should work effectively alongside, and feed into, citywide decision-making processes.

- 11. Our decision-making structurearrangements must avoid silo working both within and outside of the City Council, and enable a joined up approach to tackling issues which need the involvement of a number of organisations in the city
- 12. Our decision-making structurearrangements need to have a mechanism for making urgent decisions openly, transparently and effectively engaging elected councillors.
- 13. Our decision-makinggovernance structurearrangements need to strengthen our ability to work with our partners in a complex local, sub-regional and national policy environment, and enable us to take a lead on key issues facing the city and the citizens of Sheffield.
- 14. We need to be clear about what we are trying to achieve through our governance arrangements, and <u>build in measure against these design</u> <u>principles</u> to assess whether it is working
- <u>15.</u>We need to identify a forum that enables us to reflect, on an ongoing basis, on whether our governance systems are working as anticipated, and if changes need to be made.
- 15.16. Appropriate democratic checks and balances are in place in the exercise of power, and working together is valued in our partnership working, decisionmaking and constitutional arrangements (and consensus sought where possible) - to support the best possible democratic decision-making in a diverse city.

How we do Business (Ways of Working)

- 16.17. We need to take a more creative approach to communication between residents and the Council, including about what decisions are being made and why, what they mean to residents and what they mean for the city. This needs to be supported by effective communication and information about how decision-making works.
- 17.<u>18.</u> Role of Full Council should be reviewed in the light of changes following the referendum consider how we could make it a more meaningful forum.
- 18.19. Ensure that the appropriate support, training and skills development is continuously available for councillors so they can take full advantage of the opportunities under the new structurearrangements.
- **19.20.** We need to build a culture in which political disagreement is handled constructively and where members are supported to develop the listening, debating, chairing and committee-membership skills needed for this to happen.
- 20.21. We must ensure that a commitment to meaningful engagement, involvement and consultation runs through the organisation. We should renew a commitment to our Consultation Principles, and reflect on how the council's Engagement Standards which are currently in development can improve practice throughout our work.

- 22. We need to constantly demonstrate how engagement activity is shaping decision making, and be honest about the impact it is having, so communities and partners can understand how their views have been responded to. The influence/impact of engagement with stakeholders, or consultation, will be made clear and documented for all significant decisions.
- 21.23. Inequalities and discrimination can play a significant role in capacities and abilities to participate, to be heard, and to exercise influence. Our governance procedures and practices will actively seek to mitigate the impacts of inequality in support of inclusive governance and decision-making.
- 22.24. We need to make it as easy as possible for people to <u>understand their</u> rights with regard to the council and how engage with us – the starting point for this should be clear, consistent, accessible communication about what the Council is doing, what decisions we are planning to take and how to get involved.
- 23.25. We need to improve the information we provide about how decision making happens across the City as a whole and how partnerships and structures interconnect.
- <u>26.</u>We need to establish a process of continuous engagement so that Members, partners and citizens can give a view on how the system is working.

Engagement principles (as agreed Governance Committee 27.10.2021)

- 24.27. **Transparency** we want to provide relevant information that demonstrates our intentions and decision-making to citizens in a way that is accessible and understandable
- 25.28. Diversity We recognise that the city of Sheffield is made up of a broad and diverse group of people encompassing different ethnicities, gender, age, socio-economic backgrounds, values and physical and mental ability. We have a wide range of languages, cultures, digital, literacy and numeracy skills represented across the city and all backgrounds, interests and needs should be considered
- 26.29. Inclusive participation Provide all citizens with clear routes and opportunities to contribute to and influence outcomes that will directly affect their lives. Schedule meetings at times and in places that are convenient for as many people as possible and provide parallel ways for people to take part in a way that suits them.
- 27.30. Equality Encourage open discussion so that no sections of the community are left out and all ideas are treated with respect. Decisions should not be controlled be one particular section of a community.
- 28.31. Responsiveness Listen to views, opinions, concerns, complaints and opportunities and be clear how we will use this insight gathered to inform our decision-making.

Appendix 2

Design Principles – as previously agreed (no changes – for comparison)

Critical ambitions

- A. Sheffield City Council is a trusted organisation where decisions are taken in an open and transparent way, and accountability is clear.
 o (principles 1-5, 16)
- B. Sheffield City Council is a council where all councillors are involved in and able to influence decision making.
 - o (principles 6-9, 17-19)
- C. Sheffield City Council engages, involves and listens to citizens, communities and partners.
 - o (principles 10, 20-22)
- D. Sheffield City Council has a modern and responsive approach to governance which reflects the increasingly complex policy making environment.
 - o (principles 11-13, 23)
- E. Sheffield City Council is a reflective council that is committed to continuously improving governance
 - o (principles 14, 15, 24).

Governance Principles

- 1. A commitment to openness and transparency must run through our decisionmaking structure.
- Comprehensive forward planning of decisions being clear about what decisions we are planning to take, when they will be taken, who will be taking them.
- 3. Clear reports from officers that set out the relevant information in an accessible way, and are clear about the reasons for a decision being made.
- 4. Mechanisms for holding decision-makers and other parts of the partnership landscape to account should be strengthened in any future decision-making structure we must be held accountable for the decisions that we take, and embrace challenge to ensure we're getting the best outcomes for Sheffield.
- 5. Our governance should be underpinned by a commitment to the highest ethical standards as set out in the Nolan Standards on Public Life.
- 6. Our decision-making structure should be designed in a way that creates channels for all 84 Councillors to be involved in, and influence decision making.
- 7. Our decision-making structure should be underpinned by effective ways of working with local communities, including through development of the role and use of Local Area Committees, informed by the Big City Conversation and other, ongoing engagement with Sheffielders.
- 8. We are a member-led authority, where accountability lies with elected councillors. Our decision-making structure must reflect this, and not inappropriately increase delegations to officers.

- 9. Our decision-making structure needs to reflect the practical demands on councillors' time. Need to find a balance between time spent in formal decision-making meetings in the Town Hall against working with and in communities. Time demands shouldn't prohibit people with working/caring commitments from being a Councillor.
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- 14. We need to be clear about what we are trying to achieve through our governance arrangements, and build in measures to assess whether it is working
- 15. We need to identify a forum that enables us to reflect, on an ongoing basis, on whether our governance systems are working as anticipated, and if changes need to be made.

How we do Business (Ways of Working)

- 16. We need to take a more creative approach to communication between residents and the Council, including about what decisions are being made and why, what they mean to residents and what they mean for the city. This needs to be supported by effective communication and information about how decision-making works.
- 17. Role of Full Council should be reviewed in the light of changes following the referendum consider how we could make it a more meaningful forum.
- 18. Ensure that the appropriate support, training and skills development is continuously available for councillors so they can take full advantage of the opportunities under the new structure.
- 19. We need to build a culture in which political disagreement is handled constructively and where members are supported to develop the listening, debating, chairing and committee-membership skills needed for this to happen.

- 20. We must ensure that a commitment to meaningful engagement, involvement and consultation runs through the organisation. We should renew a commitment to our Consultation Principles, and reflect on how the council's Engagement Standards which are currently in development can improve practice throughout our work.
- 21. We need to constantly demonstrate how engagement activity is shaping decision making, and be honest about the impact it is having, so communities and partners can understand how their views have been responded to.
- 22. We need to make it as easy as possible for people to engage with us the starting point for this should be clear, consistent, accessible communication about what the Council is doing, what decisions we are planning to take and how to get involved.
- 23. We need to improve the information we provide about how decision making happens across the City as a whole and how partnerships and structures interconnect.
- 24. We need to establish a process of continuous engagement so that Members, partners and citizens can give a view on how the system is working.

Engagement principles (as agreed Governance Committee 27.10.2021)

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- 27. Inclusive participation Provide all citizens with clear routes and opportunities to contribute to and influence outcomes that will directly affect their lives. Schedule meetings at times and in places that are convenient for as many people as possible and provide parallel ways for people to take part in a way that suits them.
- 28. **Equality** Encourage open discussion so that no sections of the community are left out and all ideas are treated with respect. Decisions should not be controlled be one particular section of a community.
- 29. **Responsiveness** Listen to views, opinions, concerns, complaints and opportunities and be clear how we will use this insight gathered to inform our decision-making.



Governance Committee Report

Report of: Director of Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer)

Date: 30 November 2021

Subject: Transition to a Committee System Inquiry Session 1

Author of Report: Alexander Polak, Assistant Director (Governance)

Summary:

The purpose of this report is:

- 1. To provide an update on progress since the Committee's last meeting on 20 September 2021
- 2. To commence the committee's inquiry into the future governance model by collating, summarising and contextualising information, opinion and evidence which the Council has gathered in recent weeks, months and years which should inform Members' decisions about the future governance model of the Council. This information is organised using the governance framework previously agreed by the Committee for this purpose.
- 3. To present a series of design questions and some limited options relating to each facet of the governance framework which have been directly informed by the feedback received by the public and stakeholders.
- 4. To set the context within which members will hear new evidence at their inquiry sessions on 7th and 8th December allowing members to focus on any specific areas about which they need further information in order to reach a decision.
- 5. To act as a 'first draft' of the report which the Committee will receive again on 22 December. At that time it will include a recommendation to refer the committee's preferred options on to Full Council at the 12 January Full Council meeting. This report, or one building on it, will be updated between now and then in light of the Committee's findings and decisions.

Recommendations:

- 1. That progress in the five weeks since the committee's last meeting be noted.
- 2. That the volume of evidence so far gathered by the Council over the past few years and months, summarised in this report and its appendices, be given full consideration with a view to informing the Committee's views on the Council's future governance model,
- 3. That members identify any key gaps in the evidence available which could be addressed within the remainder of this inquiry process; and
- 4. That the questions and early options presented throughout the paper are considered with a view to whether the committee can provide any degree of steer in order to progress the inquiry towards recommendations to Council by the end of December.

Background Papers: N/A

Category of Report: OPEN

Statutory and Council Policy Checklist

Financial Implications			
NO - Cleared by: Kayleigh Inman			
Legal Implications			
NO - Cleared by: Andrea Simpson			
Equality of Opportunity Implications			
NO			
Tackling Health Inequalities Implications			
NO			
Human rights Implications			
NO:			
Environmental and Sustainability implications			
NO			
Economic impact			
NO			
Community safety implications			
NO			
Human resources implications			
NO			
Property implications			
NO			
Area(s) affected			
None			
Relevant Cabinet Portfolio Member			
Councillor Julie Grocutt, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Community Engagement and Governance			
Is the item a matter which is reserved for approval by the City Council?			
NO			
Press release			
NO			

TRANSITION TO A COMMITTEE SYSTEM INQUIRY SESSION 1

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Governance Committee has been appointed by Sheffield City Council to lead the work which will take the Council from a 'Leader and Cabinet' model of Governance to a 'Committee' model. This report commences the 'inquiry' process which is designed to get the committee to a recommended draft model by the end of December. It does this by summarising all of the information on this topic which the Council has collated to date. Further forthcoming inquiry sessions will explore new information on top of this. The recommendations to Council will be debated by all members on 12 January, and whatever they endorse will be used to steer wider public engagement and development of the final recommendations and revised Constitution during January-March 2022.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 On <u>20th September 2021</u> and <u>27 October 2021</u> the Governance Committee met and considered papers which set out the background for this work. In summary the Committee has agreed:
 - Draft design principles for use when weighing up options before May 2022 and when measuring the degree of success after May 2022
 - A draft governance framework for public use to support conversations with stakeholders, the public, councillors and officers about the future model of the Council's governance
 - Commencement of stakeholder engagement about these principles and about the various aspects of the governance framework
 - A plan for a several-stage process with simultaneous design and engagement informing each other as they proceed
 - Commencement of that stakeholder engagement activity in a two main stages:
 - Proportionate, topic-by-topic engagement with internal and external stakeholders on technical questions as they arise, including an open public invitation for participants to contribute via a stakeholder group made up of interested parties;
 - A city-wide, facilitated, representative, discursive engagement exercise in the new year, by which time more citizens' input could be more impactfully applied to the emerging model, and to shaping future ways of working within it.
 - Commencement of design of the new committee governance model, via a whole-committee inquiry to be conducted between 27 October and Christmas, with the goal of recommending a draft committee governance model to Full Council for endorsement in January

- That the model which Council endorses in January will be used as the starting point for the 2022 phase of public engagement as well as the basis for agreeing the final model and associated Constitution in March 2022
- 2.2 Progress has been made in the weeks between the 27 October 2021Committee meeting and the time of writing this report, including:
 - 1. Collation, analysis and drafting of the information contained in this report and its appendices
 - 2. Continuing the fortnightly series of workshops and briefings ('drop-ins') for stakeholders and the public in the form of an inperson workshop on 8 November and an online workshop on 24 November (after the publication of this report), both focused on the detail of aspects of the governance framework as agreed by the Governance Committee in October;
 - Ongoing briefings and Q&As for Councillors in various settings including the Chairs of Transitional Committees, Chairs of Local Area Committees, members of the Co-Operative Executive, Members of the Governance Committee itself and each individual Political Group's own meetings;
 - 4. Further briefings with senior officers and key manager groups (such as HR and Finance Business Partners) and associated planning of training and development for Officers;
 - 5. Development of a draft Member Development Strategy and Member Development Plan (including induction) in light of the transition to a committee system, including initial engagement with the new Member Development Steering Group;
 - 6. Continuing to work with key outside bodies which will support the Council with aspects of this process, including the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny, the Local Government Association, and Involve on various aspects of the programme including current and future public engagement, early research and design, member and officer briefings and development of the above member development programme;
 - 7. Commencement of the redrafting of the Constitution in readiness for Members' decisions about key aspects of this in the new year
 - 8. Continuing work with member support teams in order to understand their 'as-is' position and the scale and character of the pressures on current ways of working, from which a 'to-be' model of member support can be developed in time for May 2022. This has included ensuring that Trade Unions are briefed.
- 2.3 The Governance Committee has previously endorsed an iterative approach to developing Sheffield City Council's new governance model, whereby design takes place alongside engagement. To support the first stages of this process it was considered helpful to agree a framework, representing a reasonably generic committee system, for use in conversations over the coming weeks. Appendix 1 is a framework which has been developed for this purpose. This report is structured using that framework. The public and stakeholder engagement which has taken

place since the framework was agreed was also structured using this framework.

- 2.4 This framework was *not a proposed governance model for Sheffield*, it is a descriptive list of the main areas which will need discussion in order to design a Sheffield-specific model. It is based on the experiences of other committee-led councils and expert advice from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny. Most of the words included reflect either the necessities of the legal position or a reasonably standard approach to dealing with the problems which councils need to solve to run an effective committee system. Inevitably a level of judgement has been applied in order to produce this model but the Council has been keen that this not be seen as representing a proposal except in the loosest sense in which it is helpful to have a 'starter for ten' in order to have useful conversations about governance design. However in the coming weeks it will be necessary for this to transition into a proposed governance model.
- 2.5 The primary question which should be asked about this model is:

'what changes, if any, would make this framework into a model that is right for Sheffield?'

3.0 COMMENCING THE INQUIRY

- 3.1 The inquiry commencing today has been designed to follow on from, and somewhat mirror in form, the exercise undertaken by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee in 2019 when it looked at what should be achieved through changing the Council's decisionmaking model. The committee used a 'select committee' approach to this work, holding a series of evidence gathering sessions to hear from a range of witnesses. They also invited contributions from citizens through an online call for evidence and attendance at meetings, and undertook site visits and conversations with other local authorities to learn from their experiences of operating different governance models. A full list of witnesses, links to the evidence they considered and webcasts of their meetings can be found that committee's final report, '*Principles for Governance at Sheffield City Council*'.
- 3.2 This inquiry is not designed to re-do that 2019 committee's work, which is generally well-regarded. Evidence from this activity is readily available (including via hyperlinks and a light summary in Appendix 2) and should still be largely relevant. Today's meeting is primarily for the purpose of ensuring that all the valuable insights gained during that process and other exercises since on this topic are fresh in the minds of Councillors who are making decisions about Sheffield City Council's future governance model over the coming weeks and months, and possibly to gain an early steer from Councillors.
- 3.3 The plan for this inquiry has been worked up in consultation with the

Chair and Vice chair and engagement with the whole committee including an inquiry planning workshop on 8 November.

- 3.4 As agreed by members, today's report includes:
 - a. Collation of opinion, ideas and feedback gathered through council-led engagement with stakeholders, the public, members and council officers as described above
 - b. Desktop research including review of relevant material received in the 2019 Scrutiny exercise and since, including the Big City Conversation
 - c. Research into comparator authorities' experiences and recognised best practice
 - d. The main questions which Members will need to address under each of the facets of the framework
- 3.5 At the time of writing this report, contributors to the inquiry sessions on 7 and/or 8 December are not confirmed and these sessions are under development in consultation with Members as above. However these are expected to include:
 - e. Lessons learnt from the first few months of the active experimentation taking place within the Council's democratic arena via the Transitional Committees, Local Area Committees, Co-Chairing pilot and other Members' experiences of decision-making during the 2021/22 transitional year
 - f. Updated written or verbal submissions from a range of other contributors including an open invite to the witnesses from the 2019 Scrutiny exercise to update their submissions with any <u>new or changed</u> information. This includes eg representatives from the business community, officers, academics, local campaign groups etc
 - g. We hope to hear directly from Councillors and Officers from other authorities which have moved to operate a Committee System in the modern era.
- 3.6 The Governance Committee has decided to follow a principle of inviting back previous contributors to the 2019 Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee's review if they wish to give a written or verbal update to their previous submission. Only new or updated information is to be accepted. An open public call for evidence has not been repeated in light of the open public engagement sessions recently undertaken and still underway, and in light of the engagement work to be undertaken with the support of Involve early in the new year, which will be explicitly aimed at ensuring a diversity of voices from across the communities of Sheffield.

3.7 A few additional key names have been added to the list of invited witnesses, which is currently as below. It remains to be seen how the committee's time on the 7th and 8th December can be most usefully stretched across whatever number of witnesses agree or request to attend (virtually or in person).

Judith Hurcombe	LGA	
John Cade	INLOGOV	
lan Parry	CfGS	
Jacqui McKinlay		
Vicky Seddon	Sheffield for Democracy	
Nigel Slack	N/A	
Helen Steers	Voluntary Action Sheffield	
Helen Sims		
Alexis Krachai	Chamber of Commerce	
Louisa Harrison- Walker		
Emma Hinchliffe	Sheffield Youth Cabinet (Sheffield Futures)	
Dr Karen Ford		
Kevin Poppelwell		
Robin Hughes	Joined Up Heritage Sheffield	
Colin Copus	Local Governance Research Centre - De Montfort Uni	
Kate Josephs	SSC CEO	
Ruth Hubbard	It's Our City	
Cllr Dale and Cllr Naz	Co-chairing pilot	
Transitional Cttee Chairs and VCs	Transitional Committee lessons learnt so far	
Clive Betts MP		
Lord David Blunkett		
lan Thomas	CEO Kingston-upon-Thames	
Cllr Andreas Kirsch	Leader Kingston-upon-Thames	
Cllr Phélim Mac Cafferty	Leader Brighton & Hove City Council	
Geoff Raw	CEO Brighton & Hove City Council	
(Brighton officer option 1)		
Abraham Ghebre Ghiorghis	Executive Lead for Strategy, Governance & Law	
(Brighton officer option 2)	Brighton & Hove City Council	
Lorraine O'Donnell	Chief Executive Cheshire East Council	
(Cheshire East officer option 1)		
David Brown	Director of Governance and Compliance –	
(Cheshire East officer option 2)	Monitoring Officer Cheshire East	
Sam Corcoran	Leader Cheshire East Council	
Amanda Whitaker	Democratic Services Hartlepool Borough Council	
Cameron Stockell	Deputy Leader of Hartlepool Borough Council	
Matthew Wood	University of Sheffield	

3.8 The resources and submissions from 2019 are summarised in Appendix 2.

4.0 ISSUES AND OPTIONS – THE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

4.1 At this starting point in the enquiry, a series of key design questions are presented against each facet of the governance framework, rather than

explicit options or proposals, although in some cases the questions proposed amount to a series of options.

- 4.2 The following appendices have been organised and analysed under the headings of the governance framework in order that they can be reviewed alongside the main body of this report and inform discussion:
 - Appendix 1 Diagram of the whole Governance Framework. Some additional headings which do not appear on that framework (such as 'committee chairs') have been added in the report below where there are enough key questions, or enough learning points from sources, to warrant it.
 - Appendix 2 Summary of key points from the 2019 Overview and Scrutiny exercise, and the early parts of the Big City Conversation which took place pre-pandemic
 - Appendix 3 Case studies of seven other committee-led local authorities, labelled A-G. These include structure diagrams and analysis of their working arrangements under each of the headings of the governance framework.
 - Appendix 6 and 7 Collated and summarised public and stakeholder feedback about all the aspects of the governance framework, arising from the series of events as described within that appendix (and in the report elsewhere on this agenda).
- 4.3 The following sections of this report can be expected to return to the committee, with further information and options included, as the inquiry proceeds.
- 4.4 The draft design principles which were previously agreed by this committee are under review elsewhere on today's agenda to reflect the feedback received through the engagement sessions. Once their next iteration is confirmed, members can expect to see them incorporated into the next iteration of this report in order to support the evaluation of emerging options.

5.0 LEADERSHIP - FULL COUNCIL

1. Full Council

Statements-

- Is made up of all the City Councillors elected by the people of Sheffield to listen to and represent their wards and the people who live within them
- Agrees the Constitution (i.e. how the Council operates)
- Sets the Scheme of Delegations (i.e. who can make which decisions)
- Is the forum where all Members steer the overall direction of the Council, set the boundaries within which all the themed committees have to operate (known as the 'budget and policy framework'), and keep oversight of decisions made across the whole system. In exceptional circumstances, can overturn decisions made by Committees.

 Appoints councillors to individual committees and elects the Leader of the Council and the ceremonial Lord Mayor.

5.1 Key design questions:

- Do we need a mechanism for calling issues in to Full Council (taking them out of the hands of a committee) in extremis?
 - If so, what criteria must be fulfilled?
 - Number of councillors agreeing?
 - Checklist in constitution eg not vexatious, repetitious, irrelevant etc
- If the agenda of full Council might be going to get busier (as per testimony from other committee-led authorities), should the meeting be more frequent or just more efficient?
 - What aspects of the meeting could be changed/curtailed/redirected elsewhere in order to use members' time as effectively as possible?

6.0 LEADERSHIP - LEADER'S ROLE

<u>2. Leader's Role</u>

<u>Statem ents</u>

- Advocate for the city and represents the Council in regional and national networks and with Government
- Acts as the Council's nominee at South Yorkshire City Region (SYCR) and has voting rights when taking SYCR decisions
- Lead Spokesperson for the Council as a whole
- Chair of Overarching Committee (see elsewhere on page)

3. Lord Mayor's Role

<u>Statem ents</u>

Ceremonial 'First Citizen' representing the Council as a civic body in formal and informal public settings and promoting local causes

Chairs Full Council (has a casting vote if votes are tied)

- 6.1 Key Design Questions:
 - What should be written into the newly defined role of the Leader?
 Examples exist from eg Wirral and Cheshire East
 - Does anything need to change about the role of the Lord Mayor?
 - Should the council encourage or facilitate the sharing of roles such as 'Leader' or 'Lord Mayor' between more than one Councillor?
 - o If so, how?

