

To: **Members of the Constitutional Sub-Committee**
Councillors: C Fitzsimmons (Chair), B Axcell,
P Bretherton, J Joyce, P Kennedy

Professor Steven Broomhead
Interim Chief Executive Executive

Town Hall
Sankey
Street
Warrington
WA1 1UH

Constitutional Sub-Committee
Tuesday, 16 October 2012 at 2.00 pm
Room 13, West Annexe, Town Hall, Warrington

Agenda prepared by Louise Murtagh, Democratic Services Officer
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AGENDA

Part 1

Items during the consideration of which the meeting is expected to be open to members of the public (including the press) subject to any statutory right of exclusion.

1. Apologies for Absence

To record any apologies for absence received

2. Code of Conduct - Declarations of Interest

Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any disclosable pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda no later than when the item is reached.

3. Minutes

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 3 April 2012

4. Executive Board and Committee Review

Report of the Solicitor to the Council

Part 2



Items of a "confidential or other special nature" during which it is likely that the meeting will not be open to the public and press as there would be a disclosure of exempt information as defined in Section 100I of the Local Government Act 1972.

Nil

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CONSTITUTIONAL SUB-COMMITTEE – 3 April 2012

Present: Councillors C Fitzsimmons (Chair), B P Axcell, and P Kennedy

CSC 12 Apologies

Councillors P Bretherton and J Joyce.

CSC 13 Code of Conduct – Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

CSC 14 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2012 were signed and agreed as a correct record.

CSC 15 Update to the Constitution

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Solicitor to the Council on a range of issues to be reported the Annual Meeting of the Council on 21 May 2012. This allowed an opportunity for members of the Sub Committee to input into the process.

Members noted that the Constitution to be submitted to the Annual Meeting of the Council on 21 May 2012 will cover a series of areas including:

- In year changes agreed by Council;
- Legislative changes including the Localism Act;
- Tidying up of consequential changes;

Members noted that Council, on 26 March 2012, approved a revised Financial and Contract Procedure Rules which will form part of the revised Constitution.

Members noted that, although the Localism Act had received Royal Assent, there are still many provisions that are not yet in force. Members noted that it is likely that some of those provisions could be enacted at short notice and that it is therefore highly likely that there will be further changes to the Constitution during the new Civic Year 2012/13. In particular there will be changes to the Standards regime.

Members noted that there had been a series of changes made by Council during the current civic year including:

Street trading - Council on 31 October 2011 gave approval to amend the Constitution to enable certain licensing applications to be dealt with by the Chair and Deputy Chair of Licensing Committee without the need for a hearing before the Committee.

Revised Procedure for Development Management - Council on 12 December 2011 agreed to revisions to how both the Development Management Committee and

Planning Applications Sub Committee operated. This included extending the membership of the Sub Committee

Changes to the Council's Governance Arrangements - Following the abolition of Cheshire Police Authority in November 2012 and the establishment of the Police and Crime Panel changes will be required to the Constitution from July 2012 to allow the newly formed Panel to operate effectively. Further changes may also be required in the autumn of 2012 to allow for a revised governance structure for the Authority.

Scrutiny and Petition Changes - Various scrutiny changes not yet added to Constitution, including changes to Councillor 'Call for Action', establishment of Statutory Scrutiny Officer and Flood Risk management role.

Review of petitions arrangements is no longer statutory, but the Council may wish to consider continuing with the existing scheme.

