

SWT Executive

Wednesday, 20th October, 2021,
6.15 pm



Somerset West
and Taunton

The John Meikle Room - The Deane
House

[SWT MEETING WEBCAST LINK](#)

Members: Federica Smith-Roberts (Chair), Derek Perry (Vice-Chair),
Chris Booth, Dixie Darch, Caroline Ellis, Ross Henley,
Marcus Kravis, Mike Rigby, Francesca Smith and
Andrew Sully

Agenda

1. Apologies

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting of the Executive

To approve the minutes of the previous meeting of the
Committee.

(Pages 5 - 10)

3. Declarations of Interest

To receive and note any declarations of disclosable
pecuniary or prejudicial or personal interests in respect of
any matters included on the agenda for consideration at this
meeting.

(The personal interests of Councillors and Clerks of
Somerset County Council, Town or Parish Councils and
other Local Authorities will automatically be recorded in the
minutes.)

4. Public Participation

The Chair to advise the Committee of any items on which
members of the public have requested to speak and advise
those members of the public present of the details of the
Council's public participation scheme.

For those members of the public who have submitted any
questions or statements, please note, a three minute time
limit applies to each speaker and you will be asked to speak
before Councillors debate the issue.

Temporary measures during the Coronavirus Pandemic

Due to the temporary legislation (within the Coronavirus Act 2020, which allowed for use of virtual meetings) coming to an end on 6 May 2021, the council's committee meetings will now take place in the office buildings within the John Meikle Meeting Room at the Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton. Unfortunately due to capacity requirements, the Chamber at West Somerset House is not able to be used at this current moment.

Following the Government guidance on measures to reduce the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19), the council meeting rooms will have very limited capacity. With this in mind, we will only be allowing those members of the public who have registered to speak to attend the meetings in person in the office buildings, if they wish (we will still be offering to those members of the public that are not comfortable in attending, for their statements to be read out by a Governance and Democracy Case Manager). Please can we urge all members of the public who are only interested in listening to the debate to view our live webcasts from the safety of their own home to help prevent the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19).

5. Executive Forward Plan

(Pages 11 - 12)

To receive items and review the Forward Plan.

6. Establishment of a Joint Committee in Somerset for the implementation of Local Government Reorganisation

(Pages 13 - 24)

This report is the responsibility of Councillor Federica Smith-Roberts, Leader of the Council.



**JAMES HASSETT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

Please note that this meeting will be recorded. You should be aware that the Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act 2018. Data collected during the recording will be retained in accordance with the Council's policy. Therefore unless you are advised otherwise, by taking part in the Council Meeting during Public Participation you are consenting to being recorded and to the possible use of the sound recording for access via the website or for training purposes. If you have any queries regarding this please contact the officer as detailed above.

Following Government guidance on measures to reduce the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19), we will be live webcasting our committee meetings and you are welcome to view and listen to the discussion. The link to each webcast will be available on the meeting webpage, but you can also access them on the [Somerset West and Taunton webcasting website](#).

If you would like to ask a question or speak at a meeting, you will need to submit your request to a member of the Governance Team in advance of the meeting. You can request to speak at a Council meeting by emailing your full name, the agenda item and your question to the Governance Team using governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk

Any requests need to be received by 4pm on the day that provides 2 clear working days before the meeting (excluding the day of the meeting itself). For example, if the meeting is due to take place on a Tuesday, requests need to be received by 4pm on the Thursday prior to the meeting.

The Governance and Democracy Case Manager will take the details of your question or speech and will distribute them to the Committee prior to the meeting. The Chair will then invite you to speak at the beginning of the meeting under the agenda item Public Question Time, but speaking is limited to three minutes per person in an overall period of 15 minutes and you can only speak to the Committee once. If there are a group of people attending to speak about a particular item then a representative should be chosen to speak on behalf of the group.