7.0 LEADERSHIP – ROLE OF POLICY COMMITTEE CHAIRS

- 7.1 Key design questions:
 - What should be written into the newly defined role of Policy Committee Chair?
 - Should there be any constitutional requirements constraining who Full Council can elect as Chairs or Vice Chairs of policy committees?
 - Eg with regard to whether they are in the administration, opposition, or some other Group?
 - Should the council encourage or facilitate the sharing of roles such as 'committee chair' between more than one Councillor?
 If so, how?

8.0 COMMITTEES - POLICY COMMITTEES



Statem ents

- Decision-making Committees organised by theme (Full Council sets exact number, titles and remits – which may be reviewed and changed at each year's Annual Meeting)
- Work within the Budget, Policy and Strategy Frameworks set by the Full Council & any Overarching Committee
- Make up of all Themed Committees is proportionate to the size of each party group on Full Council
- In certain conditions Committees may establish a limited number of temporary, time-limited Sub-Committees for specific purposes, such as to develop policy on a specific issue.
- 8.1 As the creation of themed committees is the definitive aspect of change in the new governance system for the Council to effectively and efficiently manage the decision-making, it is considered prudent to begin consideration of real options soonest with regard to this facet of

the governance framework

- 8.2 Appendix 4 contains a series of hypothetical models showing a very similar structure of committees to the current model but with various amounts of Policy Committees replacing the Co-Operative Executive and all Overview and Scrutiny Committees.
- 8.3 Appendix 5 contains certain statistics which it is important to view alongside these models:
 - Analysis of the workload on members of various numbers of committees (the number of members on each committee has been proportionally reduced for the models with more committees)
 - Analysis of the frequency with which any of those Policy Committees could meet within the bounds of broadly the amount of democratic and member support officers we have in place (ie less frequently, if there are more separate committees)

8.4 Mini Case Study: Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council

Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council has recently moved to a committee system. They are one of the example authorities examined in Appendix 4. On 30 June the Secretary of State announced an <u>external assurance review</u> of Wirral Borough Council's financial position and the strength of its wider governance arrangements. The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) led on the financial aspects of the review. <u>Ada Burns</u>, former Chief Executive of Darlington Borough Council, led on governance.

CIPFA's financial review and Ada Burn's governance review set out detailed findings, including conclusions, evidence and methodology used, and include the following statements:

"The move to a Committee system, implemented in the middle of the pandemic has clearly improved Member engagement but poses a further risk to the improvement journey because of its immaturity, its over-elaborate design, and the administrative burden its placing on Officers..."

"Potentially [the committee system] has a valuable role to play in allowing space for deep Member involvement and consensus building, and transparency and engagement have been cited in every interview as a positive benefit of the move. This is particularly valuable in an environment of No Overall Control with five political groupings and elections in thirds.

"However, there are significant risks to the ability of the system to support swift and sustained progress on finances. The risks sit with the division of responsibility and resources into seven Policy Committees, with the retention in addition of a Decision Review Committee. This poses a risk of fragmentation and delay, for example where corporate and service savings strategies need sign up from all Committees. The risks of fragmentation could be mitigated where there is a comprehensive Council financial strategy (as above) which Policy and Resources would lead and delegate to the Committees to drive forward. I've seen no evidence that this is in place and indeed the budget development process agreed by Policy and Resources Committee on 17th March 2021 revolves around a consideration by each Committee of only the budgets relevant to their responsibilities..."

"The number of Committees and requirements to ensure appropriate briefing of all the five Political Groups in the lead up to each meeting is posing a significant resource burden on the Council. The volume of papers and length of agendas is both an administrative burden and a likely distraction from a necessary focus on key decisions..."

"Further, the existence and procedures of the Decision Review Committee poses a risk to swift decision making, and it is difficult to understand the rationale for retaining a feature of the strong Leader and Cabinet model in a Committee system..."

"It is the case that Officers who have risen in seniority during the years of the strong leader and executive model will have had less exposure to politicians than within a committee system, and it may be that more training is necessary to ensure that they make their input appropriately and effectively..."

"Members [should] work with the Director of Law and Governance to review the Committee system to reduce the number of Committees, assign authority to the Policy and Resources Committee in respect of financial recovery, and significantly reduce the related administrative burden"

8.4 Key Design Questions:

- How many committees should there be?
 - o Based on cost
 - o Based on efficiency/bureaucracy/pace
 - Based on volume of decisions to be made
 - Based on capacity of members
 - o Based on capacity of officers
 - Based on how many members need or want to be on a policy committee (in addition to roles on other pre-existing committees such as Planning, Audit etc)
 - Based on number of key member roles (and associated Special Responsibility Allowances)
- What should their remits be?
 - Based on thematic areas (such as previous scrutiny remits)
 - Eg Children, Young People and Family Support;

Healthier Communities and Adult Social Care; Management Committee (3 cttees)

- Eg Children, Young People & Family Support; Healthier Communities & Adult Social Care; Economic & Environmental Wellbeing; Safer & Stronger communities; Strategy & Resources (5 cttees)
- Based on alignment to the corporate structure
 - Eg Resources, Place, People (3 cttees)
 - Eg Children, young people and education; adult social care and health; Housing and neighbourhood services; Environment, climate and transport; Economy, regeneration and culture; policy, finance and resources (6 cttees)
- o Based on Functions of Council
 - eg Local Housing Authority, Highways Authority, Social Services or Children's Services Authority etc
- How do we avoid policy committees becoming siloed in their ways of thinking?
- What should they be called?
 - Eg Service Committees
 - Eg Policy Committees
 - Eg Themed Committees
- How often will they meet, at what time of day, for how long?
 - Eg agree a minimum likely frequency and use that to calculate how many committees can be serviced within current capacity
 - Eg stick with broadly status quo for now
 - Eg wholesale shift to afternoons or evenings (this would have major workforce implications)
- Will there be any sub-committees?
 - Will there be limits on duration/purpose/resources for subcommittees (eg task and finish groups)?
 - Will standing sub-committees be allowed and if so, on what topics?
- How will Committees ensure that they are able to move swiftly on major, complex and fast-moving issues?
 - Role of Group Spokespersons to meet regularly with Chair and officers in between meetings?
- Will committees work in the same way consistently?
- When cross-cutting issues arise, what happens?
 - Do committees negotiate between themselves over which one deals with it?
 - Does a co-ordinating committee step in?
- How will the budget setting process work? Will every committee have a role to play, or just a 'strategy and resources' committee?
- How will committees ensure that the voice of residents are at the heart of all decisions?
 - Early engagement by officers in the policy development phases?

- What direct engagement tools are available to committees and when would it be appropriate to use them?
 - Co-optees?
 - Time-limited engagement activity such as deliberative discussion, inquiries, community workshops?

9.0 COMMITTEES - OVERARCHING COMMITTEE

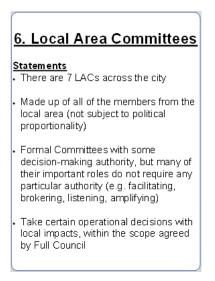
5. Overarching Committee
Statements • Overarching Committee with strategic responsibilities (NB this idea was endorsed by Full Council pre- referendum)
 Develops a Corporate Plan, budget and other aspects of the Budget & Policy Framework, with input of the other Themed Committees, for agreement/endorsement by Full Council- and then can only work within those limits agreed by Council
 Takes strategic decisions and sets the overall work programme for the Themed Committees which are each responsible for delivering specific parts of a Corporate Plan
 Membership typically is Chairs of all the Themed

 Membership typically is Chairs of all the Themed Committees plus others to maintain political proportionality. Chaired by Leader of the Council

9.1 Key design questions:

- Will there be a committee with a strategic/crosscutting/coordinating role?
- If so what will its functions be?
 - Financial?
 - Coordinating Policy?
 - Determining which committee will lead on cross-cutting issues?
 - Strategic Issues?
 - Urgent decisions?
 - Determining whether to 'call-in' an issue to Council?
 - Corporate Communications?
 - Holding other policy committees to account on delivery of their plans?
- If so, will its membership include the Chairs of the other committees? Vice Chairs?
- If so, how will proportionality be maintained?

10.0 COMMITTEES - LOCAL AREA COMMITTEES



10.1 Key Design Questions:

[Noting that the timetable for devolution of decision-making authority to LACs is outside the scope of this project]

- How do LACs escalate issues for strategic consideration?
- What types of issues or question are appropriate for the strategic parts of the organisation to ask LACs to raise at their local meetings?

11.0 COMMITTEES - STATUTORY SCRUTINY

7. Statutory Scrutiny

<u>Statements</u>

 No legal requirement for separate Scrutiny Committee(s) now that cross-party check and challenge (and cross-party policy development) is built into every decision-making Committee and Full Council.

Some statutory responsibilities remain & must be effective, including Health and Crime & Disorder. This can be made part of the remit of other existing (non-scrutiny) Committees or we could maintain a standalone Committee.

11.1 Key Design Questions:

- Which committees should cover the statutory responsibility to scrutinise the Health Service, flooding, and crime and disorder?
 - The relevant policy cttee?
 - One or more other pre-existing committees in the structure?
- Are any additional checks and balances on decision-makers required?
 - Opposition Groups within the decision-making committee itself
 - o Audit Committee
 - Finance/resources committee

- Openness and transparency / elections
- Mechanism for calling issues in to Full Council in extremis?

12.0 COMMITTEES - OTHER COMMITTEES

8. Other Committees

<u>Statem ents</u>

 A range of existing Committees continue to serve their current functions e.g. Planning, Licensing, Audit and Standards

 Some Committees may need to be reshaped or rethought in order to fit within the new Committee System, such as Health & Wellbeing Board, Joint Commissioning Committee.

12.1 Key design questions:

- Will there be a need for a separate Governance Committee?
 - To review the model in due course and continue to make recommendations for improvement.
- Will there be a separate 'urgency' committee?
- How will the role of the current Joint Commissioning Committee be incorporated in the model?
- Will anything need to change about Joint Committees and Partnership Boards in the new framework?
- Can we streamline some of the other existing committees/subcommittees?
 - There must be two Licencing committees for technical legal reasons, one dealing with statutory licensing and one with other licensing functions, but the membership can be the same for both and they can meet with the same frequency between them (as now) so not much must operationally change about how this currently works
- Which Committee should oversee the development and maintenance of a member development strategy and plan which are fit for purpose to support the transition to committees?
 - Full Council?
 - Governance Committee?
 - Audit & Standards Committee?
- Who should replace the current Co-op Executive nominees on the Health and Wellbeing Board?

13.0 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNICATIONS

9. Public Engagement

Statem ents -

 A critical ambition for the new governance system is for citizens, communities and partners to be more effectively engaged, involved and listened to within the decisionmaking process.

 Decisions, and the processes used to reach decisions, should be easy for anybody to find and understand so that decision-makers are publicly accountable to everyone.

 This objective should be read as running through every single part of this framework.

10. Communications

Statements-

A protocol will define who can make official statements on behalf of the Council under the new Committee System. Typically each political Group will have a nominated public spokesperson for each committee, but official Council statements are likely to be in the names of the Chairs of the relevant Committee.

13.1 Key Design Questions:

- How will policy committees approve/conduct comms & engagement?
 - Can the Chair of each policy committee commission comms or is this a role for an overarching committee?
- What is the role of Group Spokespersons?
- What communication channels should committees routinely use to communicate with the public and what format should this take?
- What will the model be for public participation in committee meetings?
 - o in person, remotely, both?
 - Continue with open time for public questions, or some other mechanism for ensuring residents are speaking in the most impactful setting (and keeping Full Council focused on strategic matters)?
 - Should public questions be written and submitted in advance?
 - Should public questions at committee be verbal or written only?

14.0 ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES - SCHEMES OF DELEGATION

11. Schemes of Delegation

Statem ents-

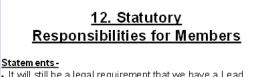
All decisions previously made by the Co-operative Executive will be made at the new Themed Committees. Decisions previously made by Individual Executive Members could either be made at a Thematic Committee or by Officers. Where decisions are made by Officers, the thresholds for this, and mechanisms for transparency and holding decision-makers to account, will be clear in the Constitution.

14.1 Key design questions:

- Do the current decision-making limits and delegations for Officers need to change?
- If so, how should a threshold be defined?

- Based on member capacity?
- Based on a definition of what is strategic?
- Based on efficiency/bureaucracy/pace?
- How do we ensure there is appropriate member oversight and opportunities to hold decision-makers to account?

15.0 ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES - STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES FOR MEMBERS



 It will still be a legal requirement that we have a Lead Member for Children's Services. This role is usually combined with Chairmanship of the relevant Committee(s)

Individual Member decision making is not permitted under the Committee System.

15.1 Key Design Questions:

- What responsibilities and extra duties including various Boards should be considered necessarily associated with the Lead Member for Children's Services?
- Are these achievable alongside a chairmanship role?

16.0 MISC - STAFFING, RELATIONSHIPS, CASEWORK ETC

13. Staffing, Relationships and Casework

<u>Statements-</u>

 \cdot The Member Support offer will need to be reviewed in line with the new model.

Various new relationships and ways of working between Members and Officers must be forged

Member Casework support mechanisms may need to be reviewed

16.1 Key design questions:

- What degree of officer support will be needed by each committee and their Chairs and Vice Chairs?
 - Primarily these are operational decisions relating to the officer establishment and service offer
- What are the ambitions for digitally-enabled ways of working?
 - Online agendas/papers?
 - Hybrid meeting technology and protocols?
 - Online engagement?
- Who will define what 'Special Responsibility Allowances' need to be paid, and at what level, under the new arrangements?
 - An 'Independent Remuneration Panel' is being convened

as usual.

 Should we continue to operate a public forward plan of decisions, and the concept of 'key decisions'?

17.0 LEGAL, FINANCIAL AND EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY IMPLICATIONS

- 17.1 There are no immediate legal implications to this report. The outcome of the inquiry must result in a proposed governance model that meets the statutory requirements as set out in the Local Government Act 1972, the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and relevant regulations, and enables lawful decision-making. The full legal implications will be set out in a future report to the Governance Committee describing the proposed model.
- 17.2 There are no immediate financial implications to this report.
- 17.3 There are no immediate equalities implications to this report. Equalities will be a key consideration in the design and implementation of the engagement programme, the detail of which is covered in a report elsewhere on today's agenda.

18.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1. That progress in the five weeks since the committee's last meeting be noted.
- 2. That the volume of evidence so far gathered by the Council over the past few years and months, summarised in this report and its appendices, be given full consideration with a view to informing the Committee's views on the Council's future governance model,
- 3. That members identify any key gaps in the evidence available which could be addressed within the remainder of this inquiry process; and
- 4. That the questions and early options presented throughout the paper are considered with a view to whether the committee can provide any degree of steer in order to progress the inquiry towards recommendations to Council by the end of December.

19.0 APPENDICES

- **Appendix 1** Draft Governance Framework
- Appendix 2 Summary of evidence from 2019 Scrutiny exercise and since
- Appendix 3 Case studies of other Committee-led Councils
- Appendix 4 Diagrams of potential governance structures for SCC
- Appendix 5 Councillor capacity requirements aligned to the

options in appendix 3

- **Appendix 6** Public engagement feedback about the governance framework (part 1)
- **Appendix 7** Public engagement feedback about the governance framework (part 2 It's Our City slides)

Gillian Duckworth

Director of Legal & Governance (and Monitoring Officer)

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Committee System Discussion Framework

Leadership

1. Full Council

Statements-

- Is made up of all the City Councillors elected by the people of Sheffield to listen to and represent their wards and the people who live within them
- Agrees the Constitution (i.e. how the Council operates)
- Sets the Scheme of Delegations (i.e. who can make which decisions)
- Is the forum where all Members steer the overall direction of the Council, set the boundaries within which all the themed committees have to operate (known as the 'budget and policy framework'), and keep oversight of decisions made across the whole system. In exceptional circumstances, can overturn decisions made by Committees.
- Appoints councillors to individual committees and elects the Leader of the Council and the ceremonial Lord Mayor.

2. Leader's Role

- Statements
 Advocate for the city and represents the Council in regional and national networks and with Government
- Acts as the Council's nominee at South Yorkshire City Region (SYCR) and has voting rights when taking SYCR decisions
- Lead Spokesperson for the Council as a whole

Chair of Overarching Committee (see elsewhere on page)

3. Lord Mayor's Role

Statements

- Ceremonial 'First Citizen' representing the Council as a civic body in formal and informal public settings and promoting local causes
- Chairs Full Council (has a casting vote if votes are tied)

Engagement & Communication

9. Public Engagement

Statements-

- A critical ambition for the new governance system is for citizens, communities and partners to be more effectively engaged, involved and listened to within the decisionmaking process.
- Decisions, and the processes used to reach decisions, should be easy for anybody to find and understand so that decision-makers are publicly accountable to everyone.
- This objective should be read as running through every single part of this framework.

10. Communications

Statements-

 A protocol will define who can make official statements on behalf of the Council under the new Committee System. Typically each political Group will have a nominated public spokesperson for each committee, but official Council statements are likely to be in the names of the Chairs of the relevant Committee.

4. Themed Committees

Statements

 Decision-making Committees organised by theme (Full Council sets exact number, titles and remits – which may be reviewed and changed at each year's Annual Meeting)

- Work within the Budget, Policy and Strategy Frameworks set by the Full Council & any Overarching Committee
- Make up of all Themed Committees is proportionate to the size of each party group on Full Council
- In certain conditions Committees may establish a limited number of temporary, time-limited Sub-Committees for specific purposes, such as to develop policy on a specific issue.

6. Local Area Committees

<u>Statements</u>There are 7 LACs across the city

- Made up of all of the members from the local area (not subject to political proportionality)
- Formal Committees with some decision-making authority, but many of their important roles do not require any particular authority (e.g. facilitating, brokering, listening, amplifying)
- Take certain operational decisions with local impacts, within the scope agreed by Full Council

Committees

5. Overarching Committee

Statements

- Overarching Committee with strategic responsibilities (NB this idea was endorsed by Full Council prereferendum)
- Develops a Corporate Plan, budget and other aspects of the Budget & Policy Framework, with input of the other Themed Committees, for agreement/endorsement by Full Council- and then can only work within those limits agreed by Council
- Takes strategic decisions and sets the overall work programme for the Themed Committees which are each responsible for delivering specific parts of a Corporate Plan
- Membership typically is Chairs of all the Themed Committees plus others to maintain political proportionality. Chaired by Leader of the Council

7. Statutory Scrutiny

<u>Statements</u>

- No legal requirement for separate Scrutiny Committee(s) now that cross-party check and challenge (and cross-party policy development) is built into every decision-making Committee and Full Council.
- Some statutory responsibilities remain & must be effective, including Health and Crime & Disorder. This can be made part of the remit of other existing (nonscrutiny) Committees or we could maintain a standalone Committee.

8. Other Committees

Statements

A range of existing Committees continue to serve their current functions e.g. Planning, Licensing, Audit and Standards

Some Committees may need to be reshaped or rethought in order to fit within the new Committee System, such as Health & Wellbeing Board, Joint Commissioning Committee.

Roles & Responsibilities

11. Schemes of Delegation

Statements-

 All decisions previously made by the Co-operative Executive will be made at the new Themed Committees. Decisions previously made by Individual Executive Members could either be made at a Thematic Committee or by Officers. Where decisions are made by Officers, the thresholds for this, and mechanisms for transparency and holding decision-makers to account, will be clear in the Constitution.

12. Statutory Responsibilities for Members

Statements-

 It will still be a legal requirement that we have a Lead Member for Children's Services. This role is usually combined with Chairmanship of the relevant Committee(s)

Individual Member decision making is not permitted under the Committee System.

13. Staffing, Relationships and Casework

Statements-

• The Member Support offer will need to be reviewed in line with the new model.

Various new relationships and ways of working between Members and Officers must be forged

· Member Casework support mechanisms may need to be reviewed



Summary of Evidence from 2019

Purpose of document

Both pre and post the May 2020 referendum a significant amount of consultation with the public and key stakeholders has taken place. While engagement is ongoing, both online and out in communities, we want to ensure that everything we have already heard and learnt to date is included in the design and decision-making process.

A series of key outputs have therefore been summarised into one comprehensive document, aligned to the framework for discussion paper.

Date	Output	Who was involved	Purpose
30 th October 2019	Sheffield's Big City Conversation – Independent Governance Event Report	 A panel of representatives of groups, both local and national including: Anne Barr (It's Our City!) Vicky Seddon (Sheffield for Democracy) Maddy Desforges (Voluntary Action Sheffield) Richard Wright (Sheffield Chamber of Commerce and Industry) Mark Edgell (Local Government Association) Ian Parry (Centre for Public Scrutiny) As well as members of the public Authored by active citizen, Nigel Slack. 	An independently chaired event as part of the Big City Conversation, giving members of the public the opportunity to talk about how they want to engage with the council on issues that matter to them and contribute to the debate on how Sheffield City Council makes decisions ahead of the referendum. This was also used as part of the evidence base for producing the Governance Principles document (below).
Launched October 2019. Initial findings were presented to Full Council	Sheffield's Big City Conversation – Summary	Members of the public engaged with via a series of events in district and local centres, as well as an online survey	To engage with citizens across the city about their priorities and how they wanted to get involved in decisions and issues in their local community prior to the development of LACS. This summary reflects the key issues raised and is more LAC specific.

Outputs included in the summary

and Scrutiny in Jan 2020			
December 2019	Principles for Governance at Sheffield City Council	Lead and authored by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. A select committee approach encompassed the following: A series of evidence gathering	To support Sheffield citizens in making an informed choice at the May 2020 referendum the council had a commitment to publish proposals on how both of the referendum options could work. As part of the process of developing
		 sessions to hear from a range of witnesses. This included: Experts in local governance and decision making Local organisations with an interest in local democracy Partners from business and the Voluntary Community and Faith sector Youth Cabinet and Youth Advisers. Contributions from citizens through an online call for evidence and attendance at meetings Site visits Conversations with other local authorities. 	referendum options, the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee – a cross party group of Councillors – worked with the Deputy Leader at the request of Full Council, to look at what we wanted to achieve through changing our decision making structures. This included producing a set of principles that should underpin both options to be put to the referendum. This report sets out the approach that was taken and the principles that were subsequently developed.