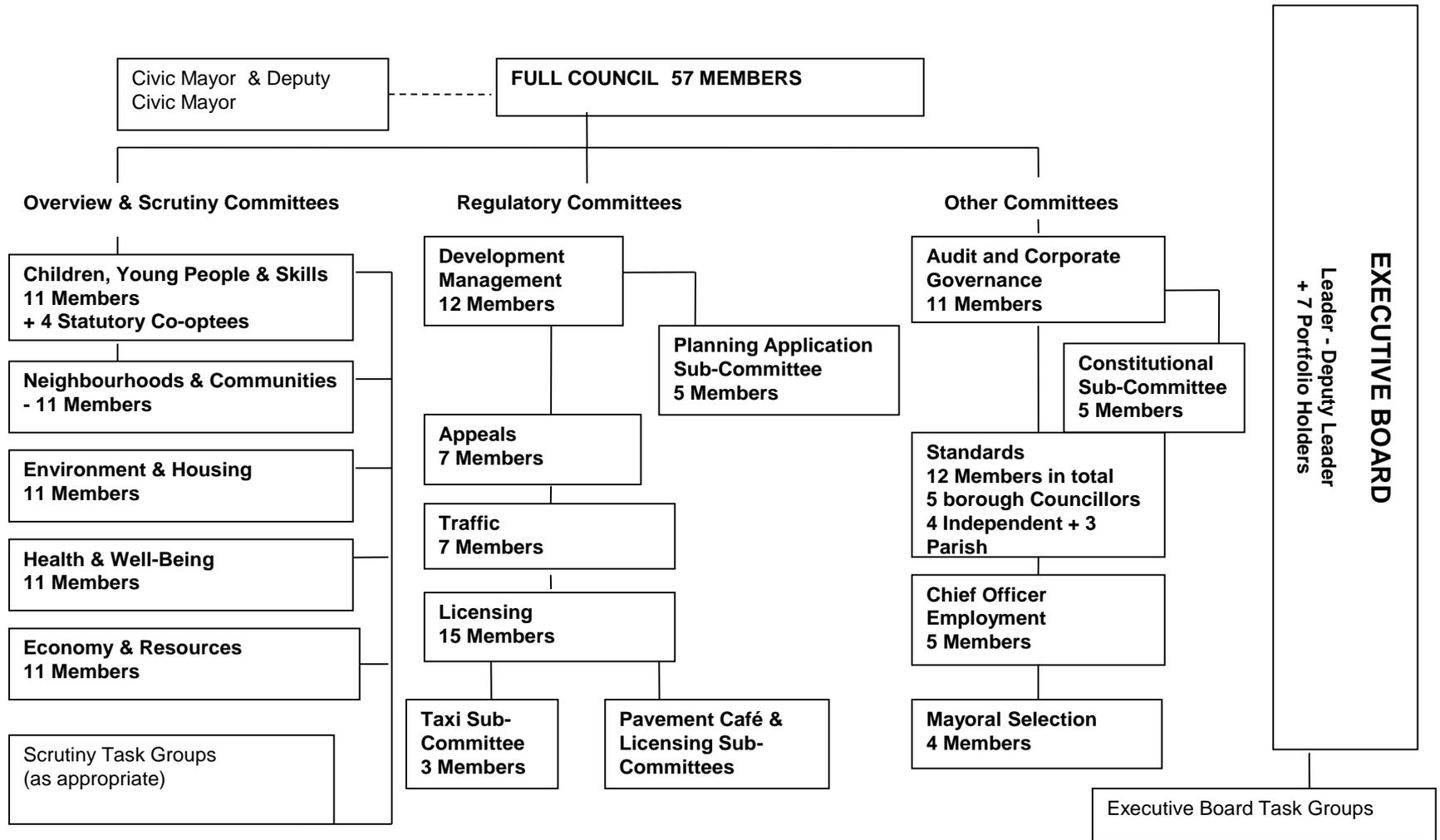
Decision: That the Sub Committee noted the report and agreed to submit the following comments and recommended amendments to the constitution to the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee on the 26 April 2012:

- Deletion of Chief Executive Announcements from 7.1(b)(v) from the Council Procedural Rules;
- An amendment to the Protocol on use of the 'call-in' procedure contained in Part 4 Rules and Procedures to move from a two stage process to a one stage process only;
- A more detailed description of the role of the Statutory Scrutiny Officer;
- Inclusion of standing item of business in the Order of Business of the Annual meeting to report the Election Results;
- A delegation from Council to the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee, with subsequent amendment to the Terms of Reference, to enable it to carry out election functions on behalf of the Council; and
- A request to amend the Councils Induction Programme for newly elected members to include a module on the constitution dealing with such matters as Motions and rules of debate.