Please see below for Temporary Measures during Coronavirus Pandemic and the changes we are making to public participation:-

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Full Council, Executive, and Committee agendas, reports and minutes are available on our website: www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk

For further information about the meeting, please contact the Governance and Democracy Team via email: governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk

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SWT Executive - 15 September 2021

Present: Councillor Federica Smith-Roberts (Chair)

Councillors Chris Booth, Dixie Darch, Caroline Ellis, Ross Henley, Mike Rigby, Francesca Smith and Andrew Sully

Officers: James Hasset, James Barra, Alison North, Paul Fitzgerald, Marcus Prouse, Amy Tregellas, Clare Rendell, Simon Fox, Kerry Prisco, Malcolm Riches and Richard Sealy

Also Present: Councillors Simon Coles, Roger Habgood, Janet Lloyd, Ray Tully and Loretta Whetlor

(The meeting commenced at 6.15 pm)

36. **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors Marcus Kravis and Derek Perry.

37. **Minutes of the previous meeting of the Executive**

(Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 18 August 2021 circulated with the agenda)

Resolved that the minutes of the Executive held on 18 August 2021 be confirmed as a correct record.

38. **Declarations of Interest**

Members present at the meeting declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Councillor or Clerk of a County, Town or Parish Council or any other Local Authority:-

Name	Minute No.	Description of Interest	Reason	Action Taken
Cllr C Booth	All Items	Wellington and Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr C Ellis	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr M Rigby	All Items	SCC & Bishops Lydeard	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr F Smith	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr F Smith-Roberts	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr R Tully	All Items	West Monkton	Personal	Spoke

39. **Public Participation**

No members of the public had requested to speak on any item on the agenda.

40. **Executive Forward Plan**

(Copy of the Executive Forward Plan, circulated with the agenda).

Councillors were reminded that if they had an item they wanted to add to the agenda, that they should send their requests to the Governance Team.

Resolved that the Executive Forward Plan be noted.

41. **Corporate Performance Report, Quarter 1 2021/22**

During the discussion, the following points were raised:-

- Councillors thanked the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources for the report.
- Councillors were pleased that there were mainly positive outcomes detailed within the report.
- Concern was raised on the call waiting times; however, councillors were aware that there had been certain contributing factors to the delay in calls being answered.
The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources explained the reasons behind certain spikes in call waiting times. He congratulated the work that Customer Advisors had done and had empathy for them especially when dealing with difficult calls whilst working at home.
- Councillors suggested that there had not been enough publicity to advise customers that the offices were now open, which would allow them to come in and speak to a Customer Advisor face to face, rather than waiting for a phone call to be answered.
- Councillors highlighted the impact the Covid Pandemic had had on the performance figures and that they needed to be aware of the impact that it would have on the budget.
- Councillors agreed it was good to see lots of green indicators within the report and that there had been improvements, but they did not want to become complacent and suggested challenges needed to be set to further improve service delivery.
- Councillors agreed that it was disappointing to see the cases of fly tipping had increased, but they understood that it was probably as a result of the increased amount of missed waste collections due to the current lorry driver shortages.
- Councillors agreed that corporate performance was an important subject and that it was good to see that services had continued to be delivered throughout the Covid Pandemic.

Resolved the Executive considered the performance report.

42. **2021/22 General Fund Financial Monitoring as at Quarter 1 (30 June 2021)**

During the discussion, the following points were raised:-

- Concern was raised that the reserves had to be used to back fill the lost car park income and councillors queried whether this could be reclaimed from Central Government.
The Management Accounting and Reporting Lead advised that yes some of the lost income had been claimed back, however, not all of it could be, which meant that some of the reserves had to be used.
- Councillors highlighted that Somerset West and Taunton Council had faced so many challenges since its creation back in 2019, that it was great work to see a paper that was able to report some positive outcomes.

Resolved that the Executive:-

- a) reviewed and noted the Council's forecast financial performance and projected reserves position for 2021/22 financial year as at 30 June 2021.
- b) supported the transfer of £1.145m from the Budget Volatility and Risk Earmarked Reserve to contribute towards the estimated shortfall in parking income.
- c) approved a budget virement to realign Capital Budgets funded by Better Care Fund grant income.