Links to key documentation:

- <u>Big City Conversation</u> report to Council 8 Jan 2020
- <u>
 <sup>Proposals for a Committee System of Governance</u> report as agreed at Full Council and Cabinet
 in Feb 2020

 </u></sup>
 - o <u>Diagram of proposed committee system of governance</u> (as at Full Council 5 Feb 2020)
 - o Minutes of the Full Council meeting at which this was agreed
- <u>Final report from Scrutiny Management Committee 2019</u> Evidence which informed this report is linked below:
 - o <u>26 Nov 2019 Scrutiny Management Cttee Minutes</u>
 - Evidence Submission CfPS, item 5. PDF 37 KB
 - Rethinking-Governance, item 5. PDF 298 KB
 - Musical-Chairs, item 5. PDF 335 KB
 - Evidence Submission INLOGOV, item 5. 2 PDF 37 КВ
 - John Cade, item 5. ¹/₂ PDF 243 KB
 - Evidence Submission LGA, item 5. 2 PDF 37 КВ

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- LGA paper November 2019, item 5. PDF 142 KB
- Decision making data for OSMC, item 5. PDF 177 KB
- Appendix to OSMC report, item 5. 2 PDF 371 KB
- Decision making in Sheffield -, item 5. PDF 400 KB
- o <u>28 Nov 2019 Scrutiny Management Cttee Minutes</u>
 - Online Call for Evidence Appendix 1, item 5. PDF 1 MB
 - It's Our City Evidence and community principles for a modern committee system, item 5. PDF 788 KB
 - Nigel Slack Independent Governance Event Report 17.11.19, item
 <u>5.</u> PDF 444 KB
 - Nigel Slack Transforming SCC Gov, item 5. 2 PDF 6 MB
 - <u>S4Ds proposals re local democracy Final, item 5.</u> PDF 164 КВ
 - VAS Evidence, item 5. ²³ PDF 184 KB
 - Sheffield Futures Evidence, item 5. PDF 461 KB
 - Evidence Submission Karen Ford, item 5.
 ^D
 РDF 151 КВ

 - <u>Robin Hughes Joined UP Heritage Sheffield Evidence, item 5.</u> PDF 14 KB
 - Sheffield Green Party Submission, item 5. 2 PDF 163 КВ
 - 3 Dec 2019 Scrutiny Management Committee Minutes

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- Governance Evidence Session 3 Cover Sheet, item 5. PDF 143 KB
- Visits feedback, item 5. PDF 398 KB
- OSMC Interim Big City Conversation headlines, item 5. PDF 2 MB
- <u>Reading Decision Making, item 5.</u> PDF 293 KB

SUMMARY

1. Leadership (encompasses the role of Full Council, the Leader's Role and the Lord Mayor's Role).

Input on these matters in the documents reviewed was tended to be on the topic of 'Leadership' in general rather than comments being specifically aligned to leader role, lord mayor's role etc.

1.1 Relevant Ambitions, Governance Principles and Ways of working identified in Principles for Governance document:

Ambition for Sheffield:

- Sheffield is a council where all councillors are involved in and able to influence decision making
- A council that has a modern and responsive approach to governance which reflects the increasingly complex policy making environment
- Sheffield City Council is a reflective council that is committed to continuously improving governance

Governance Principles:

- We need to be **clear about what we are trying to achieve through our governance arrangements**, and build in measures to assess whether it is working
- We need to identify a forum that enables us to reflect, on an ongoing basis, on whether our governance systems are working as anticipated, and if changes need to be made.

Ways of Working

Role of Full Council – should be reviewed in the light of changes following the referendum
 – consider how we could make it a more meaningful forum.

A key theme echoed across the documents was that culture and ways of working was more important than structure. This included the need to create a culture of co-operation between all political parties, stakeholders & the public. It could therefore be assumed that the role of leaders within any new model should be to embody and drive this culture change.¹

1.2 Key points from the Big City Conversation

Beyond the new model it was suggested the Council should consider moving to four-yearly elections as a way to bring longer-term focus and stronger culture of accountability. (Sheffield for Democracy as part of Big City Conversation)

1.3 Key points from the Principles of Governance document

"The Committee considered the role of Full Council meetings, with many Councillors feeling that the current approach does not provide a meaningful forum for debate, and that this process provides us with an opportunity to reconsider how our Full Council meeting is used." **Governance Principles doc**

"The Committee considered the role of Full Council meetings, with many Councillors feeling that the current approach does not provide a meaningful forum for debate, and that this process provides us with an opportunity to reconsider how our Full Council meeting is used." **Governance Principles doc**

2. Committees (encompasses Themed Committees, Overarching Committees and Other Committees – Statutory functions and LACs have been addressed separately).

2.1. Relevant Ambitions, Governance Principles and Ways of working identified in Principles for Governance document:

Ambition for Sheffield outlined in Governance Principles 2019 doc:

- Sheffield is a council where all councillors are involved in and able to influence decision making
- A council that has a modern and responsive approach to governance which reflects the increasingly complex policy making environment

Governance Principles

- A commitment to openness and transparency must run through our decision making structure. This needs to start with comprehensive forward planning of decisions being clear about what decisions we are planning to take, when they will be taken, who will be taking them. It needs to continue through the decision making process, with clear reports from officers that set out the relevant information in an accessible way, and are clear about the reasons for a decision being made. –
- Our decision making structure should be designed in a way that creates **channels for all 84 Councillors to be involved in, and influence decision making**.
- Our decision making structure needs to reflect the practical demands on councillors' time. Need to find a balance between time spent in formal decision making meetings in the Town Hall against working with and in communities. Time demands shouldn't prohibit people with working/caring commitments from being a Councillor.
- Our decision making structure must avoid silo working both within and outside of the City Council, and enable a joined up approach to tackling issues which need the involvement of a number of organisations in the city
- Our decision making structure needs to have a **mechanism for making urgent decisions** openly, transparently and effectively engaging elected councillors.
- Our decision making structure needs to strengthen our ability to work with our partners in a complex local, sub-regional and national policy environment, and enable us to take a lead on key issues facing the city and the citizens of Sheffield.

Ways of Working

- We need to **improve the information we provide about how decision making happens across the City as a whole** and how partnerships and structures interconnect. Much of the feedback was focussed on decision making as an overarching subject rather than how this should be aligned to structure. How decisions are made and how people can influence and understand them was repeatedly stated as being of chief concern over structure.

2.2 Key points from the Big City Conversation:

- Any structures should be open & transparent around decision making. The question of *'How are decisions made?*' should be understood by all and supported across the political divides.
 Clarity in where policies or issues for decisions arise, who is involved in the decision (and why?) and what oversight can be relied upon?
- Involving the public in the decision-making process, and the importance of letting people know what decisions are planned over the medium/long term so that organisations and individuals can seek to engage with decisions that affect them.
- Ensuring a range of voices are heard
- That experts with the right skills and experience (internal or external) are consulted.
- That decisions are taken at the most appropriate level e.g. with and closer to citizens through neighbourhood level structures (see LAC summary)

The **LGA** and **CfGS** made more structure specific statements as part of the Big City Conversation to say that any new model should:

- Assess different governance models apolitically to ensure the system which is put in place works for the city and is sustainable.
- It's more important to examine what does and doesn't work in the current structure than to just select an alternative structure
- The choice isn't binary and there are different designs and models to consider.
- Needs to consider the barriers which cannot be overcome, for example the legal requirements (eg. where councillors are the only ones able to make decisions and spend money)
- Conversation and engagement should be used to define attributes as opposed to defining a system.

A key area of consensus was that any new structure should enable all members to have a meaningful role in decision making.

2.3 Key points from the Principles for Governance document:

"Through our evidence gathering sessions, it quickly became clear that 'governance' – the technical process by which we make decisions – is only one part of the picture. We heard that how Sheffield City Council does its business, our processes, our behaviours, our culture; how we as Councillors work with each other, with our communities and with our officers has an equally significant impact on the quality, and experience, of decision making in the city. There is no 'perfect' governance structure – there are advantages and disadvantages to all models – it is how we operate within those structures that will ultimately determine how successful they are." Governance Principles doc

"We heard from experts in local governance that culture and processes are more significant than structure here. Through these conversations we have seen how committee systems can serve to marginalise opposition councillors if they operate with a de facto 'cabinet' in the form of a powerful policy committee. Conversely, our conversations with Rotherham MBC have shown us that a significant strengthening of pre-decision scrutiny has given all councillors an opportunity to have their say on policy before decisions are made, and opposition councillors feel that they can have a real impact. We recognise that ultimately, in any decision making structure we implement, the majority party has a mandate to govern – but we need to ensure that our structures and processes enable all councillors to be involved and have influence." **Governance Principles doc**

"We recognise that some of the most important issues we need to tackle as a council – climate change, inequality, inclusive growth - do not fit neatly into any one policy area, and require a joined up approach from a range of Council services and indeed, partners. Voluntary Action Sheffield shared their concern that a decision making structure must not lose critical interrelationships between issues such as the economy and the climate crisis. This was echoed in the evidence from local governance experts who talked to us about the importance of being able to deal with complex 'wicked' issues." **Governance Principles doc**

"The Chamber of Commerce told us that they want to see a decision making structure that doesn't procrastinate and put off decisions. Timely, and on occasion, quick, decision making is important to avoid missing out on opportunities – particularly around inward investment. We want to make the most of all of the opportunities that come Sheffield's way, and to be able to respond appropriately to urgent issues as they arise across all policy areas. We recognise that the quality of decision making should not come at the price of speed, but any future system needs to have a **mechanism for making urgent decisions** openly, transparently and involving elected councillors. "**Governance Principles doc**

"The policy making environment has become increasingly complex over recent years. There are a range of joint boards and partnerships operating across the city – for example in health alone we have a Health and Wellbeing Board, Joint Commissioning Committee, Accountable Care Partnership, Integrated Care System and Statutory Scrutiny Committee. We need to ensure that our decision making structure enables us to function effectively, and play a leadership role in this environment. We also need to be clear about how these structures interconnect, and improve the information that we provide about decision making in the City as a whole – linking back into our ambition around openness and transparency." **Governance Principles doc**

2.1 Scrutiny

2.1.1 Relevant Ambitions, Governance Principles and Ways of working identified in Principles for Governance document:

Ambition for Sheffield outlined in Governance Principles 2019 doc: -

- Sheffield is a trusted organisation where decisions are taken in an open and transparent way, and accountability is clear

Governance Principles

 Scrutiny is important in any future structure – both in terms of our statutory responsibility around health and community safety scrutiny and in terms of building in checks and balances. Scrutiny should be strengthened in any future decision making structure – we must be held accountable for the decisions that we take, and embrace challenge to ensure we're getting the best outcomes for Sheffield.

2.1.2 Key points from the Big City Conversation:

- **Member skills** importance of supporting Councillors to have the skills to undertake robust scrutiny of decisions
- **Independence in the scrutiny process** a keenness to have different, independent voices involved in scrutiny committees, designing-in roles for citizens, community organisations and expert voices.
- **Pre-scrutiny of decisions** opportunity to think about when scrutiny takes place so that scrutiny are involved before decisions are made to check that the process towards a decision has been robust

2.1.3 Key points from the Principles for Governance document:

"Accountability was another key theme to emerge from our discussions. We recognise that one of the perceived advantages in moving to Leader/Cabinet models back in 2000 was about improved visible accountability. We have also sought to explore accountability in committee systems and raised this with experts in local governance. On the whole, their responses suggested that accountability can be less clear in a committee system, but that ultimately, in representative democracy, the majority group delivers the policy it has the mandate for and is accountable for that" **Governance Principles doc**

"We heard again that culture and ways of working are important in building in accountability to *any* system, and the importance of the role of scrutiny in strengthening accountability. We heard from Rotherham Borough Council, who have significantly strengthened their scrutiny function with positive results. After discussion with our Statutory Scrutiny Officer we recognise that there are things we could do to strengthen our approach to scrutiny in Sheffield, and that we can start to do this now." **Governance Principles doc**

2.2.1 Local Area Committees

Ambition for Sheffield outlined in Governance Principles 2019 doc: -

- A council that engages, involves and listens to citizens, communities and partners

Governance Principles

- Our decision making structure should be underpinned by **effective ways of working with local communities,** informed by the Big City Conversation.
- The issues people care about are often local in nature. Our decision making structure needs to include channels through which people, communities and partners can work with local councillors about what is important to them. We need to **strengthen locality arrangements** based on the findings of the Big City Conversation and ensure that these arrangements work effectively alongside, and feed into, citywide decision making processes.
- Our decision making structure needs to balance between **time spent in formal decision making meetings in the Town Hall against working with and in communities.**

Ways of Working

- We need to take a more creative approach to communication between residents and the Council, including about what decisions are being made and why, what they mean to residents and what they mean for the city. This needs to be supported by effective communication and information about how decision making works.

2.2.2 Key points from Big City Conversation:

- Devolved decision making Developing a role for all parts of the city in how they make decisions for their own communities. Developing a shared approach to commissioning, improving local services and holding service providers from all agencies accountable for their performance, including a role in challenging decisions that affect their community
- The importance of safeguards around devolved powers was also noted, concerns around 'messy' complexity that has occurred in other authorities such as London Boroughs.
- The importance of strengthening citizen voice and understanding of decision making clear communication and harnessing community networks to connect people with the city's democracy
- The importance of decisions being taken at the most appropriate level ie. with and closer to citizens or through neighbourhood level structures/committees that are more focused on the needs of specific communities and places (see also Engagement and Communication theme below which further builds on how committees should / could be utilised)

2.2.3 Key points from the Principle for Governance document:

"We recognise that influencing decision making isn't something that only happens in the Town Hall. People, partners and groups want to be able to work with their councillors on issues that matter in their local neighbourhoods. The need to strengthen neighbourhood arrangements below the city level was raised as an issue by many of our witnesses, and we recognise that we need to address this. The Big City Conversation is talking to people about what is important to them locally, and we need to consider how we can use this to develop local structures and strengthen ward councillors' ability to influence outcomes in their local areas." **Governance Principles doc**

2.2.4 Key points from the Big City Conversation Summary (Aligned to LACs but with wider lessons for Decision Making, Engagement and Communication)

- Sheffielders do not feel informed about local services, particularly how they are performing and how decisions are made

- People do get involved in their local community but this ranges considerably across the city and where people do get involved, they aren't sure it really makes a difference

- Online channels and networks matter: Of those that get involved at local level, people predominantly use online channels or engaged with local public services and Members. Attending 'Council meetings' were not a significant route to get involved but the absence of any regular local council meetings (like area committees) probably reduces the opportunities for people to attend.
- Time: Of those who said that they don't get involved locally, respondents said that they have busy lives and therefore struggle to find the time or they are sceptical that they could make any real difference. But, people also said that they did get involved in other ways, such as national issues or campaigns, therefore indicating that people are motivated to engage and get involved.
- The majority of people don't currently feel that they can influence decisions in Sheffield but people are keen to get more involved, depending on the issue - 60% of respondents said they don't feel that they can influence decisions affecting their local area *but* people are keen to get more involved if the issue matters to them
- Local neighbourhood meetings and online networks are key channels for people who want to get more involved in local decisions and services - Of those that said that they'd be willing to get more involved locally, neighbourhood level meetings with public services and online networks were the most preferred routes.

3. Engagement and Communication (encompasses Public Engagement and Communications).

3.1 Relevant Ambitions, Governance Principles and Ways of working identified in Principles for Governance document:

Ambition for Sheffield outlined in Governance Principles 2019 doc:

- A council that engages, involves and listens to citizens, communities and partners

Governance Principles:

 The issues people care about are often local in nature. Our decision making structure needs to include channels through which people, communities and partners can work with local councillors about what is important to them. We need to strengthen locality arrangements based on the findings of the Big City Conversation and ensure that these arrangements work effectively alongside, and feed into, citywide decision making processes.

Ways of Working:

- We must ensure that a **commitment to meaningful engagement, involvement and consultation runs through the organisation**. We should renew oura commitment to our Consultation Principles, and reflect on how the council's Engagement Standards which are currently in development can improve practice throughout our work
- We need to constantly demonstrate how engagement activity is shaping decision making, and be honest about the impact it is having, so communities and partners can understand how their views have been responded to.
- We need to make it **as easy as possible for people to engage with us** the starting point for this should to be clear, consistent, accessible communication about what the Council is doing, what decisions we are planning to take and how to get involved.
- We need to establish a process of continuous engagement so that Members, partners and citizens can give a view on how the system is working.

3.2 Key points from The Big City Conversation:

- **Vital that public involvement is cross-city** so that it is not just those who would regularly be involved in Council discussions.
- The need for broad, representative coverage of different demographics in the city.
- Importance of **consulting local communities and connecting with community networks** to improve transparency and reach different voices.

With an emphasis on **open information**, summarised in the following quote:

"Open information – Putting in place the means for ALL Councillors, stakeholders and the public to access information and evidence used to support decision-making from the beginning of the process and a more open and embedded place for the public in that decision making structure. Transparency of challenge is also vital, reducing criticisms or challenges to annual statistics is not a way to improve trust or confidence in the structures or culture of organisations" **Big City Conversation**

"Public consultation undertaken should be appropriate for the size of the issues being discussed. Therefore, methods such as citizens' assemblies could be used to inform decision making and alter the way in which decisions are made and the culture surrounding them" (Sheffield for Democracy as part of Big City Conversation)

"It is vital that any approach we take in Sheffield must enable communities from *every* part of the city to engage and have their voice heard" (VCF Sector as part of Big City Conversation)

"It is vital to see ongoing engagement and accountability from the Council to enhance collaboration between sectors and to make things as accessible as possible to the public" (VCF Sector as part of Big City Conversation.

"While there is now web-casting available for meetings to be watched by anyone at any time, comments imply that the public need to be made more aware of what it is the Council is doing and have this pushed more widely as an available resource. "**Big City Conversation**

3.3 Key points from the Principles for Governance document:

"We need to be more open in our communication about democracy and decision making, and put accessible information on platforms people are already engaging with. People we spoke to welcomed the improvement in transparency that webcasting council meetings has brought, but we recognise that we need to make it easier for people to access information – as one of the young people we spoke to told us - you shouldn't have to trawl through minutes to understand how the Council works." **Governance Principles doc**

"One of the key messages to have come out of our evidence gathering sessions was about the importance of quality engagement and involvement with people, communities and partners. Young people told us that involvement shouldn't be tokenistic, and should happen at a time when it can meaningfully influence – a youth cabinet member shared their frustration at being consulted on the 'final draft' of a strategy which they felt was too late to have a real impact. They were also keen to ensure that more is done to involve and engage with 'hard to reach' communities. This need for meaningful and timely engagement and participation also came through in the responses to our online call for evidence, as well as from 'Its Our City'. Voluntary Action Sheffield told us that better collaboration and involvement with the VCF in decision making would deliver real benefits for the city." **Governance Principles doc**

"We also heard examples of good, early engagement – Hallamshire Historic Buildings told us about their experience of being involved in plans for Heart of the City II at the right time – resulting in a scheme that celebrates heritage without compromising viability. We want to make sure that this becomes the norm and not the exception" **Governance Principles doc**

4. Roles and Responsibilities (encompasses Scheme of Delegations, Statutory Responsibilities for Members, Staffing, Relationships & Casework)

4.1 *Relevant Ambitions, Governance Principles and Ways of working identified in Principles for Governance document:*

Governance Principles

- Our decision making structure should be underpinned by **effective ways of working with local communities,** informed by the Big City Conversation.
- We are a member-led authority, where accountability lies with elected councillors. Our decision making structure must reflect this, and **not inappropriately increase delegations to officers.**
- Our governance should be underpinned by a **commitment to the highest ethical standards** as set out in the Nolan Standards on Public Life

Ways of Working

 Ensure that the appropriate support, training and skills development is continuously available for councillors so they can take full advantage of the opportunities under the new structure.

4.2 Key points from the Big City Conversation:

- The importance of Councillor training and development, particularly in the effective chairing of meetings (Sheffield For Democracy as part of Big City Conversation)
- For many, the role of their Ward Councillor needs to reflect the needs of local people and participants would like it if party politics could be removed from discussions.
- **Member behaviour and standards** sense that citizens have expectations about the behaviour of Councillors in office (uphold Nolan principles).

"A cost-neutral change to a modern committee system." (It's Our City! As part of Big City Conversation)

4.3 Key points from the Principles for Governance document:

"We heard from the Centre for Public Scrutiny that effective delegation is crucial in developing an effective governance structure. In a Leader and Cabinet model, decisions can be delegated to Cabinet, to individual cabinet members, or to officers. Under a committee system decisions can only be delegated to committees or officers. We are keen to see that any future decision making structure keeps Elected Councillors at the heart of decision making, considering strategic issues where they can add value, without inappropriately increasing delegations to officers. We also need to ensure that any new decision making structure does not significantly increase the amount of time Councillors spend in Town Hall meetings, to the detriment of working in their communities – a criticism that was levelled at pre-2000 committee models." **Governance Principles doc**

"Once elected, Councillors carry out a wide range of roles on behalf of their communities and the city. We need to ensure that we appropriately support Members with the skills and competencies they need fulfil a wide range of roles (eg. meeting chair, community leader, Cabinet Member)." **Governance Principles doc**

"Finally, a message that came through our online call for evidence, and from evidence submitted by Nigel Slack, Active Citizen, Sheffield For Democracy and 'It's Our City' was that there are high expectations about Councillor conduct, and that we should ensure that the Council is upholding the Nolan Principles on public life." **Governance Principles doc** ⁱ Principles for Governance doc, Big City Conversation doc, Big City Summary doc

Committee Governance Structures Case Studies

Transition to Committees Programme

Sheffield City Council

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Brunt C; Eckhardt J; Matheau-Raven H

Preface

The purpose of this document is to provide internal stakeholders, external stakeholders and most importantly, and specifically, Members with a summary of evidence to be used to support decision making leading to the shape of the Decision-Making Committee System for May 2022.

All content is a) merely a snapshot of the documents available at the time of this paper, and b) a summary built by outsiders without necessarily the sign-off or consent of the authorities in question. There are therefore likely to be occasional lapses of accuracy, but it is felt that overall this document should contribute significantly to the overarching picture for decision-makers. Inaccuracy has been avoided as far as possible by:

- Undertaking a thorough desktop exercise
- Using a standard conversation guide to support contacting sources
- Holding meetings with officers or members wherever possible in order to verify information
- Review of papers released in and around the referendum timeframe and since

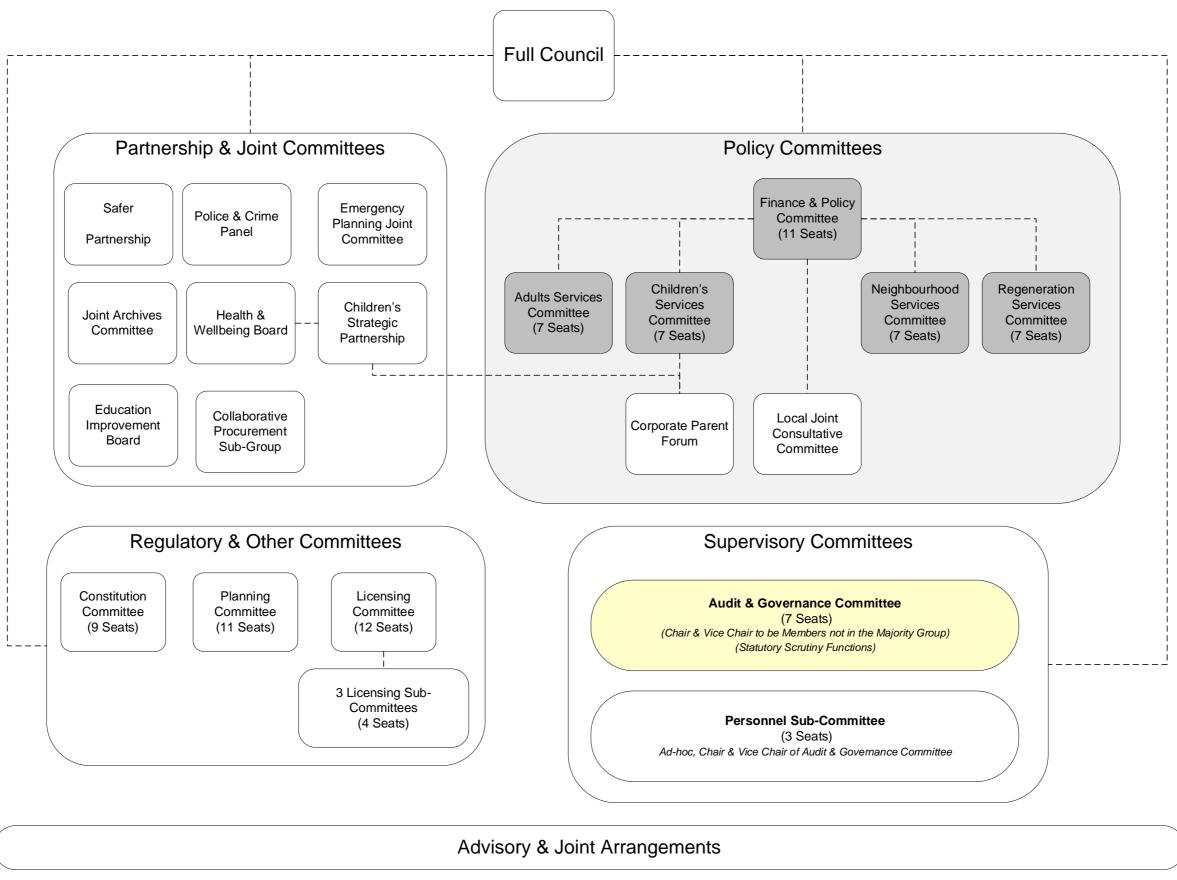
Additional information and insights will be continually received as we get closer to implementation, and once implemented, it is expected that there will be a period of discovery in terms of initial problem solving, understanding the intricacies of the system and gathering of further requirements that may be subject to change. To this end, this document is an early indicator to support initial decision making.