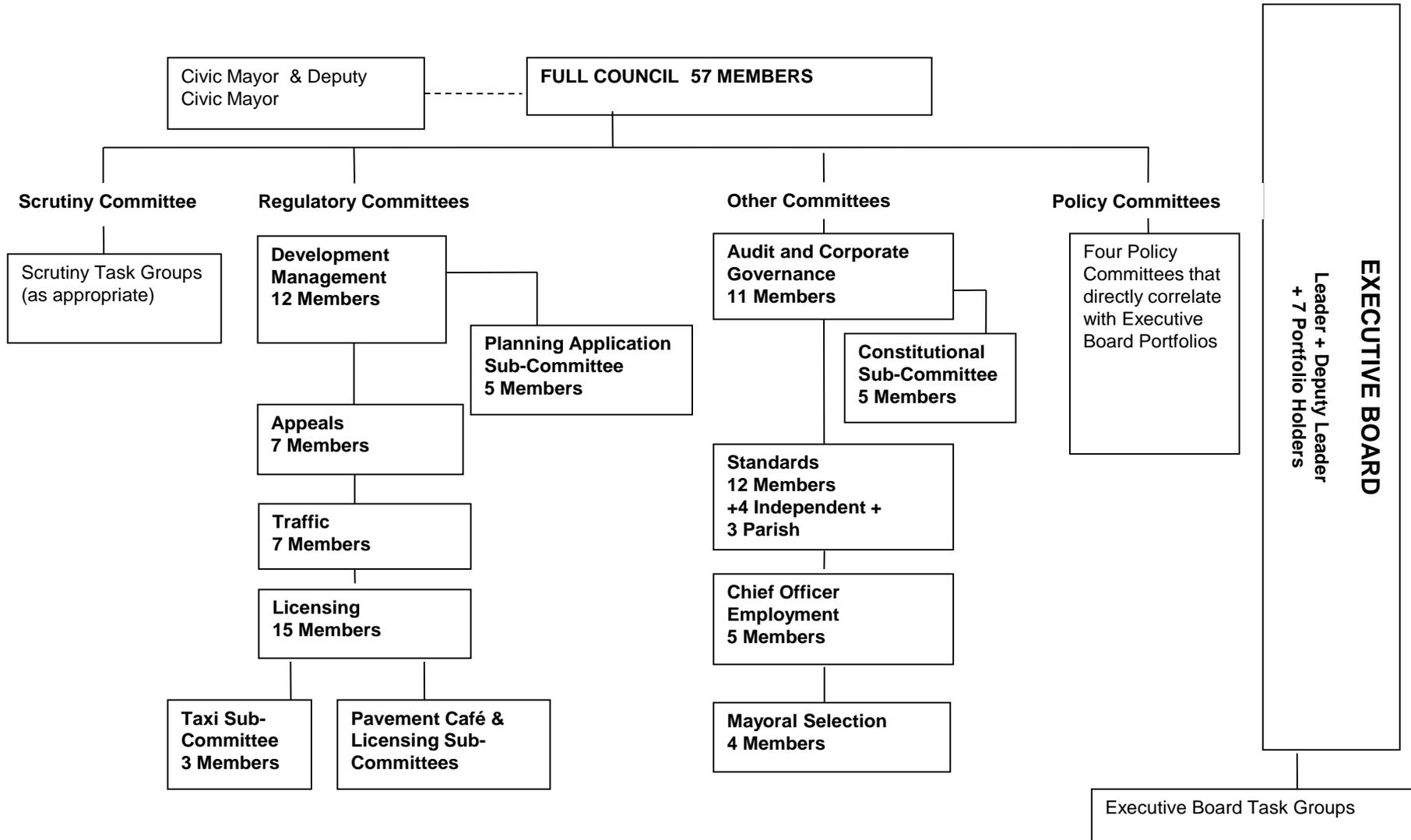
Signed

Dated.....

CURRENT COUNCIL & COMMITTEE STRUCTURE



POTENTIAL COUNCIL & COMMITTEE STRUCTURE



Equality Impact Assessment



SECTION 1: Aims and Objectives of the Structure/Service

Directorate: Assistant Chief Executive

Department: Democratic and Member Services.

Assessment Lead: Helen Stanley

Email: hstanley@warrington.gov.uk Telephone Number: 01925 442121

Review of Executive Board and Committee Structures

This is an initial Equality Impact Assessment in respect of the proposed new Executive Board and Committee Structures which are due to come into effect in May 2012. A detailed EIA will be undertaken prior to the implementation of the new structure.

Aims and Objectives – The aim of the review is to ensure that there is greater member involvement in consultation and policy development and that this will lead to a more inclusive decision making process. It will deliver wider opportunities for member development, building skills, capacity and expertise. A synopsis of the proposals is as follows:-

- The establishment of a Scrutiny Committee;
- The establishment of four Policy Committees.

Stakeholders – The main stakeholders affected by the review are elected members, Neighbourhood Boards and other key partners such as Police, Health, Cheshire Fire & Rescue Services, Golden Gates Housing Trust, and third sector agencies. Other affected stakeholders include residents of Warrington, local businesses, Parish Councils, Senior Management Board, officers within all Council directorates and independent co-opted committee members.

Outcomes – The proposed new structure will lead to more open and transparent decision making which is visible to the residents of Warrington and deliver effective governance and value for money.