43. **2021/22 Housing Revenue Account Financial Monitoring as at Quarter 1 (30 June 2021)**

During the discussion, the following points were raised:-

- Councillors highlighted that it was a challenging time for the construction industry, as many other sectors, it was facing hardship because of the Covid Pandemic.
The Portfolio Holder for Housing agreed, and shared the councillors concern as to whether the sector would ever fully recover.
- Councillors were sad to see the loss in income due to the meeting halls still being closed. They further queried when they would reopen for community use.
The Portfolio Holder for Housing advised that officers had made the decision to keep the meeting halls closed for the safety of all that used them. There was a rolling program planned to reopen them once they had all been deep cleaned and all the safety checks had been carried out.
- Councillors highlighted that compliance works were one of the biggest overspends and queried whether it would continue to cause a spend or whether it would level off as the works were completed.
The Portfolio Holder for Housing advised that compliance works would continue to cause a spend because as soon as one compliance project was finished, another would start, so it was a rolling program to ensure the Council's properties were safe.

Resolved that the Executive:-

- 2.1 reviewed and noted the HRA's forecast financial performance and projected reserves position for 2021/22 financial year as at 30 June 2021.

- 2.2 recommended that Full Council approved the reallocation of £869k of earmarked reserves to general reserves to support the Revenue Budget. [Note – this recommendation would be included in summary in the Financial Strategy report to Council 5 October 2021]
- 2.3 agreed in principle that the final pay award would be funded from General Reserves, and delegated authority to the Director of Housing and Communities and the S151 Officer to approve a supplementary budget funded from HRA general reserve to cover the 2021/22 estimated cost of the 2021/22 pay award once agreed.

44. **Monkton Heathfield: SS1 Policy Area and MH2 Concept Plan and Design Principles**

During the discussion, the following points were made:-

- Councillors were surprised to see that the Masterplan would not be adopted but understood the reasons behind the decision and that it had also gone out to public consultation for feedback.
The Major Projects Officer advised that when drafting the recommendations, he had been careful not to place Somerset West and Taunton Council in a negative position.
- Councillors wanted assurance that officers had the 'tools' to ensure that developers adhered to certain standards for any works carried out.
The Major Projects Officer advised that officers had many other documentation to assist and guide developers, which included the District Design Guide along with the Garden Town Design Guide.
- Concern was raised on changes made by the developers near the end of phase one which were different to what the developers originally planned for. Councillors wanted to ensure that any changes developers made would not have a negative impact on any development.
The Major Projects Officer gave clarification on the different factors that could impact on developers and their original planning obligations.
- Councillors queried whether ecological standards could be added to planning documentation, such as the Garden Town Design Guide.
The Major Projects Officer advised that ecological standards could be discussed and added to documentation, however, decisions would need to be made on which areas of development were a priority, for example, education, transport, ecology.
- Concern was raised that the district centre was still empty in the phase one area and councillors queried whether this was a risk for the phase two area.
The Major Projects Officer agreed that it was a key issue. He further explained that most housing developers were not necessarily experts in developing a district centre, but they normally worked with partners to fulfil that obligation. There were mechanisms in place, but officers could not force businesses to set up in an area designated for a district centre.
- Councillors were keen to ensure zero carbon methods of construction were used throughout the district.
- Councillors felt confident that officers had the correct framework in place to guide developers to the level of standards and quality that was expected of them and would be adhered to across the whole of the district.

- The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation thanked officers for their work and for the comments made by councillors. He agreed that work always needed to be reviewed to ensure the best work was achieved.

Resolved that the Executive agreed having taken into account the comments received to the consultation and in the light of national guidance, that the Council did not proceed to adopt the SS1 Policy area Framework Plan, the draft MH2 Concept Plan and the draft MH2 Design Guidance as a material planning consideration in the determination of planning proposals.

45. **Monkton Heathfield: Land South of Manor Farm, Langaller – Masterplan and Development Guide**

Agenda item 10 was discussed jointly with agenda item 9, please see minutes as above.