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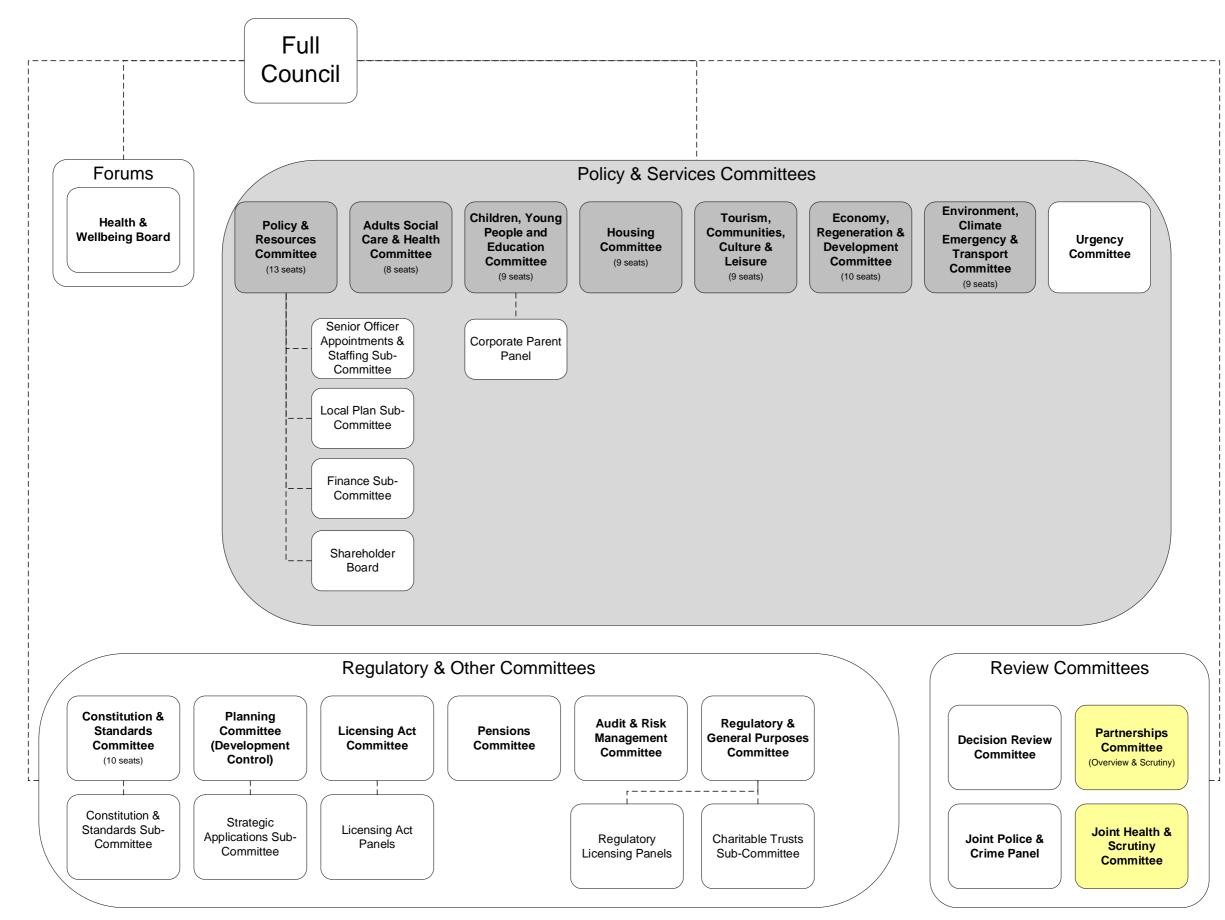
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0. Diagrams of Models

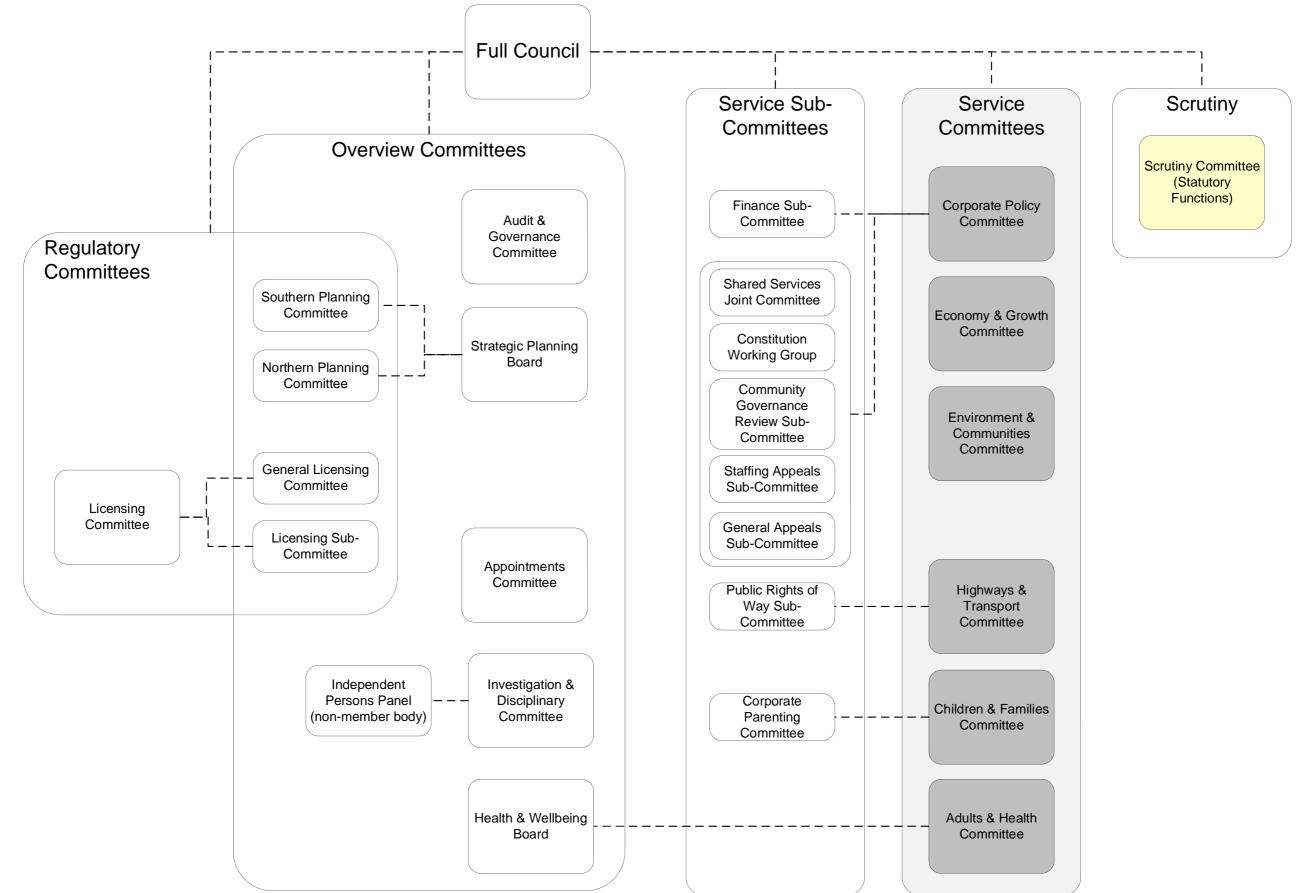
Example A



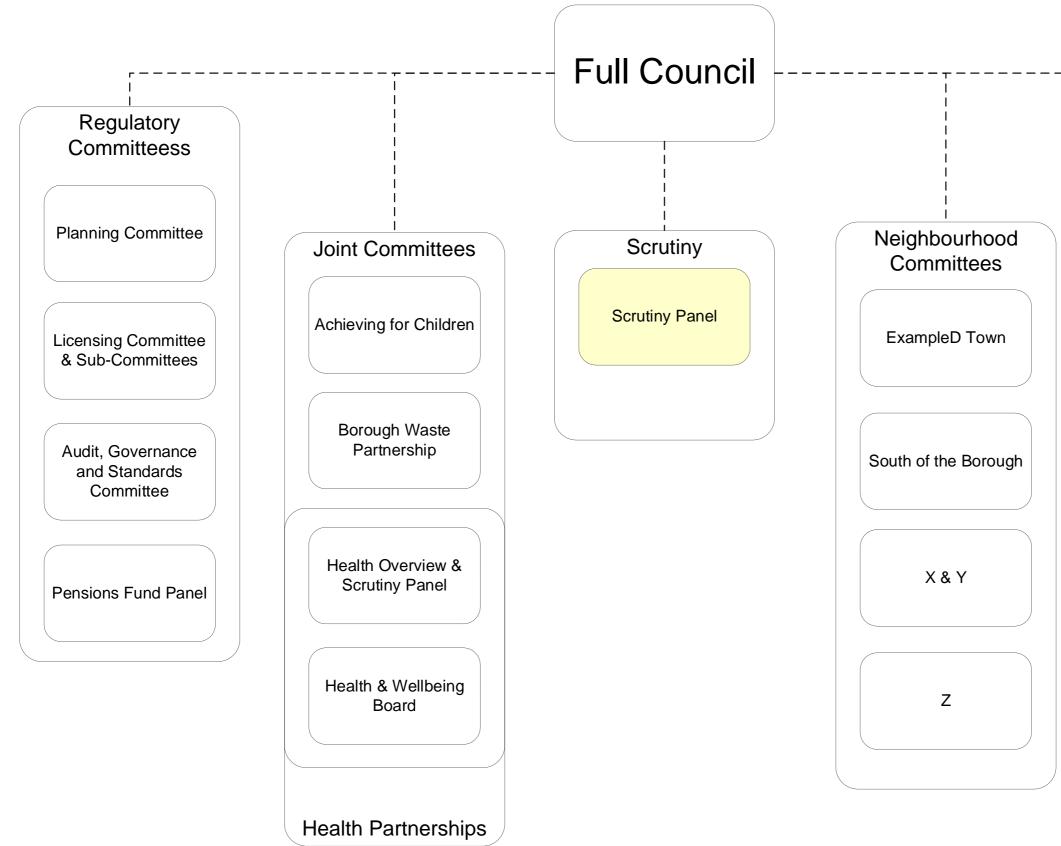






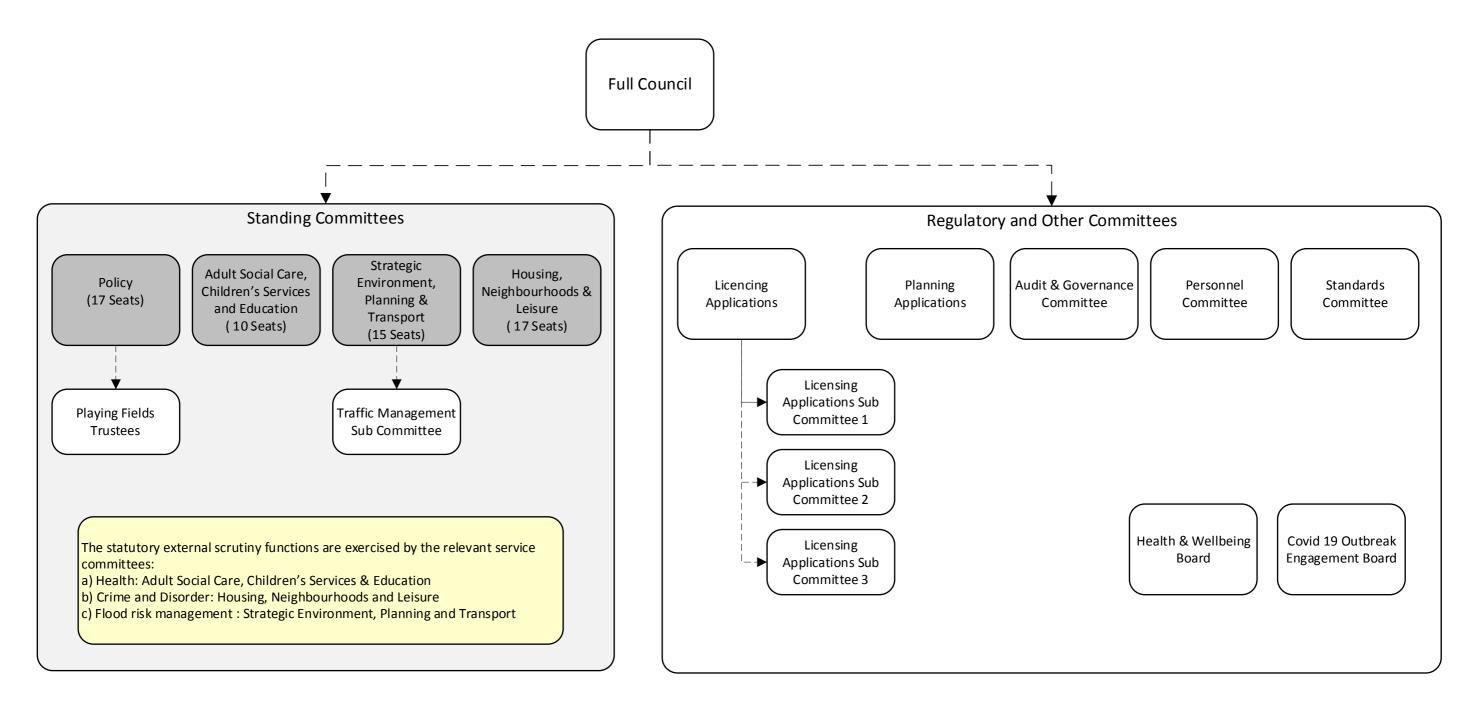


Example D

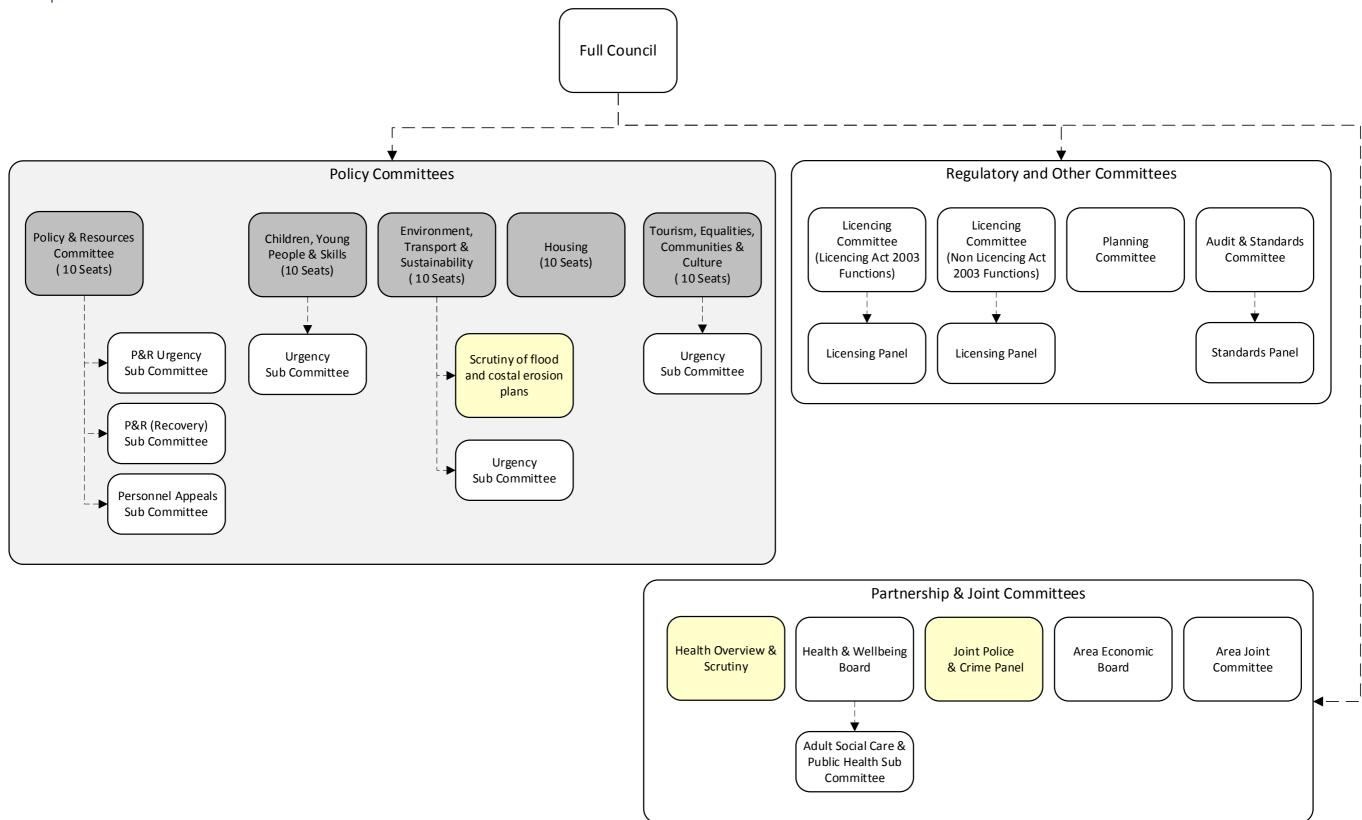




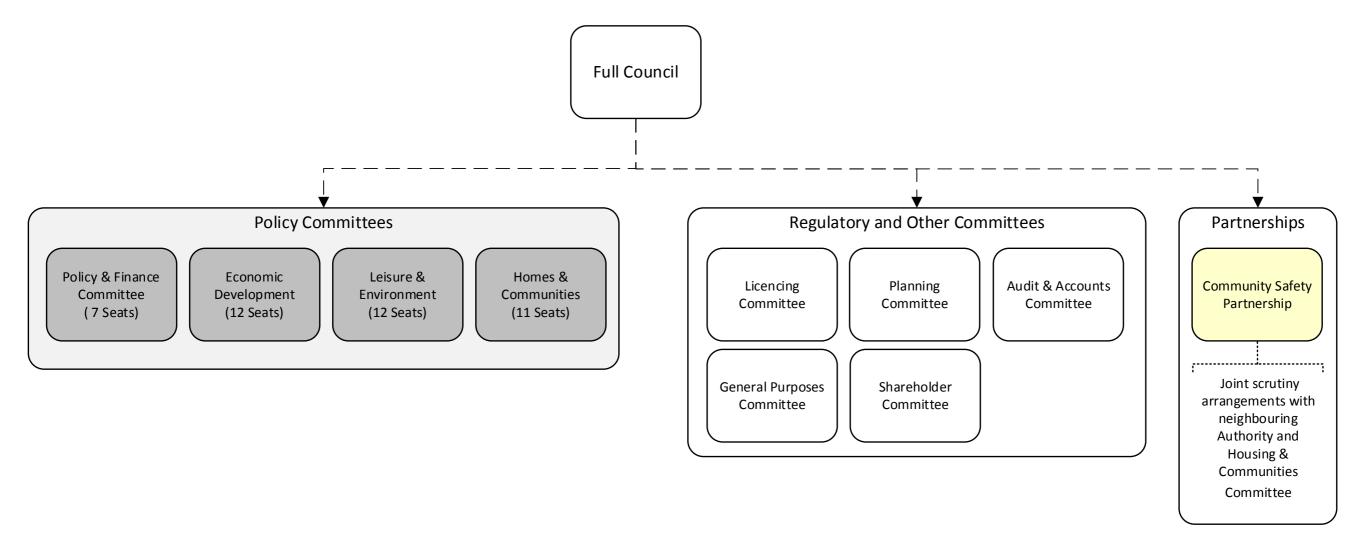
Example E







Example G



1. Full Council

ExampleA

- Made up of all 36 Councillors from different political parties across the Borough who represent the people that live within it.
- Meet together and debate issues of importance and local concern as well as opportunity to discuss major issues of policy. Set the overall direction of the Council and boundaries for Committees to operate within.
- Is the forum where Members can ask questions of the Leader, Policy Committee (Overarching Committee) and other Chairs and receive reports from Policy Committee
- Members of the public as well as Cllrs can submit questions to be asked at Ordinary Council meetings
- Extraordinary meetings can be held when there is an issue of special importance that the Council wishes to discuss. These have a strict agenda and are kept very short.
- At Annual Meetings-
 - Elects the Ceremonial Mayor and Deputy
 - Elects Leader of the Council and Deputy
 - o Appoints Council Committees- size and membership
 - Appoints Members to represent Council on various outside bodies and orgs
- Changes to the Constitution will only be approved by Full Council after consideration of the proposal through recommendations of the Constitution Committee
- Schemes of Delegation are agreed by Full Council

ExampleB

- Made up of all 66 Councillors from different political parties across the Borough who represent the people that live within it.
- The full Council meets around seven times a year
- Responsible for:
 - Electing the Leader of the Council
 - Electing the Lord Mayor
 - Setting the Schemes of Delegation
 - Adopting and amending the Constitution
 - Approving the Council's budget
 - Establishing the Committees, agreeing TOR and deciding their composition
 - Approving the Council's Policy Framework, setting the work for the Themed Committees.
- The following plans and strategies where adoption or approval is required by law to be reserved to a meeting of full Council, which will take into account the recommendation of the Policy and Resources Committee or relevant Policy and Service Committee include but are not limited to:
 - Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy
 - o Youth Justice Plan
 - Sustainable Community Strategy
 - Local Transport Plan; and more
- The following plans and strategies where Council has decided that adoption or approval is to be reserved to a meeting of full Council, which will take into account

the recommendation of the Policy and Resources Committee or relevant Policy and Service Committee include:

- Council's Corporate Plan
- Any plans and strategies where the Policy & Resources (Overarching) Committee has recommended the adoption or approval should only be determined by a meeting of Full Council

ExampleC

- The Full Council has 82 Councillors and meets 6 times per year
- The Council:
- is accountable to residents and service users for the proper discharge of all of its functions and the delivery of its services
- will keep under review the running of the Council's affairs and will implement changes where it considers there is a need to do so to improve the way in which the organisation operates, its relationships with the public and the delivery of services in the most efficient and effective way to deliver best value
- will adopt the Council's Constitution and approve any amendments to it (except where specifically delegated to the Corporate Policy Committee or the Monitoring Officer)
- will elect the Mayor, appoint the Deputy Mayor, elect the Leader of the Council and appoint the Deputy Leader
- o will adopt the Policy Framework and any of the policies within it
- will agree the Council's Budget
- will determine any decision which would otherwise be contrary to the Policy Framework or contrary to/or not wholly in accordance with the Budget
- will adopt the Council's Codes of Conduct for Councillors and Officers and the Protocol on Councillor/Officer Relations
- will agree the establishment and composition of Committees and Sub-Committees
- will agree the political balance of such bodies as required from time to time
- will agree the allocation of Chairs and Vice-Chairs to those bodies
- will agree and amend the terms of reference of its Committees and Sub-Committees and the job description for committee Chairs
- will determine any matter which is referred to it for determination by a Committee or Sub-Committee

ExampleD

- Full Council (where all 48 Councillors meet together) is the primary decision-making body of the Council and as such is responsible for the exercise of all the functions that are the responsibility of the local authority.
- It meets approx. 6 or 7 times per year
- Full Council delegates many of its decision-making powers to committees, officers, and to other local authorities. The Council may at any time withdraw, extend or modify any term of reference or delegation, or transfer any term of reference from one body to another.
- Only Full Council will exercise the following functions:
 - (a) approval of the Constitution and any changes to it.
 - (b) approval of the annual Budget and policy framework and setting the Council Tax;(c) Making any applications to the appropriate Secretary of State in respect of any
 - Housing Land Transfer;

(d) agreeing and/or amending the terms of reference for Panels, Committees, etc, deciding on their composition and making appointments to them; including the Chairs, Co-Chairs and Vice-Chairs where appropriate

(e) appointing the Mayor;

(f) appointing elected (and other) Members to such other Council bodies as appropriate;

(g) adopting the authority's Code of Conduct for Members and the Councillor Recall Scheme;

ExampleE

- Full Council is made up of all 46 elected Councillors and meets 7 times per year.
- It is responsible for setting the policy and budget framework for the authority; approving plans and strategies; and setting the authority's strategic vision and corporate objectives, which the Policy Committee may recommend to it.
- Full Council will delegate functions to be exercised by individual Committees
- Full Council may take a decision in respect of any function it has delegated to a Committee or officer, in place of that Committee or officer; and a Committee or officer may refer or recommend a decision in respect of a delegated function to be taken by full Council.