SECTION 2: Research and Intelligence

Equality Group	Stakeholder Profile	Involvement and Consultation
<p>Sex (Gender)</p>	<p><u>Residents</u> - In July 2011 the population of Warrington was estimated at 198,900. 98,500 of the population were male (49.2%) and 100,400 were female (50.8%)</p> <p><u>Councillors</u> - The Council has a total of 57 Councillors. In January 2012 37 Councillors were male (64.9%) and 20 Councillors were female (35.6%). This is higher than the national average which is 30.6% (<i>Source – national census of Local Authority Councillors 2010</i>)</p> <p><u>Officers</u> – In December 2011 the Council employed 8,633 people, 22% of the workforce were male and 78% of the workforce were female.</p>	<p>The following activities were undertaken for all equality groups:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Interactive Councillor Briefing Sessions in November 2011. 2. Reports to Executive Board and Audit and Corporate Governance Committee in August and September 2011 respectively.
<p>Disability</p>	<p><u>Residents</u> - In November 2010 there were 11,120 claimants of disability living allowance. This accounts for 5.6% of the total population which is slightly above the national average of 5.2%. The rate of Incapacity Benefit Claimants has gradually decreased from 7.6% to 6.2% between 2005 and 2009 and currently stands at 5.6%.</p> <p><u>Councillors</u> – Equality monitoring for councillors is due to commence in February 2012.</p> <p><u>Officers</u> There are 1.2% of officers with a declared disability.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. The following stakeholders were consulted by letter in November 2011 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Parish Councils • Neighbourhood Boards • Warrington Partnership – this includes the following agencies:- Warrington Health Consortium Golden Square Warrington Collegiate Job Centre Plus Citizens Advice Bureau Bridgewater Community Trust Older Peoples Engagement Group NHS Warrington Golden Gates Housing Trust Churches Together in Warrington Cheshire Fire & Rescue Cheshire Police
<p>Age</p>	<p><u>Residents</u> Warrington currently has a relatively young population. However, the number of older people is projected to grow significantly by 2033. The number of children (aged 0 to 15) is projected to grow to 38,600 (increase of 2.1% since 2008 compared to 12.4% nationally). The number of people (aged 16 to 64) is projected to grow to 128,300 (increase of only 0.3% since 2008 compared to 7.4% nationally). The number of older people (aged 65 and over) is projected to grow significantly to 54,100 (increase of 79.7% since 2008 compared to 65% nationally).</p> <p><u>Councillors</u> - In January 2012 the average age for a councillor in Warrington was 52.19 years which is lower than the national average of 59.7 (<i>Source – national census of Local Authority Councillors 2010</i>) In 2012 3 councillors were under the age of 34</p> <p><u>Officers</u> In December 2011 the average age of the workforce was 44 years.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Presentation to Informal Executive and Strategic Management Board. <p>Information published on the Council's website.</p>

<p>Race</p>	<p><u>Residents</u> - The majority of people who live in Warrington identify themselves as White British. 6.9% of the population describe themselves by other categories compared to 11.6% in the Northwest and 17.2% in England. The next largest group is 'Other White' estimated at 3,900 (2.0%) followed by 'Irish' and 'Indian' both estimated at 1,600 (0.8%) and 'Pakistani' estimated at 1,300 (0.7%). According to the Annual Population Survey around 4.59% (approximately 9000) residents identify themselves as non-UK nationals.</p> <p><u>Councillors:</u> - Equality monitoring for councillors is due to commence in February 2012.</p> <p><u>Officers</u> - In December 2011 96.4% of people employed by the Council were from a White British ethnic background, 0.9%, were from mixed/multiple ethnic groups, 1.9% were from Asian/Asian British ethnic groups, 0.5% were from Black/African/Caribbean/Black British ethnic groups and 0.3% were from other ethnic groups.</p>	
<p>Religion and Belief</p>	<p><u>Residents</u> - The majority of respondents to the 2008 Warrington Place Survey were Christian (82%), with 13% saying they have no religion or belief, and 2% describing themselves as Buddhist, Muslim, Sikh, Jewish or other.</p> <p><u>Councillors:</u> - Equality monitoring for councillors is due to commence in February 2012.</p> <p><u>Officers:</u> - This data is currently being updated and will be available after 1/2/12.</p>	
<p>Sexual Orientation and Gender Reassignment</p>	<p><u>Residents:</u> - There is no statistically reliable data on the proportion of Warrington's residents who declare themselves as lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender. In the 2010 Warrington Together survey 91% of residents described themselves as heterosexual, 1% as lesbian, gay or bisexual and 8% did not respond.</p> <p><u>Councillors:</u> - Equality monitoring for councillors is due to commence in February 2012.</p> <p><u>Officers</u> - :- This data is currently being updated and will be available after 1/2/12.</p>	
<p>Pregnancy & Maternity</p>	<p><u>Residents:</u> - Between January and September 2011, there were 2,261 pregnant women in Warrington.</p> <p><u>Officers:</u> Information is limited at the present time however action will be taken during 2012 to improve collection of this data.</p>	
<p>Marriage and Civil Partnership</p>	<p><u>Residents:-</u> According to the 2001 census of the 16+ population there are 82,810 married people (54.7% of the total), 15,615 divorced (10.3%), 11,991 widowed (7.9%) and 40,853 single people (27%).</p>	