Resolved that the Executive approved having reassessed the situation and taken into account the comments received to the consultation and in the light of national guidance, that the Council did not proceed to formally approve the Masterplan and Development Guide to inform pre-application discussions.

(The Meeting ended at 7.30 pm)

EXECUTIVE

Executive Meeting	Draft Agenda Items	Lead Officer
20 October 2021	To consider a proposal for a Local Government Reorganisation Joint Committee	Amy Tregellas/Kevin Williams
venue =		
Exec RD = 8 October		
Informal Exec RD = 7 September		
SMT RD = 24 August		
17 November 2021	Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Review	Scott Weetch
venue =	Public Realm Design Guide for Taunton Garden Town – Feedback	Fiona Webb
Exec RD = 5 November	Somerset West and Taunton Districtwide Design Guide	Fiona Webb
Informal Exec RD = 5 October	North Taunton CPO	Chris Brown/ Jane Windebank
SMT RD = 22 September		
15 December 2021	Financial Performance 2021/22 Q2	Paul Fitzgerald
venue =	Corporate Performance Report Q2	Malcolm Riches
Exec RD = 3 December	Tower Street	Natalie Kirbyshire
Informal Exec RD = 2 November	Housing Revenue Account 2022/23 Draft Budget Update	Emily Collacott
SMT RD = 20 October	Firepool Design Guidance and Masterplan	Graeme Thompson/Tim Bacon
	General Fund 2022/23 Draft Budget Update	Emily Collacott
19 January 2022	CCTV	Sally Parry/Scott Weetch
venue =	Housing Revenue and Capital Budget Setting 2022/23 including Dwelling Rent	Paul Fitzgerald
	Setting 2022/23 and 30 Year Business Plan Review	
Exec RD = 7 January	Longforth Masterplan	Sarah Povall
Informal Exec RD = 30 November	Marina Lease	Andrew Pritchard/New AD
SMT RD = 17 November	Employment Land Feasibility Study in West Somerset	Robert Downes
Budget - 9 February 2022	General Fund Revenue Budget and Capital Estimates 2022/23	Paul Fitzgerald
venue =	Council Tax Setting 2022/23	Paul Fitzgerald
Exec RD = 28 January		
Informal Exec RD = 4 January		

SMT RD = 8 December		
16 February 2022		
venue =		
Exec RD = 4 February		
Informal Exec RD = 4 January		
SMT RD = 8 December		
16 March 2022		
venue =	Financial Performance 2021/22 Q3	Emily Collacott
Exec RD = 4 March	Capital, Investment and Treasury Strategy 2022/23	Paul Fitzgerald
Informal Exec RD = 1 February	Corporate Performance Report Q3	Malcolm Riches
SMT RD = 19 January		
20 April 2022		
venue =		
Exec RD = 6 April		
Informal Exec RD = 8 March		
SMT RD = 23 February		

Report Number: SWT 90/21

Somerset West and Taunton Council

Executive – 20 October 2021

Establishment of a Joint Committee in Somerset for the implementation of Local Government Reorganisation

This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Federica Smith-Roberts, Leader of the Council

Report Authors: James Hassett, Chief Executive and Alison North, Director of Internal Operations

1. Executive Summary / Purpose of the Report

1.1 On 21 July 2021 the Secretary of State announced his decision to implement, subject to parliamentary approval, a proposal submitted by the Somerset County Council (the “Council”) for a single unitary council covering the whole of the administrative county of Somerset.

1.2 It is anticipated that the main enabling legislation (the Structural Changes Order”) will be laid before Parliament to consider from January 2022 and will take effect in March 2022. The Structural Change Order (SCO) will establish an Implementation Executive (an executive committee) which will be responsible for preparing for and facilitating the transfer of each of the Somerset councils’ (“Constituent Councils”) functions, property, assets, rights, liabilities and investments to the unitary council as well as various other transitional functions pending the establishment of the unitary council in April 2023.