ExampleF

- Full Council is made up of 54 elected members
- Councillors decide the Council's overall policies and set the budget each year. Full Council is responsible for setting the policy framework and budget, including approving specified plans and strategies. It also holds the decisions of the Committees to account
- It meets 7 times per year, other 5 full council meetings review decisions made by committees
- Council is the supreme decision-making body and may with some exceptions exercise any of the functions vested the City Council by law. It may also delegate many of those functions to a Committee, a Sub-Committee or an officer.

ExampleG

- The council is made up of 39 councillors who democratically accountable to the residents of the ward they represent. It meets 6 times per year
- Responsible for :
 - Approval of the Council's corporate plan
 - o Setting the Council's Budget and Council Tax
 - Appointing the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council
 - Appointing the Leader of the Council
 - Agreeing or amending the committee structure, the remit/terms of reference of committees, their size and membership

2. Leader's Role

Local Authority Models

ExampleA

Leader carries out these key roles:

- Advocate- Authority's principle public spokesperson, act for the benefit of all Borough's citizens and interested parties/stakeholders,
- Representation- Political Leader of the Authority, represent the interests of the Authority and community at regional, national and international events, attend and participate in such civic and ceremonial functions and duties as determined by Full Council
- Chair- Finance and Policy Committee (Overarching Committee), gives the overall policy direction to the Authority, lead with the Chairs of Committees the implementation of policies, budgets and strategies approved by Full Council

ExampleB

- Advocate- Authority's principle public spokesperson, act for the benefit of all Borough's citizens and interested parties/stakeholders, focal point for political leadership and strategic direction, support cross party co-operation
- Representation- Political Leader of the Authority, represent the interests of the Authority and community at regional, national and international events, attend and participate in such civic and ceremonial functions and duties as determined by Full Council, represent the Council's voice externally
- Chair- Policy and Resources Committee (Overarching Committee), Work across the Council, particularly with the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of its Committees and Sub-Committees, and to be responsible for the development and implementation of the Council's strategic vision for the future, policy framework, budgets and other strategies
- Sets the Scheme of Delegation- The delegation of the Council's Executive functions to officers are set out in Part 3 Schedule 4 Part B and are determined by the Leader of the Council.

ExampleC

- Act as the political leader rather than ceremonial of the Council for the benefit of all the Borough's communities, citizens, taxpayers, businesses, public bodies and other public authorities
- Lead and work with the Council, particularly the Chairs of its Committees and Sub Committees, in the development of the Council's vision for the future, policy framework, budgets and strategies;

- Lead and work with the Council, particularly the Chairs of its Committees and Sub Committees, in overseeing service delivery and the implementation of policies approved by the Council.
- Represent and pursue the interests of the Council in the community and at international, national and regional levels;
- Act as Chair of the Corporate Committee, fulfil the role of Leader at full Council meetings and carry out as necessary the other functions mentioned at paragraph xx below;
- Lead in providing policy direction and guidance to the Chief Executive and Chief Officers;
- Meet regularly to progress the Council's objectives with Committee Chairs, the Chief Executive and Chief Officers, Leaders of other political groups on the Council, partner organisations, stakeholders, community representatives, government representatives, local Members of Parliament etc.
- Chairing Corporate Policy Committee: the Leader shall be appointed at the Council's Annual Meeting as Chair of the Council's Corporate Committee.
- The establishment of policy direction and the Council's priorities and the facilitation of discussion thereon.
- To be principal ambassador for the Borough and the Council (recognising the role of the Mayor).
- To represent the Council on any external body, as considered appropriate, and to make decisions and vote on behalf of the Council at meetings of such bodies.
- Involvement in Major Emergencies: the Leader and Deputy Leader must be informed if an emergency is likely or has been declared under the Council's emergency planning or business continuity procedures.
- To promote and uphold high standards of ethical conduct by Members and the Council's equalities policies.

ExampleD

- The Leader of the Council is selected by the political group that has a majority of seats on the Council and is appointed on a year by year basis.
- The Leader of the Council is responsible for the overall political leadership and strategic direction of the Council.
- The Leader of the Council may appoint up to 10 Portfolio Holders, each of whom will have oversight of a portfolio of service areas / activities. Subject to the formal decision of the Council, Portfolio Holders shall be appointed Chairs of the relevant Strategic Committees
- The Chief Executive, as principal policy adviser, will ensure that the Leader and Portfolio Holders are provided with the appropriate advice and information to enable them to take informed decisions and they will have regard to such advice in reaching their decisions.
- As leader of a party political group, the Leader will not seek advice from the Chief Executive in relation to party political business. Attendance by the Chief Executive, or other officers of the Council, at political group meetings is, however, permissible in the circumstances set out in the Member/Officer Relationships Protocol. The Leader

has no line management responsibilities for Council employees who are responsible to the Council as a whole.

• Any concerns over the performance of employees either individually or collectively will be referred by the Leader to the Chief Executive to address. Matters relating to the appointment, dismissal and disciplinary action in respect of employees are contained in the Procedural Standing Orders set out in the Council's Constitution.

ExampleE

- To lead the development and implementation of the Council's strategic vision and corporate objectives and priorities
- To provide the Council's community leadership role
- To oversee the allocation and management of resources, and the existence of effective financial management and audit arrangements
- Chair of Policy Committee

ExampleF

- Chair of the Policy & Resources Committee; may attend and speak at any meeting of a Committee or Sub-Committee of the Council but can only vote if appointed as a voting member
- Lead and work with the Council, particularly the Chairs of its Committees and Sub-Committees, in the development of the Council's vision for the future, policy framework, budgets and strategies

ExampleG

- The Council's Leader will be the Council's political and elected head, the focus for political direction and the chief advocate and ambassador for the district (excluding civic and ceremonial duties).
- The Leader will act as Chairman of the Policy & Finance Committee and is entitled to attend all meetings of the Council's functional committees in an ex officio capacity.

3. Lord Mayor's Role

Local Authority Models

ExampleA

The role of the Lord Mayor is 'Ceremonial'

- Acts at the 'First Citizen' of the Borough
- Presides over meetings of the Full Council, ensuring efficient business, rights of Elected Members and interests of Communities are upheld, provides a forum for debate of matters of concern to local communities and a place to ask questions of Committee Chairs
- Represents the Council as a civic body in formal and informal (civic and ceremonial) public settings
- Promotes public involvement in the Authorities activities

ExampleB

- The Mayor is always a serving councillor, elected by the full Council at its annual general meeting in May, and stands for one year in office.
- The Mayor is the first citizen and chosen representative of Wirral, acting as a focal point for community and civic life.
- Chair's Full Council and Highways and Traffic Representation Panel

ExampleC

The Council's Mayor, supported by the Deputy Mayor will perform the Council's civic role. This entails raising and maintaining the profile of the Council's area and its residents. The aims and values of the Council will be promoted in an apolitical manner. The Mayor will decide which civic and ceremonial functions to promote following consultation with officers. These functions may include representing the Council at events organised by other local authorities or organisations. Council Role: The Mayor is responsible for:

- Upholding and promoting democracy and this Constitution and interpreting it, where necessary, with advice
- Presiding over meetings of the full Council to ensure that business is carried out efficiently and effectively
- Ensuring the rights of Councillors and local people are protected in the running of Council meetings (Guidance on the Role of a Chair which is relevant for all Chairs of Council meetings)
- Ensuring that matters of concern to local people and Councillors can be debated at full Council or the relevant Committee.
- Promoting public involvement in the Council's activities and acting as a link between members of the public, organisations and the Council
- Carrying out other roles on behalf of the Council

ExampleD

The Mayor will be elected by the Council annually. The Mayor will have the following responsibilities:

- To appoint a Deputy Mayor;
- To uphold and promote the purposes of the Constitution, and to interpret the Constitution when necessary;
- To preside over meetings of the Council so that its business can be carried out efficiently and with regard to the rights of Councillors and the interests of the community;
- To ensure that the Council meeting is a forum for the debate of matters of concern to the local community;
- At the Mayor's discretion to exercise a second or casting vote where there is an equality of votes on any matter under consideration by the Council;
- To promote public involvement in the Council's activities;
- To be the conscience of the Council;
- To attend such civic and ceremonial functions as the Council and they determines appropriate.
- In the year in which the Council elections are held the Mayor shall remain in office until a successor is appointed, whether or not they have been re-elected as a Councillor (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 2). In the event of there being an equality of votes on the election of a successor, the retiring Mayor may use a casting vote to break the deadlock, even if no longer a Councillor.

ExampleE

- Ceremonial role acting as the first citizen of the Borough and to represent the Council at Civic and other functions, to promote the image of the Council in all functions involving the Council or the Mayoralty, to attend such civic and ceremonial functions as the Council and he/she determines appropriate.
- Chairs the Council meeting The Mayor will be elected by the Council annually and will have the responsibility to preside over meetings of full Council so that its business can be carried out efficiently and with regard to the rights of Councillors and the interests of the community.

ExampleF

- Ceremonial role acting as first citizen, promoting the Council as a whole and act as a focal point for the community
- Chairs the Council meeting

ExampleG

• There is no Lord Mayor at this example Authority. The Chairman of the District Council represents the Council at civic events

4. Themed Committees

Local Authority Models

ExampleA

5 Themed Committees: Adults Services, Children's Services, Neighbourhood Services, Regeneration Services and Finance & Policy (which acts as an Overarching Committee, see section 5). There are no Sub-Committees for these Policy Committees.

These are referred to as 'Policy Committees' and align to the old Council Portfolio structure. Membership is politically proportionate.

Full Council sets the number, titles and remits of these Committees. These Committees work within the frameworks set by Full Council and the Overarching Finance & Policy Committee.

Meet monthly, in a single central location.

ExampleB

Has 8 Themed Committees; Policy & Resources Committee (which acts as an Overarching Committee, see Section 5), Adult Social Care & Health Committee, Children, Young People and Education Committee, Housing Committee, Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee, Economy, Regeneration and Development Committee, Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee and finally the Urgency Committee.

These are referred to as 'Policy and Services Committees' and aligned to the Directorates that were in place at the time of the appointment. This has been identified as a post-implementation issue and is being reduced down as part of service design moving forward.

Full Council sets the number, titles and remits of these Committees. These Committees work within the frameworks set by Full Council and the Overarching Policy & Resources Committee.

These Committees meet every 1-3 months as able. It is year one for this authority and they have been learning as they go.

ExampleC

- Has 5 themed Committees as well as an Overarching Corporate Policy Committee and a Finance Sub-Committee. The 5 are listed below:
 - o Economy and Growth Committee
 - o Environment and Communities Committee
 - Highways and Transport Committee
 - Children and Families Committee
 - o Adults and Health Committee
- These are not referred to by a specific moniker
- These committees do align to services and work within the Frameworks set by Full Council and the Corporate Policy Committee (Overarching)
- Full Council sets the number, titles and remits.

• These Committees appear to meet every 2-4 months, and appear to be irregular

ExampleD

- Has 3 themed Committees listed below:
 - Corporate and Resources Committee
 - People Committee
 - Place Committee
- They are referred to as 'Strategic Committees'
- These Committees align to the Council portfolios
- Full Council sets the number, titles and remits.
- These Committees appear to meet 2-3 times a year and again appear to be irregular

ExampleE

- The committee system is composed of four standing committees (and two subcommittees) and six regulatory or other committees. Each of the Committees (except the Health & Wellbeing Board) has a membership from all political groups on the Council, in proportion to their representation on the Council.
- Policy Committee (Principal Committee) Ave 10 meets pa
- Adult Social Care, Children's Services and Education Committee Ave 4 meets pa
- Strategic Environment, Planning & Transport Committee Ave 2 meets pa
- Housing, Neighbourhoods & Leisure Committee Ave 2 meets pa
- Between them, the Committees have been delegated powers by the full Council which cover all of the authority's functions. The Committees are responsible both for taking day-to-day decisions in relation to the functions delegated to them, and also for setting and reviewing the policy framework relevant to those functions.

ExampleF

- The Council has nine policy committees (Policy and Resources; Health and Wellbeing Board; Children, Young People and Skills; Tourism, Equalities, Communities and Culture; Housing; Environment, Transport and Sustainability; Planning; Licensing; Audit and Standards) and 3 Sub-Committees (Licensing Panel which deals with licensing, registration and other appeals; Standards Panel and the Personnel Appeals Panel).
- The Policy and Resources Committee is regarded as the senior Committee and meets on average 11 months per year
- The other policy Committees meet on average 5 times per year
- Each Committee is politically proportionate

ExampleG

- The Council has 4 Operational Committees (Policy & Finance 10 members, Economic Development 12 members, Homes and Communities 11 members, Leisure & Environment 12 members) and 4 Regulatory Committees (Audit & Accounts, General Purpose, Licencing, Planning)
- Each are politically proportionate, and meet 5/6 times per year
- This Authority is preparing to change to a Leader and Cabinet model in 2022

5. Overarching Committees

Local Authority Models

ExampleA

- Finance & Policy Committee acts as the overarching Committee with finance/budgetary, strategic and policy direct responsibilities.
- Chaired by: Leader of Council who also Chairs on Constitution Committee and Appointments Panel
- Membership: consists of 11 Members including the Chairs of the Policy Committees. Is politically proportionate
- Purpose: The Committee is responsible for financial and other resources of the Authority, for formulating, developing and implementing the Authority's plans and strategies under the budget and policy framework. Additional service area responsibility including asset management, strategic procurement, electoral services, revenues and benefits, social welfare and public health, under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, including the development of partnership working.

ExampleB

- Policy and Resources Committee acts at the Overarching Committee with finance/budgetary, strategic and policy direct responsibilities.
 - Chaired by: Leader of the Council who also Chairs the :
 - Finance Sub Committee
 - Local Plan Steering Sub-Committee
 - Senior Officer and Appointments Staffing Sub-Committee
 - Shareholder Board
 - Urgency Committee; and is also a member of:
 - Constitution and Standards Committee; and
 - Health and Wellbeing Board
- Membership: consists of Fifteen (15) Members of the Council, which may be altered to accommodate the overall political balance calculation, and which may be amended from year to year to ease political balance calculations and to incorporate the membership requirements.

The membership shall include:

- (a) the Leader of the Council, who shall be the Chair;
- (b) the Deputy Leader of the Council, who shall be Vice-Chair; and

(c) the chairs of each of the other Policy and Service Committees

• Purpose: This Committee is responsible for co-ordinating processes for the development of the Budget and Policy Framework, together with decision making on cross-cutting policies not part of the Policy Framework and decisions on resources concerning virements and purchase and sale of assets. The Committee is also responsible for a number of corporate functions, including employment of officers, company and asset ownership and overall performance and risk management in respect of the Council's delivery of functions as well as matters of urgency and review.

ExampleC

While not clearly specified, it is likely that ExampleC uses their Corporate Policy Committee as their Overarching Committee.

- Policy Committee is composed of 13 Councillors and is politically proportionate
- The Chair of this Committee is the Leader of the Council
- Membership includes the Chairs of the 5 Themed Committees as well as Chairs of some of the other relevant Committees (such as Strategy Board and Finance Sub-Committee) and additional Members to support proportionality.
- Purpose: The Corporate Policy Committee will provide strategic direction to the operation of the Council by developing and recommending the Corporate Plan to full Council and making decisions on policies and practice where such decisions are not reserved to full Council.

ExampleD

While not clearly specified, it is likely that ExampleD uses their Corporate & Resources Strategic Committee to act in some capacity as Overarching Committee without having an actual Overarching Committee in place.

- Corporate & Resources Committee is composed of 13 Councillors
- This Committee does not appear to be politically proportionate as it consists of no Labour seats and no Independent seats with a Lib-Dem majority, which does not match their proportionality. This will need checking with the Authority.
- This Committee does not have a single Chair and instead has 4 Co-Chairs, all of which from the 4th most popular party, LibDem
- Membership does not necessarily include the Chairs of the remaining Strategic Committees. This will need checking with the Authority.
- Purpose: To be responsible for the following functions:
 - o Revenue and Capital Monitoring and Expenditure
 - Recommendations to Council on the levying of Council Tax
 - Revenues and Benefits
 - Strategic Partnerships
 - Human Resources and Pensions Investment Company Assets, including the disposal or acquisition of land or property
 - Contracts and Commissioning
 - o Equalities
 - o Communications
 - o Consultation & Engagement
 - Customer Contact
 - o ICT & Digital
 - International Partnerships
 - o Constitutional issues
 - Members Services
 - Electoral Services
 - Legal Affairs
 - Covid Recovery (incl related Task Forces)

ExampleE

• Policy Committee (Principal Committee) composed of 17 Councillors from all political groups on the Council, includes the Leaders of all of the political groups, and the Lead Councillors

- Purpose: Oversight of strategy, policy and budget, all services in the Chief Executive's Office and Resources Directorate, Voluntary sector grants, Economic development and regeneration, Corporate land, buildings and assets, Overview of service performance and improvement across all Council services, Partnerships: LSP (Community Strategy), LEP, CIC, City Deal, Cultural Strategy
- Can make decisions cutting across service committee areas
- Can make any decision between committee meetings, on an urgency basis
- Leader is Chair, Deputy Leader is Vice-Chair

ExampleF

- The Policy and Resources Committee is regarded as the senior Committee and is chaired by Leader of the Council
- Membership: consists of 10 Members and one non voting standing invitee to assist the committee in raising and addressing issues of interest and importance to people from a Black and Minority Ethnic background
- Meets on average 11 months per year
- Functions: overall responsibility for the financial and other resources, developing the Council's strategy and policy, development of partnership working, economic growth, regeneration and major built projects.

ExampleG

- The Policy & Finance Committee meets 6 times per year to make key strategic decisions (other than those which must be determined by Council) including all decisions which have a major impact on a number of Council services or on the Council as a whole.
- Membership: 7 members (plus 3 others for additional Hearing Panel)
- Chaired by the Leader of the Council
- Functions include:
 - strategic housing, HRA, formulating budget proposals and capital programme and recommending to the Council for approval.
 - operational decision making and performance management across a wide range of services.
 - promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Members and co-opted Members of the authority

6. Local Area Committees

Local Authority Models

ExampleA

• N/A

ExampleB

• N/A

ExampleC

• N/A

ExampleD

ExampleD is the only authority that we have found that operates with a Locality Committee model in addition to a Themed Committee model.

- There are 4 Neighbourhood Committees, three of these have Sub-Committees
 - ExampleD Town- 12 seats
 - o South of the Borough- 15 seats
 - o X&Y- 9 seats
 - o Z- 12 seats
- The purpose of these Committees is to have responsibility for certain development control, highways and other place-based functions including the management of public parks and community halls and engagement with local residents, businesses, campaign groups and voluntary and community sector organisations.
- These Committees are not politically proportionate due to the nature of locality working
- Unable to locate further information on decision making

ExampleE

• N/A

ExampleF

• N/A

ExampleG

• N/A

7. Statutory Committees (Scrutiny)

Local Authority Models

ExampleA

- Built Statutory Scrutiny into the Audit & Governance Committee (outside of Policy Committee remit but also not a standalone Scrutiny Committee)
- The Audit and Governance Committee is responsible for:
 - the review and scrutiny of matters relating to the planning, provision and operation of health services- "To exercise and undertake the statutory health scrutiny functions of the Authority under Part 5 of Chapter 2 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and regulations made there under and associated guidance."
 - Designation as the Authority's 'Crime and Disorder Committee' with responsibility for the review and scrutiny of crime and disorder matters- "To undertake the functions of the Authority's Crime and Disorder Committee for the purposes of the Police and Justice Act 2006";
 - In addition to multiple other auditory and governance-based remits
- In the Cabinet Model, ExampleA had:
 - o Overview & Scrutiny- Scrutiny Coordinating Committee
 - Children's Services Scrutiny Forum
 - o Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum
 - Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum
 - Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum
 - Health Scrutiny Forum
- Flood Risk Management statutory scrutiny sits within a Regional Flood and Coastal Committee.

ExampleB

- Built Statutory Scrutiny into Partnerships Committee (Overview and Scrutiny) (outside of Policy & Services Committees remit, acts as a single standalone Scrutiny Committee)
- The Partnerships Committee is responsible for:
 - Matters relating to the health of the authority's population and can make recommendations to health bodies or other relevant authorities (and on a shared basis where matters also concern neighbouring Cheshire West and Chester Council area); and
 - The power to scrutinise the activities of those responsible for crime and disorder strategies, which is the Council and the police, as embodied by the Safer ExampleB Partnership
 - The Council has determined that these overview and scrutiny functions are to be carried out by the Partnerships Committee, which will also scrutinise the functions and responsibilities undertaken by other bodies within the Borough, in addition to the joint committees for specific purposes with neighbouring authorities. The process for this is set out in Part 4(3) of this Constitution
- This example authority also, as referenced above, undertakes scrutiny in addition to Statutory requirements.