SECTION 3: Assessing the Impact

Equality Group	Key Evidence from the Stakeholder Profile	Relevant Evidence from the Consultation Process and potential equality impact	Suggested measures for consideration
Sex (Gender)	There are a higher number of female councillors than the national average	<p>The following evidence is relevant to all equality groups :-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councillors felt that the proposed new structure would improve transparency and inclusivity which could be viewed as a positive impact in terms of councillor engagement. One partner agency suggested that Executive Board should engage with and influence the wellbeing agenda. This suggestion could be viewed as a positive impact particularly for the disability and age equality groups. A Parish Council commented that the cut in the number of scrutiny committees could lead to decreased accountability for Executive Board. This could potentially have a negative impact on some equality groups. A number of stakeholders suggested that appropriate representation from partner organisations be integrated into the decision making structure. This could be viewed as a positive impact if partner organisations that represented different equality groups were included as co-optees in the new structure 	<p>The following suggested measures are relevant to all equality groups and address some of the issues identified in the stakeholder profile and evidence received from the consultation process:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In order to ensure that the new structure is accessible it is suggested that it be widely promoted to all stakeholders including residents and staff. This will also help to ensure that decision making is transparent. That the protocols contained within the constitution relating to public questions be reviewed to improve public engagement in the decision making process. Revised protocols could encourage more residents to ask questions at committee meetings. Research is undertaken with regard to the use of social media to promote decision making and increase accessibility to councillors. That all documentation relating to council committees be written in a clear easy to read style and offered in alternative formats/languages on request.
Disability	The number of residents claiming disability living allowance is slightly above the national average		
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of older people is expected to rise significantly over the coming years The average age of a councillor is lower than the national average 		
Race	The majority of the population identify themselves as White British. The % of the population who identified themselves as belonging to other groups is significantly lower than the national average. There is also a % of the population who identify themselves as non UK nationals		
Religion/Belief			

Sexual Orientation And Gender Reassignment			
Pregnancy & Maternity			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That Committee report templates be revised to include a brief EIA with each report in addition to the existing summary of equality actions contained in reports.
Marriage and Civil Partnership			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That consideration be given to the formation of agendas for the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to ensure that key priorities are addressed and Executive Board and other partners are held to account. • That consideration is given to the inclusion of stakeholders on the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Policy Committees that include representation from older peoples, disability and ethnic minority groups. • That consideration be given to the membership of Committees and the appointment of Chairs to ensure that they are balanced in terms of gender and age

WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

Constitutional Sub Committee

16 October 2012

Report of the: Solicitor to the Council

Report Author: Bryan Magan, Head of Democratic and Member Services

Contact Details: **Email Address:** **Telephone:**
bmagan@warrington.gov.uk 01925 44 2120

Ward Members: All

TITLE OF REPORT: EXECUTIVE BOARD AND COMMITTEE REVIEW

1. PURPOSE

To consider the matters contained in this report before the Council meeting on 29th October 2012.

2. CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT

2.1 This report is not confidential or exempt.

3. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

3.1 The Council Meeting held on 10 September 2012:

- a. endorsed the proposal to establish four Policy Committees and one Scrutiny Committee and to delete the five existing Overview and Scrutiny Committees from the current Committee Structure as detailed in Appendix 1a & 1b;
- b. adopted in principle the draft Terms of Reference for the four Policy Committees and the Scrutiny Committee as detailed in Appendix 2;
- c. requested that this Sub Committee consider the matters contained in this report before the Council meeting on 29th October 2012;
- d. requested a further report to be submitted to the Council meeting to be held on 29th October 2012 to address further the issues of remuneration, to further consider the Terms of Reference for the four Policy Committees and to establish a commencement date for the proposed new structure.

3.2 The Council Meeting noted that during the last municipal year a review of the Council's Executive Board arrangements and committee structure was undertaken. This was led by Councillor Russ Bowden as Executive Board Member, Corporate Resources and Assignments.