- There is an additional Decision Review Committee:
 - Purpose the Decision Review Committee is a committee established by the Council with powers set out in the 2012 Local Authorities (Committee System) (England) Regulations to review or scrutinise a decision made but not yet implemented as referred to above.
 - (ii) Function The Decision Review Committee is to consider the decision called in for review as soon as possible, and, normally within 15 working days. In doing so it shall provide an opportunity for a representative of the signatories to the call in the opportunity to address the meeting on the subject. The Decision Review Committee may either
 - (1) uphold the original decision, in which case it has immediate effect, or
 - (2) refer it back to the decision-making Committee, Policy and Resources Committee or (exceptionally), a meeting of the Full Council with or without recommendations for change. This is the only function of the Committee
- There is also Joint Health Scrutiny Committee
 - The role and function of any Joint Health Scrutiny Committee shall be determined in accordance with the arrangements set out in the 'Protocol for the Establishment of Joint Health Scrutiny Arrangements for Cheshire and Merseyside'.
 - (ii) To undertake joint health scrutiny obligations arising under the Health Scrutiny Regulations (as detailed in the 'Protocol for the Establishment of Joint Health Scrutiny Arrangements for Cheshire and Merseyside') as from 1st April 2013 (i) where more than one local authority's health scrutiny arrangements consider a proposed change in NHS services to be substantial in terms of the impact on its area; and/or (ii) in other circumstances as permitted by the Health Scrutiny Regulations or the Protocol

ExampleC

- ExampleC has a standalone Scrutiny Committee with 13 seats.
- It only undertakes statutory scrutiny functions
- The purpose of the Scrutiny Committee is to undertake reviews and make recommendations on services or activities carried out by other organisations and which affect residents, businesses as well as the Council and its Committees. The Committee's responsibilities include:
 - The discharge of the Council's responsibilities set out in section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006,
 - \circ section 244 of the Health and Social Care Act 2006, and
 - section 9JA and 9JB of the Local Government Act 2000 in relation to flood risk management.

ExampleD

- ExampleD has a Scrutiny Panel with 7 seats with political balance between Conservative and LibDem
 - o Purpose to oversee statutory health requirements; and

- to deal with Call-Ins. Call-Ins can also apply to decisions made by Neighbourhood Committees.
- Membership is made up of Members of the Council including three representatives of Opposition Groups.
- In addition, though not relating explicitly to scrutiny, there is also the Audit & Governance & Standards Committee whose role is to provide an independent and high level focus on audit, assurance and reporting arrangements that underpin good governance and financial standards. Its purpose is to provide independent assurance to members and those charged with governance, on the adequacy of the risk management framework and internal control environment. It provides an independent review of the Council's governance, risk management and control
- frameworks and oversees financial reporting, annual governance processes and internal audit and external audit.

ExampleE

 Has resolved not to appoint any separate overview and scrutiny committees. The statutory external scrutiny functions of the authority to be exercised by the relevant service committees, are as follows: a) Health: Adult Social Care, Children's Services & Education b) Crime and Disorder: Housing, Neighbourhoods and Leisure c) Flood risk management : Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport; and by the Policy Committee in respect of overview or scrutiny across Council services covered by more than one Committee.

ExampleF

- The council's decisions are discussed and scrutinised by Councillors from all parties before they are made at committee meetings
- Full council meets 7 times per year, other 5 full council meetings review decisions made by committees

ExampleG

- The Council does not have dedicated Overview and Scrutiny Committees but applies overview and scrutiny principles in the work of the Economic Development, Leisure & Environment and Homes & Communities Committees.
- The one exception is Community Safety where there are joint scrutiny arrangements with a neighbouring District Council.

8. Other Committees

Local Authority Models

ExampleA

Example A has a number of 'other' Committees/Boards/Forums.

- Policy Committees (aside from the 5 core PCs):
 - Corporate Parent Forum
 - Local Joint Consultative Committee
- Regulatory:
 - Constitution Committee
 - Planning Committee
 - Licensing Committee (which has 3 Sub Committees)
- Supervisory Committees:
 - Audit & Governance Committee (where the Statutory Scrutiny functions are)
 - Personnel Sub-Committee
- Partnership & Joint Committees:
 - Safer ExampleA Partnership
 - Police & Crime Panel
 - Health & Wellbeing Board
 - Children's Strategic Partnership
 - Education Improvement Board (Note, likely decommissioned)
 - Collaborative Procurement Sub-Group (Note, likely decommissioned)
 - o Joint Archives Committee (Note, likely decommissioned)
 - Emergency Planning Joint Committee (note, ad-hoc)

The previous governance arrangements were:

- Cabinet- no longer in place due to Committee system
- Finance and Corporate Services Portfolio- superseded by Finance and Policy Committee
- Regen and Neighbourhoods Portfolio- superseded by both Regeneration Policy
 Committee and Neighbourhoods Policy Committee
- Adult & Public Health Portfolio- superseded by Adults Services Policy Committee
- Children's And Community Services Portfolio- superseded by Children's Services
 Policy Committee and Neighbourhoods Policy Committee
- General Purposes Committee- superseded by other Committees in place
- Constitution Committee- In place in Committee Model as is
- Audit Committee- In place, merged into Audit & Governance Committee to accommodate Statutory Scrutiny
- Standards Committee- superseded by Audit & Governance Committee
- Scrutiny Co-Ordinating Committee- Superseded by Audit & Governance Committee to accommodate Statutory Scrutiny
- Children's Services Scrutiny Forum- Superseded by Audit & Governance Committee to accommodate Statutory Scrutiny

ExampleB

Example B has a high number of 'other' Committees/Boards/Forum, more than Example A.

- Policy & Services Committees (Aside from the 8 core P&S Committees):
 - Senior Officer Appointments & Staffing Sub-Committee
 - Local Plan Sub-Committee
 - Finance Sub-Committee
 - o Shareholder Board
 - o Corporate Parent Panel
- Regulatory & 'Other' Committees:
 - Constitution & Standards Committee
 - Constitution & Standards Sub-Committee
 - Planning Committee (Development Control)
 - o Strategic Applications Sub-Committee
 - Licensing Act Committee
 - Licensing Act Panels
 - Pensions Committee
 - Audit & Risk Committee
 - Regulatory & General Purposes Committee
 - Regulatory Licensing Panels
 - Charitable Trusts Sub-Committee
- Review Committees:
 - o Decision Review Committee
 - Partnerships Committee (Overview and Scrutiny)
 - Joint Health & Scrutiny Committee
 - Joint Police & Crime Panel
- Forums:
 - Health & Wellbeing Board

The previous governance arrangements were:

• Awaiting evidence

ExampleC

Example C has a complicated set of Committees with multiple types of Committees.

Oversight Committees:

• Audit & Governance Committee

Regulatory Committees:

- Strategic Planning Board
- Southern Planning Committee
- Northern Planning Committee
- Licensing Committee
- General Licensing Sub-Committee
- Licensing Sub-Committee
- Public Rights of Way Sub-Committees

Other Committees:

- Appointments Committee
- Investigation and Disciplinary Committee
- Independent Persons Panel (non-member body)
- Corporate Parenting Committee
- Health & Wellbeing Board

Themed Committee Additions:

- Finance Sub-Committee
- Shared Services Joint Committee
- Constitution Working Group
- Community Governance Review Sub-Committee
- Staffing Appeals Sub-Committee
- General Appeals Sub-Committee

It is not clear from the evidence available what remains from the previous model prior to moving to the Committee model

ExampleD

Example D has kept their Committee Model as simplistic as possible in addition to having their 'LAC' structure. The below exist in addition to the 'Themed Committees', 'LACs' and 'Scrutiny':

Regulatory Committees:

- Planning Committee
- Licensing Committee & Sub-Committees

Overview Committees:

• Audit, Governance & Standards Committee

Other:

- Pensions Fund Panel
- Health Overview & Scrutiny Panel
- Health & Wellbeing Board
- Joint- Achieving for Children
- Joint- South Example D Waste Partnership

It is not clear from the evidence available what remains from the previous model prior to moving to the Committee model

ExampleE

- Regulatory Committees
 - Licensing Applications Committee (& 3 sub committees)
 - Planning Applications Committee

- Other Committees
 - Playing Fields Trustees (subcommittee of the Policy Committee)
 - Traffic Management (subcommittee of the Strategic Environment, Planning & Transport Committee)
 - o Audit and Governance
 - Health and Wellbeing Board
 - o Personnel Committee
 - o Standards Committee

ExampleF

- Regulatory Committees
 - o Audit & Standards
 - Licencing (Licensing Act 2003 Functions)
 - Licencing (Non Licensing Act 2003 Functions)
 - Licencing Panel (Licensing Act 2003 Functions)
 - o Licencing Panel (Non Licensing Act 2003 Functions)
 - Licensing Urgency Sub Committee
 - o Planning
- There are a number of sub committees (see model)
- Joint Committee (with neighbouring Authorities)

ExampleG

- Regulatory Committees
 - Audit and Accounts
 - Licencing (Re: Licensing Act 2003)
 - General Purpose (licencing and ancillary matters outside the remit of the Licencing Committee including caravan sites, hackney carriage and private hire vehicle licences, drivers and operators, entertainments, betting, gaming and lotteries, theatres and cinemas etc)
 - o Planning
 - Shareholder Committee (Council's Development Company)

9. Engagement

Note: This will be investigated as part of the next phase of work)

10. Communications

Note: This will be investigated as part of the next phase of work)

11. Schemes of Delegation

Note: This will be investigated as part of the next phase of work)

Design Principles

Local Authority Models

ExampleA

- Schemes of Delegation are agreed by Full Council
- All decisions previously made by the Cabinet are now made by Committee, within the appropriate Committee for the decision.
- Decisions previously made by the IEM can be made by Committee or by Officers as part of Officer delegations. This is outlined in the Constitution.

ExampleB

- Setting the Schemes of Delegation- The delegation of the Council's Executive functions to officers are set out in Part 3 Schedule 4 Part B and are determined by the Leader of the Council with approval from Full Council
- All matters which have not been reserved to Council or a Committee are delegated to Officers.
- Decisions previously made by the IEM can be made by Committee or by Officers as part of Officer delegations. This is outlined in the Constitution.
- Under this scheme Officers must keep Members properly informed of action arising within the scope of these delegations. Officers must liaise closely with the relevant Chair and Vice-Chair when the matter falls within the remit of that Committee.
 Officers should inform the local Ward Members when they exercise delegated powers specifically affecting their ward and when the matter is likely to be politically sensitive or contentious unless legal reasons prevent this.

ExampleC

- The Council operates a "Cascade" principle of delegation to ensure that decisions are taken at the most appropriate level closest to those who will be affected. This means that the vast majority of the Council's decisions and actions will fall into the category of operational day to day decisions taken by its officers.
- In order to ensure the smooth functioning of the Council and the efficient delivery of services, Full Council and the Committees and Sub-Committees have delegated to officers all of the powers that they need to perform their roles.

ExampleD

- In order to operate more effectively as an organisation, Full Council delegates many of its decision-making powers to committees, officers, and to other local authorities.
- The Council may at any time withdraw, extend or modify any term of reference or delegation, or transfer any term of reference from one body to another.
- The Council shall reserve the right to appoint such other bodies as are necessary to carry out the work of the Council and may at any time dissolve any body or alter its membership.
- The Scheme of Delegation to Officers, which deals with the powers allocated to Officers of the Council is set out at Part 3B of the Constitution
- Any decision which affects a single Neighbourhood Committee area may be taken by the relevant Neighbourhood Committee provided that:
 - The decision is within Council's budget and policy framework
 - They are within Council policy / there is no conflict with Council policy
 - The impact of the decision extends no further than the boundaries of relevant Neighbourhood area
 - Any financial implications of decisions taken are capable of being contained within the approved budget
 - They do not involve matters of a highly controversial nature as identified by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair of the Neighbourhood Committee concerned.

ExampleE

- Full Council is responsible for the exercise of all functions of the authority. It may
 delegate functions to be exercised by individual Committees or Sub-Committees, or
 by a senior officer(s). Committees in turn may delegate any of their functions to be
 exercised by a Sub-Committee of Members, or by a senior officer; and a SubCommittee in turn may delegate any of its functions to be exercised by a senior
 officer. subject to the decision not being a key decision
- The authority will continue to set a local definition of a key decision, which will apply to all functions, any such decision must be taken by a Committee; significant expenditure (over £500k) or savings (over £250k), except where already approved as part of the Council's revenue or capital budgets; significant effects on communities living or working in two or more wards

ExampleF

- Full Council is the supreme decision making body and may, with some exceptions, exercise any of the functions vested in the City Council by law. It may also delegate many of those functions to a Committee, a Sub-Committee or an officer.
- Where a matter has corporate policy or corporate budgetary implications it will normally be considered first by the Committee with responsibility for the relevant functions or service area before being referred with recommendations to the P&R Committee for a decision.
- Where a function is delegated to a Committee, that Committee may delegate the function to its Sub-Committee(s) or an Officer and the Sub-Committee(s) may delegate the function to an Officer

ExampleG

- The current Scheme of Delegation (SoD) forms part of the Council's Constitution and sets out a set of criteria for committee and officer decisions
- Full Council is responsible for significant changes to the Council's Constitution

12. Statutory Responsibilities for Members Note: This will be investigated as part of the next phase of work)

Local Authority Models

ExampleA

- The Children's Services Committee has 7 Members and the Chair will be the lead spokesperson on children's services (as per legal requirement), including child protection to children and young people. The Committee will exercise the Council's functions as Local Education Authority and will provide oversight of the Children's Strategic Partnership Board for the purposes of the Children Act 2004. The Children's Services Committee also includes a number of young peoples representatives.
- Individual member decision making is not permitted under the Committee System. All decisions must be made by Committee or by Officer as per the Scheme of Delegation.

ExampleB

- There is no reference to the Lead spokesperson for Children's Services online on the example authority's website, nor their Constitution.
- Individual member decision making is not permitted under the Committee System. All decisions must be made by Committee or by Officer as per the Scheme of Delegation.

ExampleC

• The Lead member for Children's Services is the Chair of the Children and Families Committee via Heath and Wellbeing Board

ExampleD

• A co-chair of the Children's and Adults' Care and Education Committee is the lead member on Children's and Adults' Health

ExampleE

- This Authority appoints Lead Councillors with Portfolios covering all council services, and appoint them to be members of the Policy Committee and Committee(s) covering their portfolio areas
- Role of Lead Councillor: Political oversight and leadership of their portfolio area, collective oversight and leadership of the authority (together with the Leader and other Lead Councillors, as members of the Policy Committee), public spokesperson for their portfolio area, presenting reports from portfolio services to their committee(s), the Policy Committee and Council, answerable for service performance in their portfolio areas to Committee and Council
- The Lead Councillor for Children sits on the Adult Social Care, Children's Services and Education Committee

ExampleF

Chair of the Children, Young People & Skills Committee is the Lead Member for Children's Services

• The Chair of the Adult Social Care and Public Health Sub-Committee will be the Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health, and Deputy Chair will be the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board

ExampleG

• This example authority does not have responsibility for Children's Services, that is within the remit of the County Council

13. Staffing, Relationships and Casework

Note: This will be investigated as part of the next phase of work)