- 3.3 The initial aim of that review was to ensure that the Executive Board operated effectively and that the portfolio roles and responsibilities were appropriate for effective decision making.
- 3.4 The second aim of the review was to ensure that an environment was created that led to greater member involvement in consultation, policy development and scrutiny and that this would lead to a more inclusive decision making process.
- 3.4.1 Full Council noted that although the decision making authority of the Council would remain with the Executive Board:
- there is potential to seek greater involvement of Members in the development of policy, strategy and recommendations; and
 - that this aspect of the review focused on a re-organisation of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee structure and appropriate amendments to the Council Constitution and Committee Terms of Reference.
- 3.5 The review encouraged high levels of participation of members of all political groups through a series of workshops, papers presented to the Executive Board, this Sub Committee, and Audit and Corporate Governance Committee. Wider public engagement and feedback was sought through Neighbourhood Boards, Parish Councils, partnership networks and on the Council's website.

4. CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS

- 4.1 The Council's current governance arrangements were established as a consequence of the requirements of the Local Government Act 2000 ('the 2000 Act'). In broad terms the 2000 Act required the majority of local authorities to abandon the pre existing committee system and to adopt a new governance model. In common with many authorities Warrington Borough Council adopted a form of governance, the key feature of which has been a Leader and Executive.
- 4.2 Leader and Executive arrangements are characterised by the following features. First, the majority of decisions must be taken by the Executive itself, subject to certain specified matters being reserved to either full Council or the Council's regulatory Committees. Second, the Executive's activities are monitored by one or more Overview and Scrutiny Committees. In the case of Warrington there are five such Committees. Members of Overview and Scrutiny Committees cannot simultaneously be members of an Executive.
- 4.3 The 2000 Act has been amended on a number of occasions since it received Royal Assent, not least by the Localism Act 2011. This most recent Act provides councils generally with more flexibility to determine their own governance arrangements. As indicated above the current proposals utilise those flexibilities to foster enhanced member involvement in policy and decision making but without departing from the formal Leader and Executive model.

- 4.4 Any changes to the Council's governance must be made in accordance with the requirements of the existing Constitution. The change proposals made in this report are put forward in compliance with those requirements.

5. FEEDBACK FROM CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Responses were received from Elected Members and a variety of partners.
- 5.2 In the main there was support for the proposals. In particular, the potential for financial savings on governance, greater transparency and inclusivity of members have been cited as positives in the proposed revised structure. Feedback from Councillors attending the Member Briefing Sessions was positive. It was felt that the Policy Committees would add value and the proposals presented a more inclusive model. Members commented that the current system led to some feeling left out of the decision making process.
- 5.2.1 It was further considered that the new model, once implemented, could be more supportive of Executive Board members. Former Executive Board members commented it would be useful to have a team/policy group, to explore issues with and the Policy Committees would provide for this and across all political groups. The Committees were also seen as a good opportunity for all political groups to work and learn together.
- 5.2.2 However, one Parish Councillor did have concerns about the proposals and did not see any benefits to implementing any changes to the current arrangements.

Executive Board

- 5.3 Specific comments were made in relation to the Executive Board – asking the question 'will the reduction in the number of Executive Board members mean that it will be 'spreading itself too thinly?'; and that all Executive Board members be encouraged to engage and influence the "wellbeing" agenda.
- 5.4 Suggestions were also made on potential Portfolio responsibilities. This included one for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Social Care that included public health and public protection; Children, Young People and Skills; Resources, Improvement and Efficiency; Review the existing portfolios that relate to the Environment and Regeneration Directorate and replace with Environment, Transport and Climate Change and Economy, Development and Growth.

Overview & Scrutiny (OSC)

- 5.5 A range of comments were received about the proposed reduction to one OSC. Elected members felt that the current arrangements had not been as effective as they could have been and welcomed a change to a new set of policy committees. External bodies raised a general concern that the reduction in the number of Overview and Scrutiny Committees may lead to a limitation on transparency and openness in decision making. If the Council was to move to a single OSC then its terms of reference needed to be

clearly articulated to ensure that it focused on priority issues and that this might include a remit to explore health and wellbeing issues.

Policy Committees

- 5.6 The proposal for the shift to Policy Committees was welcomed. Suggestions that one committee should have responsibilities for economy, business and major development; that housing issues be given more prominent role in the work of one of the committees and that all committees should optimise partnership working.

Other Comments

- 5.7 Appropriate representation on the Policy Committees should be sought and this for example might be through the wider use of co-optees. Further clarity is also needed on Parish Council Liaison, and where this will be considered under the new arrangements. It was also suggested that the proposals should ensure that the policy committees work effectively with, for example, the Health and Wellbeing Board, Local Enterprise Partnership and Local Nature Partnerships.