Supporting Evidence

1. Profile- ExampleA-



2. Profile- ExampleB-



3. Profile- ExampleC



4. Profile- ExampleD



5. Profile- ExampleE



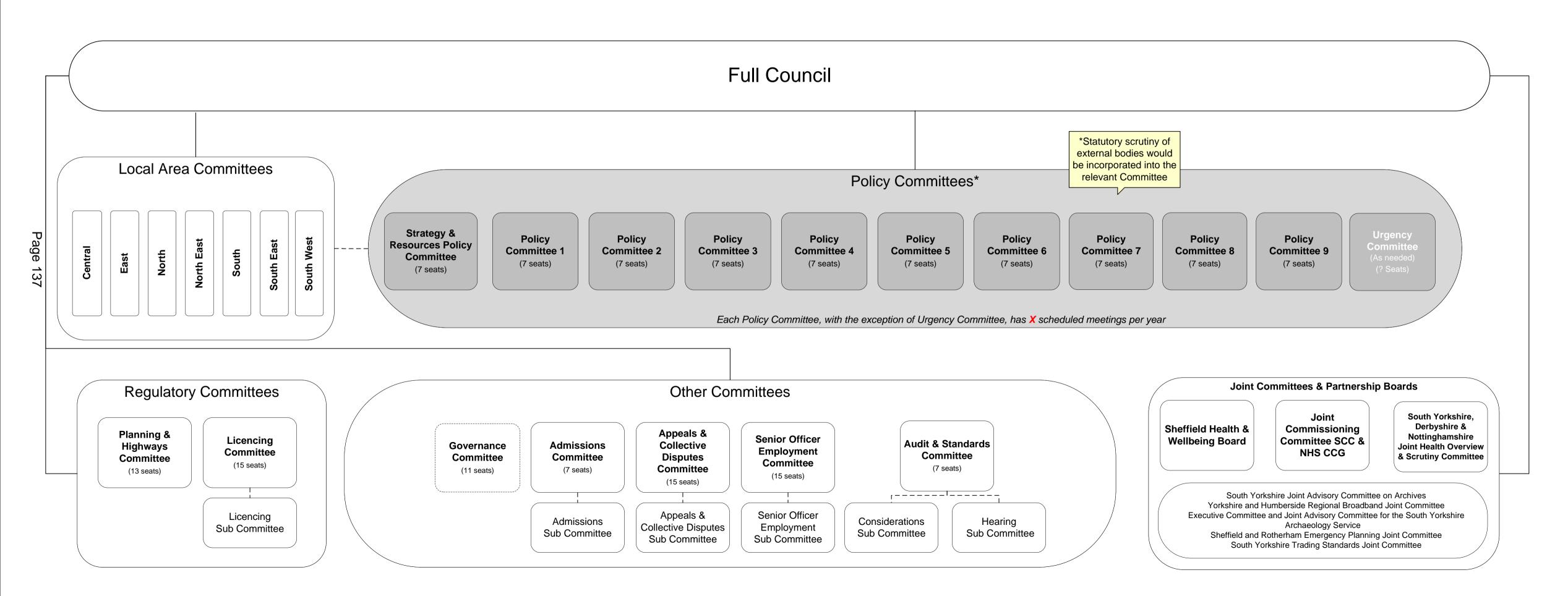
6. Profile- ExampleF



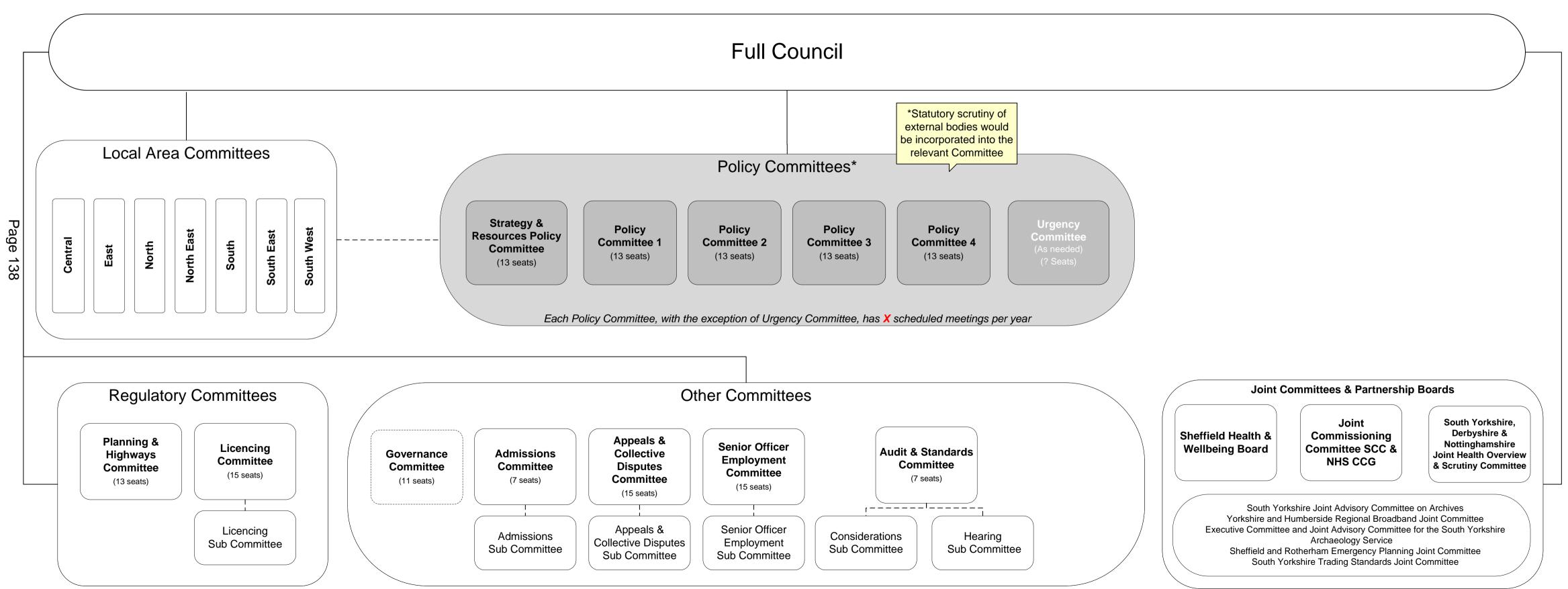
7. Profile- ExampleG



Model Option 1A v0.04

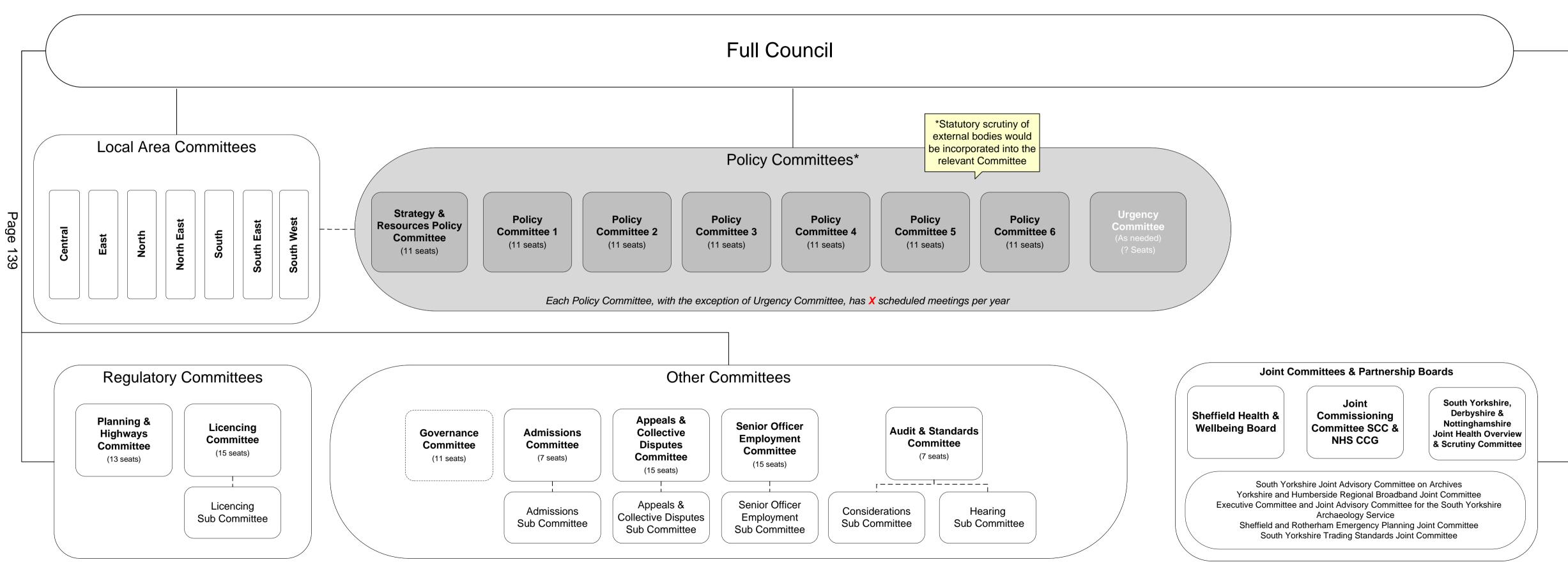


Model Option 2A v0.04

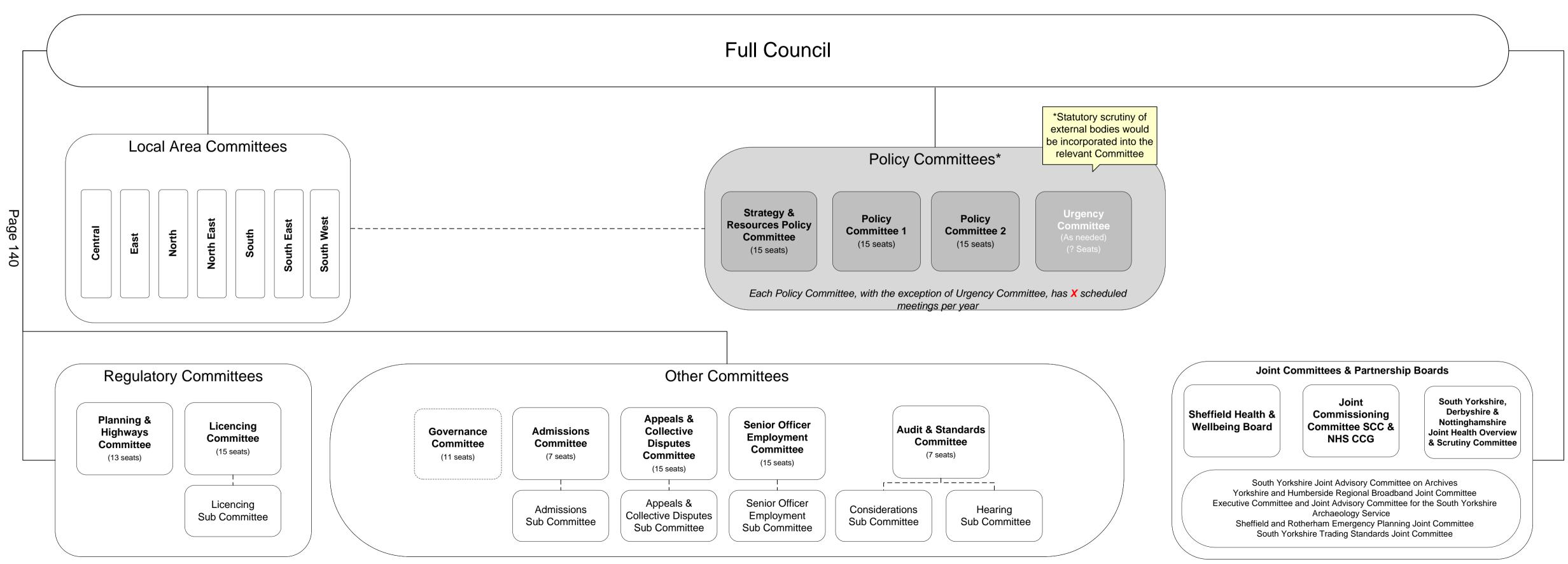




Model Option 3A v0.04

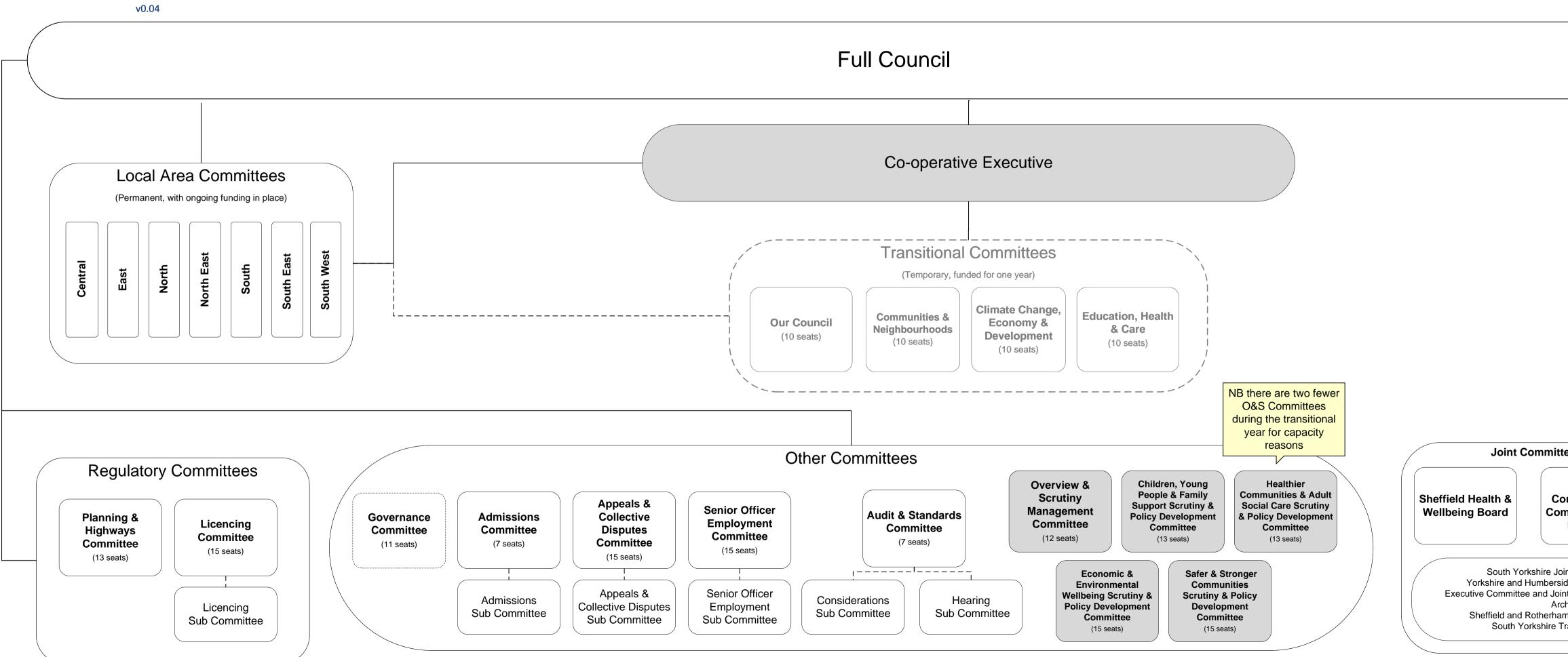


Model Option 4A v0.04



Previous Governance Arrangements





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Joint Committees & Partnership Boards

Joint Commissioning Committee SCC & NHS CCG

South Yorkshire, Derbyshire & Nottinghamshire Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee

South Yorkshire Joint Advisory Committee on Archives Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Broadband Joint Committee Executive Committee and Joint Advisory Committee for the South Yorkshire Archaeology Service Sheffield and Rotherham Emergency Planning Joint Committee South Yorkshire Trading Standards Joint Committee

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Sheffield 'To Be' Model - Options Summary and calculations

This Appendix sets out some calculations in support of the discussion about how many policy committees (and how many committees overall) the council should have in its new system. This includes:

- A very rough calculation showing the frequency of Policy Committee meetings that could hypothetically be sustained within current Democratic Services resources, depending on how many Policy Committees are created (assuming, amongst other things, that any one Policy Committee meeting would be about the same amount of work to support as a Scrutiny Committee)
- A report of how many committees each Sheffield City Councillor currently sits on (demonstrating that the 'average' number of committees split across councillors is not a true picture of members' committee commitments).
- Calculations approximating the amount of councillor time required in committees (and the number of committee meetings overall) for various hypothetical committee structures. These examples match those set out in the diagrams in Appendix 4.

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1. A very rough calculation showing the frequency of Policy Committee meetings that could hypothetically be sustained within current Democratic Services resources, depending on how many Policy Committees are created (assuming, amongst other things, that any one Policy Committee meeting would be about the same amount of work to support as a Scrutiny Committee)

	How many committees?	How often can each committee meet, within cost-neutral dem services resources?
	(not counting any 'urgency committee', on the assumption that this only meets occasionally, as- and-when)	(very rough calculation. Not counting occasional extraordinary meetings, or various inquiries and T&F groups etc which used to happen, or the equivalent activity for the new cttees. Not accounting for the extra admin overheads per additional cttee. Not counting for any additional inertia or bureaucratic load on whole organisation per additional cttee)
Previous model	~12 scheduled Cabinet meetings / year ~30 scheduled Scrutiny meetings / year (x5 committees meeting every other month) (LACs funded and resourced separately) (TCs temporary funding, also separate)	=42 scheduled meetings per year across 6 cttees (different levels of frequency)
Option 1	10 policy committees	42/10 = average of 4.2 scheduled meetings per year for each committee (quarterly)
Option 3	7 policy committees	42/7 = average of 6 scheduled meetings per year for each committee (every other month)
Option 2	5 policy committees	42/5 = average of 8.4 scheduled meetings per year for each committee (six-weekly)
Option 4	3 policy committees	42/3 = average of 14 scheduled meetings per year for each committee (every 4 weeks)

2. A report of how many committees each Sheffield City Councillor currently sits on (demonstrating that the 'average' number of committees split across councillors is not a true picture of members' committee commitments).

As at 21.11.2021:

- 7 councillors sit on 1 committee
- 19 councillors sit on 2 committees
- 28 councillors sit on 3 committees
- 12 councillors sit on 4 committees
- 12 councillors sit on 5 committees
- 4 councillors sit on 6 committees
- 2 councillors sit on 7 committees

The mean number of committees is 3.3.

The median and the mode are 3 committees.

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 Calculations approximating the amount of councillor time required in committees (and the number of committee meetings overall) for various hypothetical committee structures. These examples match those set out in the diagrams in Appendix 4.

Caveats:

- The change in frequency has only been applied to the new Policy Committees and not any other committees, hypothetical or otherwise.
- For the new Policy Committees, we have added in an approximate 2hr per meeting value as an estimate. This is considered a likely minimum.
- We have used the seats estimates as located within the Appendix A OSM Report from 2019, ie the submission to the 2019 scrutiny inquiry about the likely redistribution of seats and their costs, if the objective were to keep member commitments flat while increasing or decreasing the number of committees.
- Option 5a will not match the diagram for the Option 5a model diagram as it does not include the previous 5 O&S Committees that the diagram does for fair comparison purposes this is because there are only 3 live currently.

Options begin overpage

Option 1a

Data reference- Table 3- Appendix A OSM Report 2019

Description- illustrates a structure of 10 new Committees (to replace the Cabinet & Scrutiny Cttees) based on the portfolios of the Cabinet now Co-Op Executive Members (with a Policy & Scrutiny Cttee as replacement for the Leader's portfolio)

Members	Resource	Monthly	Every 2 Months	Quarterly
Number of Bo	dies in Model	30	30	30
Total seats	available	343	343	343
Politically prope avail		254	254	254
Amount of CIIr time	hours	7038	6198	5918
taken for the whole model annually	days	938	826	789
	weeks	188	165	158
Number meetings annually	over the year	274	214	194
	per month	23	18	16
Average per 1 Committee from	hours annually	235	207	197
this Model	working days	31	28	26
	weeks	6	6	5
	meetings per year	9	7	6
	(rounded up) per month	1 (0.75)	1 (0.59)	1 (0.5)
Average attendance for Cllrs	seats to fill	3	3	3
	hours per annum	657	578	552
	days per annum	88	77	74
	weeks per annum	18	15	15
	Committee meetings to attend	26	20	18
	meetings per month	2	2	1

Option 2a

Data reference- Table 2- Appendix A OSM Report 2019

Description- establish 5 new Cttees (to replace the Cabinet & Scrutiny Cttees) based on the remit of the previous Scrutiny Cttees i.e. (1) Children, Young People & Family Support, (2) Economic & Environmental Wellbeing, (3) Healthier Communities & Adult Social Care, (4) Safer & Stronger Communities and (5) Finance & Resources (as replacement for the Overview & Scrutiny Management Cttee).

Members	Members Resource		Every 2 Months	Quarterly
Number of Bo	dies in Model	25	25	25
Total seats	available	338	338	338
Politically prope avail		249	249	249
Amount of CIIr time	hours	6918	6138	5878
taken for the whole model annually	days	922	818	784
	weeks	184	164	157
Number meetings annually	over the year	214	184	174
	per month	18	15	14
Average per 1 Committee from	hours annually	277	246	235
this Model	working days	37	33	31
	weeks	7	7	6
	meetings per year	9	7	7
	(rounded up) per month	1 (0.7)	1 (0.6)	1 (0.56)
Average attendance for CIIrs	seats to fill	3	3	3
	hours per annum	930	825	790
	days per annum	124	110	105
	weeks per annum	25	22	21
	Committee meetings to attend	29	25	23

meet	ings per month	2	2	2

Option 3a

Data reference- N/A

Description- illustrates a structure of 7 new Committees (to replace the Cabinet & Scrutiny Cttees) remits to be confirmed, as an interim model between minimum viable product model and the largest model we have documented. We have estimated membership as 11 members per committee though this is subject to further work.

Members	Resource	Monthly	Every 2 Months	Quarterly
Number of Bo	dies in Model	26	26	26
Total seats	available	339	339	339
Politically prope avail	ortionate seats able	250	250	250
Amount of CIIr time	hours	6942	6150	5886
taken for the whole model annually	days	926	820	785
	weeks	185	164	157
Number meetings annually	over the year	226	190	178
	per month	19	16	14
Average per 1 Committee from	hours annually	267	237	226
this Model	working days	36	32	30
	weeks	7	6	6
	meetings per year	9	7	7
	(rounded up) per month	1 (0.72)	1 (0.6)	1 (0.55)
Average attendance for Cllrs	seats to fill	3	3	3
	hours per annum	863	764	731
	days per annum	115	102	98
	weeks per annum	23	20	20

	mmittee gs to attend	28	24	22
meeting	gs per month	2	2	2

Option 4a

Data reference- Table 1- Appendix A OSM Report 2019

Description- illustrates how this minimum structure may work in practice. The 3 new Cttees, for example, could be based on the structure of the Council (People, Place & Resources).

Members	Resource	Monthly	Every 2 Months	Quarterly	
Number of Bo	dies in Model	23	23	23 314	
Total seats	available	314	314		
Politically propo avail		225	225	225	
Amount of CIIr time taken for the whole	hours	6342	5850	5686	
model annually	days	846	780	758	
	weeks	169	156	152	
Number meetings annually	over the year	190	172	166	
y	per month	16	14	14	
Average per 1 Committee from	hours annually	276	254	247	
this Model	working days	37	34	33	
	weeks	7	7	7	
	meetings per year	8	7	7	
	(rounded up) per month	1 (0.68)	1 (0.61)	1 (0.59)	
Average attendance for Cllrs	seats to fill	4	4	4	
attenuance for clifs	hours per annum	1007	929	903	
	days per annum	134	124	120	
	weeks per annum	27	25	24	

Committee meetings to attend	30	27	26
meetings per month	2	2	2

Option 5a

Data reference- N/A

Description- The below is based upon our 'As Is' model, currently in place; including Co-Op Executive, 3x Scrutiny Committees,

Members	Resource	Monthly
Number of Bo	dies in Model	27
Total seats	available	354
Politically prope availa		166
Amount of Cllr time	hours	5585
taken for the whole model annually	days	745
	weeks	149
Number meetings annually	over the year	230
annaany	per month	19
Average per 1 Committee from	hours annually	207
this Model	working days	28
	weeks	6
	meetings per year	9
	(rounded up) per month	1 (0.7)
Average	seats to fill	3
attendance for Clirs	hours per annum	644
	days per annum	86

weeks per annum	17
Committee meetings to attend	27
meetings per month	2

Appendix 5

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2021 Public Engagement – Collated feedback <u>about Governance Framework</u>

<u>Overview</u>

Below is the amalgamated feedback based on the public engagement sessions that have been delivered as part of the Transition to Committee Programme, including written submissions.

The aim of the sessions have been to provide early engagement with members of the public on key themes and areas that comprise the move to the committee model of governance whilst it is still being formed and discussed. The sessions have been organised by officers, supported by the Centre for Scrutiny and Governance (CfGS) as independent advisors and overseen by Alexander Polak (Assistant Director of Governance).

Five sessions have been run so far, as follows

Session 1

An invite-only discussion amongst key stakeholders who had previously identified themselves as interested parties, with the purpose of sharing information about plans and progress to date, and importantly asking for input into how to best conduct the council's engagement process over the coming months. This was facilitated and planned with the support of Jacqui McKinley from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny and Nigel Slack, self-described Active Citizen, who provided a continuity link back to the Big City Conversation at this and subsequent events.

Sessions 2 & 3

The remaining sessions 2-5 were open to the public and advertised via Sheffield Council comms channels. At first most attendees were already known to the council as people or organisations with an active interest in local authority governance, but the ratio of new faces has increased over time.

The second session was an in-person event at St Marys on the 22nd October and the third session was a virtual session that was run on Zoom on the evening of the 26th October. Both sessions followed the same agenda;

- 1. Introduction Jacqui McKinlay Centre for Governance and Scrutiny
 - Nigel Slack Active Citizen also introduced the in-person session
- 2. <u>Scene Setting</u> Alex Polak Assistant Director (Governance)
- 3. Facilitated breakout sessions
- 4. Design Principles 1 Facilitator Frances West (SCC)
 - SCC...is a trusted organisation where decisions are taken in an open and transparent way, and accountability is clear.

- SCC... is a council where all councillors are involved in and able to influence decision making
- 5. Design Principles 2 Facilitator Jacqui McKinlay (CfGS)
 - SCC...engages, involves and listens to citizens, communities and partners
 - SCC...has a modern and responsive approach to governance which reflects the increasingly complex policy making environment
 - SCC...is a reflective council that is committed to continuously improving governance
- 6. New ways of working (how the committee system works) Discussion around the framework. Facilitator Alex Polak (SCC).
- 7. New ways of working (how citizens get involved). Facilitator Laurie Brennan (SCC)

Session 4

The fourth session was an in-person event on the evening of 8th November at the Vestry Hall in Burngreave.

The session had the following agenda:

- 1. <u>Introduction Jacqui McKinlay Centre for Governance and Scrutiny</u>
- 2. <u>Scene Setting</u> Alex Polak Assistant Director (Governance)
- 3. Facilitated breakout sessions
 - How the Committees should be organised what should each committee focus on? Facilitator - Gillian Duckworth (SCC)
 - How should new committees work and link with Local Area Committees and other democratic decision-making groups? Facilitator - Jacqui McKinlay (CfGS)
 - How do we hold decision-makers to account do we need separate scrutiny Committees? Facilitator Alex Polak (SCC).

Session 5

The fifth session was a virtual event held on the 24th November

At the time of writing, the session was due to focus on the same areas as the inperson event on the 8th, however it was anticipated that the topics may alter at the last minute in light of the publication of committee papers earlier that week. Feedback from this session is not yet incorporated into this document.

Written submissions

A small number of written submissions have been received as part of this exercise, primarily from individuals or organisations who felt there wasn't time at the workshops to put their full views across, after allowing fair time for other participants to speak. This approach has been most welcome and constructive for the wider

listening exercise, and so it is important that the written submissions are given the same weight and attention as the verbal comments captured. All written submissions have been fully incorporated into the summary below, with the exception of the submission from Its Our City, which is of a format which lends itself better to inclusion in full.

Feedback about the Governance Framework

Committee System Discussion Framework

Overarching ideas

- Many people are pretty sceptical about this whole idea.
- There are lots of different models for what democracy is, what it should be, what it means to be elected and what your role and purpose is if you are elected. Many councillors don't realise that they hold views on this, they don't realise that the way they think about democracy and their roles is just one of many ways of thinking about it. For example do they see themselves as a simple channel for, and amplifier of, local voices, or as a delegate who is supposed to make informed decisions in the best interests of residents, even if they disagree?
- Politics in Sheffield feels like it's always on a war footing. The language and tone used by councillors in public settings like Council meetings is inappropriately rude and aggressive, but they get away with it! If you don't change this culture, the rest of this is sunk
- Need a better system for holding members to account for their behaviour, not just for their decisions
- The Council needs to make the most of the hung council opportunity to work with everyone amongst their differences A culture of collaboration is what we want.
- Hansard do an annual audit of political engagement at a national level. Could we bring somebody in to do this periodically in Sheffield, could help build trust
- How do you make the city as a whole less dependent on the Council? It is like a crutch, this is a bad thing.
- The committee model is confusing with the LAC also happening. LAC is muddying the waters.
- The current four-year voting cycle within the council is a big blocker and needs to be addressed. Having 1/3 of the members up for election three out of every 4 years is disruptive to cttee system. An all-out election system is better, as more stable practices within decision making processes. Changing this would be an important step
- With good governance, the voice in the community will be very strong.
- Council doesn't reflect diversity but needs to. Including across committees.
- In committees, need a safe space for people to be real, without feeling that their jobs are at risk. The committees need private space as well as public, transparent decision-making.
- Many UK cities/large councils already use committees to make decisions (including Core Cities, larger than Sheffield). SCC's decisions are not fundamentally different to, or more numerous than other cities/large councils. So, no reason to think the shape of Sheffield's system needs to be fundamentally different from the norm.
- All councils changing to an MCS have explicitly done it without increasing costs or bureaucracy. Surely, Sheffield will follow this national blueprint?
- Costs Based on the national MCS design norms & meeting frequency, cost/meeting (provided by SCC officers) and existing SCC allowances for committee chairs £49,000/year less than SCC's old system (6 themed cttees meeting 12 times per year)

- Gives scope to, e.g., incentivise community stakeholders
- Committee chairs & vice-chairs both have allowances
- Vice-chairs must also play important role & so have an allowance in the new system, that they didn't before
- All councils have explicitly decided from the start that change to an MCS will be costneutral

Full Council

- The elephant in the room is that we all know Full Council is a pantomime. All roads may lead to Council but since that setting is always stitched up in advance this is unhelpful. This is why scrutiny or some alternative body needs to have a meaningful independent oversight role to hold Full Council to account.
- My feeling about full Council is that it's theatre; not a good look if you're a member of the public wanting answers
- This idea of call-in at Full Council what is the purpose of this and the impact on the committees?

Leaders Role

- We want to see the Leaders Role as safe-guarder of constitution and local democracy. More strategic in purpose.
- They are accountable to ward and other councillors from their party but what about all the citizens outside their ward and outside the wards of their party members?
- There should be a male and female Leader jointly doing the role
- Should the role rotate between the parties like the mayoralty?
- Should the Leader's power be checked so that it is easier for them to be politically neutral?
- It appears they will have very little legal power in the new system but still plenty of political power
- When there's no overall control the deputy Leader should be from another party (same at all committees)
- Monitoring officer lost a lot of power in recent years

Lord Mayors Role

• No specific feedback

Themed committees

- Communities in Sheffield are not listened to and if they are, it is not being brought forward. Themes should be around the social determinants of society
- Disability Access Liaison Group is not a committee, but the people involved in it apparently feel like it has a powerful effect, it feels like an independent group which manages to influence policy and decision-makers, e.g. in the way the Council consults on new schemes. Sheffield Transport for All is a similar idea. Could this be a model for how voices of interest groups are heard at decision-making-committee-level?
- Housing have implemented a new rule which has led to the formation of a group of tenants feeding back to the council about their role as landlord, this seems to feel good and influential too.
- What about independent Chairs of committees? They should not be attached to the council they could be part of the universities etc.

- Old committees had a more clustered model for example bringing adults and children's services together has been a benefit, as previously there were no communications between disability services and adults services
- Example of Committee Remits (Just examples. Sheffield will choose remits to best fit the challenges it faces) 1. Education, Children & Families 2. Housing, Health & Social Care 3. Climate change, Environment, Transport & Development 4.Communities, Equalities & Culture 5.Business, Regeneration & Investment 6. Long-term Strategy & Governance
- 'up to ten' sounds a bit worryingly big surely that's far too many to be efficient and accountable?
 - Seems like instead of 3-10 you should have 3 committees or as few as possible the number of councillors involved should depend on the number of councillors in the committees rather than the number of committees. It has to be politically proportioned. There is a fine balance between too many councillors' to policy issues
 - It's hard for the public to say which policies should go together I think it should be a number like 6 committees as it's the same number that other similarly sized cities do and is a lower cost than 10 committees.
 - Deciding a number might have to be a process of trial and error.
 - Number of members on each committee should depend on the size of the work that committee must do.
 - Maybe they should rotate frequently short terms of membership on committees
 - Changing committee members every year gives them the opportunity to hide from responsibilities. It would be better if councillors stay in longer instead of an individual making a mess in one place then moving to another committee to make the same sort of mistakes.
 - A Modern Committee system for a city the size of Sheffield, based on similar councils, will have: 6 policy committees (Maximum. Some have fewer), 14 councillors per committee, Around the same number of meetings for each councillor compared to the previous system. Cost of this for SCC = £49,000/year less than old system.
 - 6 committees is the norm. Replaces the 10 councillors in the cabinet (No reason for 10 members with portfolios in 'strong leader' system just the legal maximum). Each Policy committee gets the remit from Full Council to make decisions in its policy area. No 'Executive' committee (recommend from national experts)
 - There should be roles for the business community in committees
 - Things that are going wrong is giving businesses too much of a chance to say what they want, licencing should be priority e.g., barriers for cane users. The deals and approaches in Kelham Island when trying to get into the bakery areas without drop kerbs forcing cane and wheelchair users onto the road instead of the pavement
 - There should be a group of people who are a part of the councillors table, if those affected were at the table designing the systems those individuals would not feel left out. If we start off at a good point a lot of issues would already be ticked off
 - Co-opting people onto these committees sounds good if it brings in more knowledge but maybe they shouldn't have voting rights as they are not elected?
 - New committees should have an obligation to consult communities (without overwhelming them)

- When chairs are from the administration deputy chairs should all be from other groups. Would send a message.
- 14 councillors per committee (Legally, must be politically proportionate)
- Chairs (of 6 cttees) should be politically proportionate: Labour 3, LibDem 2, Green 1. Vicechairs from a different party to the chair
- I Would like stability with councillors sticking around for more than 3 years, but I understand that councillors depend on the political party at the time, you need to have a continuous way of working when councillors change.
- What happens if your own local councillor isn't on a particular committee? Does that mean your own interests aren't and can't be represented?
- Regarding this call for consensus If parties on a committee disagree on an a issue is that really a problem? Different viewpoints is what you would hope for on an effective team.
- Should all committees operate on a simple majority for decisions, or should the threshold be higher to encourage this way of working?
- Committee chairs & vice-chairs [should] both have allowances. Vice-chairs must also play important role & so have an allowance in the new system, that they didn't before
- Typical frequency of meetings
 - Committees do not need lots of meetings to make better informed decisions than the limited time/knowledge available from 1 Cabinet member
 - The 5 Policy committees meet 12 times/year
 - o Full council meets 6 times/year
 - Long-term Strategy committee meets 6 times/year
 - Old scrutiny committees not needed. Built into the decision-making process (~21 fewer meetings/year for SCC)
 - Councillors will go to around the same number of meetings as before

Overarching Committee

- If you have overarching committee you risk going back to an Executive, especially if one party has an overall majority and the whole idea of referendum was to move away from one party monopolising.
- Moving to a more consultative, cross-party approach is important.
- An overarching committee needs a different name. It is strategic coordination, that's central to it and needs to focus on tone, culture etc

Local Area Committees

- LACs seem to be part of the new design. Concerned about these as they are blunt instrument. Just 7 across the whole city. How will they succeed when other similar schemes have not worked? Big differences at each of the LACs according to people who have attended a few. Only pay lip service something needs to change with these but not sure of the answer. A distraction at the moment from democratic change.
- What should their future be? What is their role? Lots of confusion about their role amongst local people.
- There needs to be more clarity around what a LAC Is, what it's responsible for and what the committees will be responsible for and how public engagement plugs into both. "So many issues are city-wide, so this might frustrate people who turn up to LACs if the LACs' role is mostly just to be an ear to the ground"

- What is the proposed solution to people and groups who are based on the boundaries between two groups? (Lucky you! You get two LACs representing you...)
- If LACs have the power to make changes in their local areas and meaningfully run things differently, will various issues become a postcode lottery? And will inconsistency creep in on things like approach to street furniture? Will we just end up with seven district councils under one city council?
- There are historic perceptions that various parts of the city get more support than others. Is this playing out at or via LACs?
- Consistency is important when it comes to accessibility it is actually a bit of an issue that the LACs operate in such different ways (and that some are better than others re accessibility)
- We think some areas the LACs have been much better than others... and the engagement a has been better in some areas than others. Are the other areas learning from them? And how are they learning from them?
- More budget would make all the difference
- Been to 5/7 LACs so far, no strategic aim or vision seen so far
- Attendance at NE LAC meeting was alienating. Held in a sports hall, seats 2m apart as it should be. All Councillors sitting together, not distanced or masked at tables in a long row, they had microphones and I felt like the audience. The Chair did more talking than anyone. This is not community involvement, this is paying lip service
- Digital is the way to do this e.g. have a LAC based citizen type app to register interest in issues or report issues. If people get that feedback loop, can see services being delivered in their area. Recognise also need to cope with digital divide too
- Need to get some quick wins, LACs set up in hurry, not sure how to measure how successful they'll be. The LAC survey is very simplistic, just three questions. We're then expected to get a local plan from that in Jan. If system is to work, people need to understand how it works. Experience in LAC meetings, people didn't know how it worked. People need to understand how to engage with LACs, we need better communications to get the message out.
- From South side to North side, people should have same level of investment and services. For e.g., now living in Dore, phone with a problem, addressed immediately. In Burngreave, you can see the same derelict houses from 40yrs ago. Money spent, but not in right places. Then community gets blame. People who live here don't have a say, and people don't feel they have a say.
- LACs aren't politically proportionate, so they're as bad as the old cabinet in that specific way whatever party has local majority can control that LAC. Is this democratic?
- LACs need to find some way of rewarding people for being involved, incentive. Spending money isn't inventive and should be happening anyway.
- LACs have been given money, coming up with a plan. The community would benefit from more physical contact in all local areas. Similar to Citizens Advice, a place where you can go, a hub for engaging with the council.
- LACs have two areas of focus; interact and spend money. If there's not much money to spend, can they get involved in other committees? What are the Check point for LACs, how will we know if they are they being successful?
- LACs not diverse or representative, they need to listen/interact with whole community, not just those that come forward, even those who don't vote. The Cllrs in a LAC could all be from a single party, so not everyone's represented.

Statutory Scrutiny

- Old scrutiny committees not needed. Built into the decision-making process (~21 fewer meetings/year for SCC)
- Don't use the word 'Scrutiny' that word means something to Councillors but means nothing to the public. Need a new word to represent the new system
- We want the Council to challenge *issues* not just *decisions* e.g., Health & Wellbeing inequalities, Race inequalities
- What is the purpose of scrutiny, is it an 'are we on the right track?' committee or is it is about making sure people don't abuse power?
- The purpose should be to:
 - Give people what they need
 - Ensure that people are heard
 - 'Action and Collective' don't just listen to us, take action with us
- Previous Scrutiny model didn't work people didn't know what the Scrutiny committees were for, and everything was based around cabinet and their power – no direct link between cabinet roles and Scrutiny roles, e.g., there was a cabinet member for CYP, but no Scrutiny member for CYP
- In the previous model, Scrutiny seemed to simply mean 'proportional political representation' what about the Scrutiny of diversity, e.g., of the inclusion / exclusion of marginalised groups?
- The previous committee system (before cabinet system), and current Scrutiny committees did bring in community experts which was a positive
- Scrutiny in the old system needed to be strengthened and have more power to force change as it has not been effective in the past How effective is Scrutiny, if Scrutiny can't make decisions?
- How can we give scrutiny control over the budget so that the chairs of the committees don't just nod their own budgets through at the overarching committee, if that committee is just made up of committee chairs?
- A need to think about how SCC works with partner organisations, and how Scrutiny can be communicated beyond SCC's responsibility for a committee's theme. E.g., housing committee – not just thinking about Council housing, but housing in a wider context
- Danger that a new environment will throw decision-making awry, if for example the city faces a brand-new challenge that doesn't fit into one of the new committees, and therefore the new committee system doesn't have the expertise to address it, resulting in reliance on other agencies
- Would 3 political parties self-scrutinising each other work? Seems like there would always be an incentive to maintain the status quo. Need some scrutiny from non-councillors.

Types of potential scrutiny

- There should be a 'scrutiny and oversight' committee with an elected independent Chair
 - \circ $\,$ Non-councillor stands for election on a 3 year term.
 - o Is directly elected by the people of Sheffield
 - Apolitical role, shouldn't be aligned to a party, not elected by councillors

- Scrutiny and oversight cttee must have the power of budgetary veto (go / no go) on major projects
- Ideas should only work if this treasury committee chaired by a non-councillor agrees
- Whatever scrutiny is, it should not be whipped, must have independence
- What chance do the public get to scrutinise?
 - We never get an opportunity to comment on decisions. Putting this in place would increase accountability, there is a need for a mechanism to ask for feedback, consult and record and dissent received through consultation
 - Community groups are a part of the city as well as being a community, and shouldn't be considered in isolation, but as part of the whole
 - For local issues, ensure Scrutiny by having the decisions physically made in the local area in question – increases transparency
 - Local residents need to get involved in the area and with each other, in order to then get involved with decisions
 - How to choose *who* represents the area?
 - o Communicate decisions needing to be made with communities in advance
 - Use schools, churches, mosques, supermarkets to get messages to residents
 - How to ensure that every community is able to make its voice heard?
 - Hear us, but don't then ignore what we say
 - Community Infrastructure Levy £90million still unspent, yet some areas have still seen no investment. Where is the residents of these areas' opportunity to challenge this?
- Could LACs be used as a mechanism for the public to provide Scrutiny on committees' decisions or as independent Scrutiny?
- An external Scrutiny body would be a good idea not associated with SCC
 - Members appointed, or elected through a committee
 - Sourced from the voluntary sector? Voluntary sector tends to unite the local organisations and know the feelings on the ground in a community
 - Different community representatives could be brought in for Scrutiny, depending on the matter at hand. E.g., community nurses for health & social care decisions
 - \circ Ensure that the voices of the seldom heard, are heard
- Scrutiny should naturally be built in to cttee system as committees will be cross-party. If there need for a separate scrutiny role, could this be focused on officer decisions?
- There should still be room for things to be called in and scrutinised. The model for Scrutiny would depend on how broad the committees' remits are
- During the pandemic, SCC has carried out Scrutiny on the impact of the pandemic on different groups within the city want to ensure that this continues, and that community Scrutiny isn't lost post-Covid
- Need to ensure that behaviours of members are challenged
 - o Independent Scrutiny of Councillors' behaviour

Other Committees

• No direct comments so far

Public Engagement

- People's lack of understanding on how the council works is a blocker for them to be involved in this process.
- My main issue is after a decision is made **customers are an afterthought** receiving emails like 'would you like to give your thoughts on...' after they made the decision
- Council is a remote entity doesn't feature in life except for paying Council Tax. This needs to be changed
- Google doesn't know about this committees lark you need to get onto google and a better web presence
- More events should be held where there is a clear process which leads to decisionmaking, making decision-making accountable and where EVIDENCE is being used and evaluated in really clear ways
- It's hard work getting people interested in this issue. They didn't even know about it when they were voting on the day. Most people at polling stations didn't understand the question or why they were being asked it
- Can I just go and represent a body or an individual at a committee when I need or want to?
 - Just being able to go to a LAC isn't enough
 - How do we get these voices heard at the right, useful, relevant, important time? On our timescales, not the Council's?
 - How do we help people know when is a good time to influence things?
 - Do we need different avenues for individuals and groups?
- Can the public enter questions into all the committees when established?
- Public questions should get public responses. Ideally at the time during the meeting. If that's not possible a clear answer should be reported at the next Council meeting and the resident gets that same response in writing
- Talked about people not getting involved whole sectors or groups not getting involved or having any say.
- Concerns about not getting **personalised feedback** from committees or Councillors, too many standard letter responses
- New committee system should allow engagement as and when they require it
- Engagement in community is limited. Even if you go to your Cllr. Even if they hear you, they don't take it into consideration, don't even feedback, keep on going back to ask for feedback, but get no response. If we move to this new system, how will people's voice be heard.
- Very daunting to take a petition to committee, stand up and speak, so the average person might not do it.
- Why doesn't the council tweet every time a meeting is scheduled, to say what's on the agenda?
- Why doesn't the council let people sign up to be told about forthcoming decisions on certain topics, and then email them when they appear on agendas?
- Why doesn't the council tweet about all the decisions councillors make?
- Improving legitimacy:
 - More inclusive decision-making Especially when the ruling group (whether Labour or LibDem, recently in Sheffield) has a low electoral mandate, from a low voting turnout
 - Power-sharing and cooperation Cross-party, with stakeholders, communities & those the council has found it hard to listen to
 - Committees involving outside voices

- Co-opting stakeholders who pledge to facilitate 2-way connections with their networks
- Use more modern, flexible, efficient and open ways of securing input, as highlighted during pandemic
- \circ $\;$ Vital to clearly show the impact and influence of this input on decisions

Communications

• Language is important. "Passing up" to the Leader, "down to" LACs sounds revealing about your attitudes. This devalues what the cttee does. Citizens are seen as the lowest rung.

Schemes of Delegation

- It's important that we have an officer scheme of delegation, Councillors can't make all decisions.
- Important that officer decisions (over certain level) are visible.
- How do we give confidence, engage with members of public about this?
- Culturally shift from cabinet to cttee system is major.
- Public could theoretically find decisions made by officers, but don't know where or when to look and it can't just be on website. More engagement routes needed to help people know that a decision has been made, and abotut what- Social media, developing an app, etc.

Statutory Responsibilities for Members (became: members' responsibilities in general)

- There is a lot of 'dead wood' councillors who need to be accountable to those who they are representing.
- The pay that councillors receive won't attract the right people. It's too low to attract people except from older retired or middle class folk and not younger people or those who have to earn a living to support themselves or others.
- What metrics/professional standards are councillors measured against?
- What sanctions are in place for member if they are not fulfilling their obligations?
- 'Work needs to be done with councillors to actually talk to their people, not just when an election coming up
- People might be encouraged to think more about who they actually elect if they see that we're providing development for Councillors and a higher standard is expected.
- How do we make something happen on the ground? What levers are available to members to make something happen?
- The best type of accountability is how members react to what people want and go back and say I did it. Then people may appreciate the role of Councillors
- Political parties can't be seen to be agreeing with policies implemented by other parties, so they scrap things or ague against them even if they're working. For example, Surestart which was stopped and this creates Mental health issues, especially for young people who are impacted by closing Youth Clubs.
- Councillors should be independently minded and should not go in with a preconceived mindset of ideas

Staffing, Relationships and Casework

• No specific comments so far

Other comments

- Confusion around what is meant when you say 'The Council' who do you mean? Officers? Councillors?
- New constellations is a forward thinking plan for Sheffield that involves the council but isn't really promoted anywhere and needs to be considered in this and other forward thinking work.
- Holistic concern about the scale of ambition and resources available. No resources to hold citizens assemblies on climate change if we are trying to steer activity in the city, people going with their prejudices won't get us there. Need to evolve a consensus from dialogue from residents this is very resource intensive. Think this is the way it should be, but if the Council can't commit to something like citizens assembly, then is it realistic? Don't want to design something that can't be achieved.
- Biggest challenge is understanding people's needs, what the gaps are, and leadership you never get anything good designed by a committee. Finding ways that make people feel engaged and listened to, and then having people who are bold enough and have those **leadership** skills to take what they hear, have a vision for the city, and see it done
- Whatever is done, we don't want to change the look and feel of the character of Sheffield, we've a very vibrant city. We want to progress and move on but we don't want to live somewhere we don't recognise. We need to capture wide and diverse opinions
- There's a confrontational nature within the council. Hopefully committees will address this. Cllrs need to focus on the 90% of things they agree on, rather than 10% they don't, as is done now.
- All decision-making has to have a rigorous theme that goes to the problem, we have to say services have to be rigorously gone through to avoid services fighting with one another. If you can work with the community, you can then go to the service and ask if the problem can be solved. This process is not easy and would need the voices of the community
- We have the opportunity to get Sheffield back on the rails and catch up with other cities e.g., the Olympic legacy park investments needs to be coordinated and not always led by councillors, forming partnerships with investors and businesses will bring money back into Sheffield
- We need good people asking questions, Barrow-in Furness have been wanting a marina for 10 years which would cost £21 million to complete just the dredging. Sheffield airport is an e.g. of projects that have gone wrong we need to listen to those in the community, the people off the street

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A Modern Committee system for Sheffield, based on experience of other councils

Sheffield doesn't need to reinvent the wheel



No need to reinvent the wheel

- Many UK cities/large councils already use committees to make decisions (including Core Cities, larger than Sheffield)
- SCC's decisions are not fundamentally different to, or more numerous than other cities/large councils
- So, no reason to think the shape of Sheffield's system needs to be fundamentally different from the norm
- All councils changing to an MCS have explicitly done it without increasing costs or bureaucracy
- Surely, Sheffield will follow this national blueprint?

Some basics are missing

- Other councils, from the very start, state their intent to:
 - 1. Increase the legitimacy of council decision-making
 - 2. Make key improvements to democracy & representation (embedding democratic values and procedures)
 - 3. Make change cost-neutral
 - 4. Have no significant increase in bureaucracy
- These intents are the foundation for guiding the whole process and design of a new MCS
- Without intents, goal is unclear & process inefficient e.g. some still mistakenly think that an MCS will mean "many meetings" & "cost a lot more"

What have other councils done?

- A Modern Committee system for a city the size of Sheffield, based on similar councils, will have:
 - 6 policy committees (Maximum. Some have fewer)
 - 14 councillors per committee
 - Around the same number of meetings for each councillor, compared to the previous system
 - Cost of this for SCC = £49,000/year less than old system

6 Committees

- 6 committees is the norm
- Replaces the 10 councillors in the cabinet (No reason for 10 members with portfolios in 'strong leader' system – just the legal maximum)
- Each Policy committee gets the remit from Full Council to make decisions in its policy area
- No 'Executive' committee (recommend from national experts)
- 14 councillors per committee (Legally, must be politically proportionate)
- Chairs should be politically proportionate
 - Labour 3, LibDem 2, Green 1
- Vice-chairs from a different party to the chair

Example of Committee Remits

(Just examples. Sheffield will choose remits to best fit the challenges it faces)

- 1. Education, Children & Families
- 2. Housing, Health & Social Care
- 3. Climate change, Environment, Transport & Development
- 4. Communities, Equalities & Culture
- **5.** Business, Regeneration & Investment
- 6. Long-term Strategy & Governance

Improving legitimacy

More inclusive decision-making

Especially when the ruling group (whether Labour or LibDem, recently in Sheffield) has a low electoral mandate, from a low voting turnout

Power-sharing and cooperation

Cross-party, with stakeholders, communities & those the council has found it hard to listen to

- Committees involving outside voices
 - Co-opting stakeholders who pledge to facilitate 2-way connections with their networks
 - Use more modern, flexible, efficient and open ways of securing input, as highlighted during pandemic
- Vital to clearly show the impact and influence of this input on decisions

Typical frequency of meetings

- Committees do not need lots of meetings to make better informed decisions than the limited time/knowledge available from 1 Cabinet member
- The 5 Policy committees meet 12 times/year
- Full council meets 6 times/year
- Long-term Strategy committee meets 6 times/year
- Old scrutiny committees not needed. Built in to the decision-making process (~21 fewer meetings/year for SCC)
- Councillors will go to around the same number of meetings as before

Costs

- Based on the national MCS design norms & meeting frequency, cost/meeting (provided by SCC officers) and existing SCC allowances for committee chairs
- £49,000/year less than SCC's old system
 - Gives scope to, e.g., incentivise community stakeholders
- Committee chairs & vice-chairs both have allowances
 - Vice-chairs must also play important role & so have an allowance in the new system, that they didn't before
- All councils have explicitly decided from the start that change to an MCS will be cost-neutral

Cost comparison details

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Meeting a Q P 1	Full Council			Children YPFS Scrutiny		Healthier CASC Scrutiny	Safer SC Scrutiny			
Frequency/year	12	12	12	7	5	7	6			
Democratic Services	£14,820	£14,820	£14,820	£8,645	£6,175	£8,645	£7,410			£75,335
CIIr Allowances	£0	£89,060	£4,729	£4,729	£4,729	£4,729	£4,729			£112,705
									Total	£188,040
Modern Committee S	system									
Meeting	Full	Policy &	Committee A	Committee B	Committee C	Committee D	Committee E	Urgency Committee		
weening		Strategy Committee						Committee		
		Committee	12	12	12	12	12			
Frequency/year	6	Committee 6						1		£90,155
Frequency/year Democratic Services	6	Committee 6 £7,410	£14,820	£14,820	£14,820	£14,820	£14,820	1 £1,235		£90,155 £48,056
Frequency/year Democratic Services CIIr Allowances	6 £7,410	Committee 6 £7,410	£14,820	£14,820	£14,820	£14,820	£14,820	1 £1,235		and the second s