6. EXECUTIVE BOARD

- 6.1 Members will recall that the size of the Executive Board was reduced from ten to nine at the Council's Annual Meeting on 21 May 2012. The present proposals maintain that reduction in size.
- 6.2 The present proposals do not change the status of the Executive Board or the Regulatory Committees as the Council's main decision making bodies.
- 6.3 The proposals do provide members with new opportunities to engage with each other to enable greater participation in the development of policy and decision making. For example, whilst Executive Board Members would and could not be members of Policy Committees their attendance at relevant Policy Committees would be encouraged.

7. THE POLICY COMMITTEES AND OSC

- 7.1 One of the central features of the Executive form of governance is the statutory requirement for there to be Overview and Scrutiny arrangements. The formal position under section 21 of the 2000 Act (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) is that Executive arrangements must include provision for the appointment of one or more committees referred to as overview and scrutiny committees.
- 7.2 Overview and scrutiny functions are further defined in section 21 of the 2000 Act. Those functions include the review and scrutiny of decisions made by the Executive and also include the function of making reports and recommendations upon Executive and other functions.
- 7.3 The comments made in paragraph 5.5 above in relation to the effectiveness of

current arrangements and a potential loss of transparency can be fully addressed by the current proposals.

- 7.4 In particular the Policy Committees' Terms of Reference have been drafted specifically to enable those Committees to address issues before they are submitted to Executive Board, thus moving towards a greater degree of 'pre scrutiny' than has historically been the case. The Terms of Reference will be such that the Committees are able to discharge their functions flexibly and imaginatively within their defined areas of activity.
- 7.5 The one remaining Committee formally designated as a Scrutiny Committee will have the function of dealing with any 'call ins' together with those priority issues alluded to in paragraph 5.5 above.
- 7.6 Proposed terms of reference for the Policy Committees and Overview and Scrutiny committee are attached at Appendix 2. The current Council and Committee structure is shown in diagrammatic form at Appendix 1a with the proposed structure shown at Appendix 1b.

8. REMUNERATION

- 8.1 At its meeting on 26 March 2012 the Council agreed a Scheme of Members Allowances for the period 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013. The relevant regulations permit in year changes to be made to a Scheme.
- 8.2 Whilst the Scheme and its content are ultimately matters for full Council decision, the Council can only adopt a Scheme, or a revised Scheme, having first considered the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel ('IRP').
- 8.3 Further work is under way with the Independent Remuneration Panel to develop their understanding of the proposed changes and to obtain their views as to the levels of Special Responsibility Allowances, which would be appropriate under the new committee arrangements. Any formal recommendations made by the Panel will be presented to a future meeting.

9 PRACTICALITIES OF IMPLEMENTATION

- 9.1 Given that the proposals contained in this report represent a revision of the Constitution they must be approved by a majority of the Members present at the relevant meeting (see Article 14 of the Constitution).
- 9.2 There are two practical issues in implementing these proposals. The first relates to remuneration. The Council will not be able to make final decisions upon this matter until it receives a recommendation from the IRP.
- 9.3 The second issue is that of enabling the existing Overview and Scrutiny Committees to conclude their activities and the new Policy Committees and the Scrutiny Committee to take up their new responsibilities efficiently.
- 9.4 Those considerations imply that the new arrangements could be implemented

for the new civic year in 2013.

10. CONCLUSION

10.1 The key features of these proposals are the establishment of the four new Policy Committees and the removal of the existing Overview and Scrutiny Committees. The package of proposals provides positive basis for delivery of the More effective operation of the Executive Board and greater member involvement in consultation, policy development and scrutiny.

11. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Subject to the recommendations of the IRP and further consideration by full Council on 29 October 2012 – the conclusion of which is to be accommodated within existing resources.

12. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY / EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

12.1 The aim of the review is to encourage inclusive and full participation of all members. A full Equality Impact Assessment is enclosed as Appendix 3.

13. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

13.1 To progress the review of the Council’s Executive Board arrangements and committee structure consistent with the procedural requirements of the Local Government Act 2000, the Localism Act 2011 and the Council’s Constitution.

14. RECOMMENDATION

14.1 That the Sub Committee consider the matters contained in this report before the Council meeting on 29 October 2012.

11.	Clearance Details:				
		Name	Consulted		Date Approved
Yes			No		
	Chair of Constitution Sub Committee	Councillor Fitzsimmons	√		4/10/12
	SMB				
	Relevant Executive Director	Katherine Fairclough			
	Solicitor to the Council	Ian Mason	√		3/10/12
	S151 Officer	Lynton Green			
	Relevant Assistant Director	n/a			

APPENDIX 2

PROPOSED TERMS OF REFERENCE – POLICY COMMITTEES AND OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The following terms of reference for the proposed Policy Committees could most logically be placed within the Constitution after pages 65 – 68 which describe the responsibilities of the Executive.

“4. Responsibilities of the Policy Committees

General Responsibilities

- 4.1 There will be four Policy Committees (“Protecting The Most Vulnerable”, “Supporting The Local Economy”, “Building Strong Communities” and “Organisational Improvement and Development”). Each will discharge functions under Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 other than in respect of functions under the Council’s call-in procedures relevant to their area of activity.
- 4.2 Each of the Policy Committees will assist the Council and the Executive Board in developing the Council’s policies relevant to their area of activity.
- 4.3 Each of the Policy Committees will, other than in circumstances where it is impractical to do so, consider matters due to be submitted to the Executive Board and are authorised to make recommendations to the Executive Board upon such matters relevant to their area of activity.”

The areas of activity for each of the Policy Committees are as follows:-

4.4 **PROTECTING THE MOST VULNERABLE**

This Policy Committee will assist the Council in the development of policies and delivery of services in accordance with its general responsibilities in relation to:-

The protection and safeguarding of vulnerable adults, children and young people

Regulatory services protecting people from harm

Health and Well being

Prevention, early help, family support, safeguarding and looked after children

Without prejudice to the generality of its functions the Committee shall consider:-

The way in which services can be best focussed upon those at greatest risk and with a view to supporting preventative action

Means by which resources and services can be directed to where they can make the most difference

Means by which disabled children and adults and their families to choose their own care and support services

Ways in which children in care can be healthy, safe and will enjoy and achieve

How to promote better ways of working, encouraging closer working between different professionals and better work with partners to provide more seamless services with improved outcomes including interface with the National Health Service and integration

The development of a fairer charging system for all members of the community

Means by which to break the cycle of deprivation and close the inequalities gap in the Borough

Means by which the people of the Borough feel valued as citizens and are able to be healthy, active, safe and prosperous

4.5 SUPPORTING THE LOCAL ECONOMY

This Policy Committee will assist the Council in the development of policies and delivery of services in accordance with its general responsibilities in relation to:-

The development and implementation of cultural activities

The improvement of economic opportunities for residents

Employment skill and apprenticeships

Economic partnerships and growth

Regeneration

Infrastructure improvement and development

Without prejudice to the generality of its functions the Committee shall consider:-

Ways in which to promote Warrington as a destination of choice

Means by which to promote the Borough's economic profile and its excellent business links to support a resilient local economy and local growth

Ways of working with partners to develop training and career changing opportunities

Means by which to create employment opportunities and how to continue to offer quality apprenticeships and supporting employers in the Borough to promote apprenticeships

Means by which to create a strong and vibrant town centre and prepare for future regeneration

Means by which to increase the amount of money the Council spends with local businesses

Means by which to support local businesses to compete for Council contracts and to evaluate the impact on local jobs when awarding Council contracts

4.6 BUILDING STRONG COMMUNITIES

This Policy Committee will assist the Council in the development of policies and delivery of services in accordance with its general responsibilities in relation to:-

The Council's contribution to improving community safety

The delivery of neighbourhood services

Scrutiny of matters relating to the Police Commissioner

Waste collection and disposal services

Reduction of the Council's carbon footprint

Contact with Parish Councils

Without prejudice to the generality of its functions the Committee shall consider:-

How to focus support on those communities in greatest need, helping individuals and families to live as successful lives as possible

The provision of active leadership to all partners in working towards good health and well-being for the people of Warrington and their communities

Means of working in partnership to develop more effective ways to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour and to reduce the fear of crime

How to encourage educational achievement and promote access to learning skills and employment to improve skills and life chances

Means by which to support community action and the transfer of buildings and other assets to community ownership

Means of supporting an active voluntary sector and volunteering

Means of working with Parish Councils and other representative groups to make best use of resources

4.7 ORGANISATIONAL IMPROVEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

This Policy Committee will assist the Council in the development of policies and delivery of services in accordance with its general responsibilities in relation to:-

The development and delivery of high performing effective accessible services

Human Resources policy

Workforce skills and learning

Telephony, digital and office accommodation strategies

Corporate Strategy and review of performance upon the Corporate Plan

Innovation, collaboration and new ways of working

Without prejudice to the generality of its functions the Committee shall consider:-

The opportunities for enabling easy access to the Council through implementing the single customer gateway programme

Issues relating to the development and improvement of community engagement and involvement activity.

5. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

- 5.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will discharge those functions arising under Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 associated with the Council's call-in procedures.
- 5.2 The Committee will assist the Council and the Executive in developing the Council's budget setting responsibilities.
- 5.3 Scrutiny of matters relating to Public Health.