1.3 There are a number of actions and decisions (set out in further detail below) that will need to be taken by the Constituent Councils before the establishment of the Implementation Executive in order to provide collaborative oversight of the implementation and to deal with ancillary matters arising where liaison with the new Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) is needed (the DLUHC has replaced the former Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government). The leaders of each of the Constituent Councils endorse the need for a joint committee to be established to provide collaborative democratic oversight and transparency for these actions and decisions.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Executive agree to the establishment of a Local Government Reorganisation joint committee (the LGR Joint Committee) together with the county and district councils in Somerset constituted in accordance with, and having the functions set out in, the terms of reference attached at Appendix 1 (“Terms of Reference”).

3. Reasons for Recommendations

3.1 The establishment of the LGR Joint Committee will create a collaborative democratic mechanism which will establish a governance framework allowing the Constituent Councils (the County Council and four District Councils) to make effective and timely decisions in relation to the preparation for the establishment of the unitary council in Somerset. This will ensure that progress is made in the management of the implementation programme and that related decisions of the five councils are collaborative, open, transparent, and democratically accountable.

3.2 The proposals set out in this report will also positively respond to DLUHC’s expectations for collaborative arrangements to be established as early as possible in the implementation programme.

3.3 Joint committee arrangements are already well established by the councils previously such as the Heart of the South Joint Committee and the Somerset Waste Board.

3.4 Other options considered

a) The alternative is for the Constituent Councils to continue to co-operate in an informal manner. However, such an approach would inevitably slow progress as decision making will need to take place as part of each council’s democratic arrangements which meet on different frequencies. This may also lead to discrepancies in the approaches adopted by each council.

4 Background and Full details of the Report

4.1 Following the Secretary of State’s decision, extensive collaborative work has been undertaken by the five councils to support the implementation of the single unitary council in April 2023. Through partnership the programme governance arrangements have been jointly established with oversight and direction from the Somerset leaders and chief executives.

4.2 The proposed LGR Joint Committee will operate in accordance with the Terms of Reference (see Appendix 1). These set out the various functions that the Joint Committee will exercise on behalf of the Constituent Councils, together with the membership of the Joint Committee and its meeting and voting arrangements.

4.3 The functions to be exercised by the LGR Joint Committee have been designed to align with the potential functions of the Implementation Executive that are likely to be set out by DLUHC in the SCO.

4.4 Broadly, it will be for the LGR Joint Committee to oversee the implementation Plan for the new unitary authority. The LGR Joint Committee will oversee liaison with the new DLUHC and the development of the new unitary council's constitution. During the transition period it will also need to develop organisational and partnership policies and protocols to support the implementation of the unitary council.

4.5 It is proposed that the LGR Joint Committee's meetings will be open to the public to attend in venues around the county.

4.6 Finally, it is proposed that the LGR Joint Committee will be consulted, and have an opportunity to make representations to the Constituent Councils in relation to the setting of 2022/23 annual budgets and any medium term financial plans.

4.7 The leaders of the Constituent Councils have separately expressed a wish to set up a joint scrutiny committee to oversee the work of the LGR Joint Committee. However, while the LGR Joint Committee will exercise executive functions only and can therefore be established by executive decision by each council's Cabinet, a joint scrutiny committee may only be established following each of the five council's considering that decision at their full council meetings in November/December. Subject to approval to the formation of the LGR Joint Committee, the proposal for a LGR Joint Scrutiny Committee will then be pursued further.

5 Links to Corporate Strategy

5.1 The implementation of the proposals in the business case ("Business Case") approved by the Secretary of State will support the strategic objective to develop and deliver effective communications, consultation and engagement which listens to and engages with our residents and stakeholders and is central to the delivery of our services, strategies and plans.

6 Finance / Resource Implications

6.1 The financial implications of this decision are limited. Under the Terms of Reference Somerset County Council will act as the Administering Authority for the LGR Joint Committee during the months between its establishment and the creation of the Implementation Executive under the SCO.

6.2 Once established the LGR Joint Committee will have powers, using any delegated budgets, to agree spending commitments during the transition period to support the implementation of the unitary council. However, these commitments will be subject to their own decision-making procedure. It is proposed that the five councils support the LGR Joint Committee with developing a 2023/24 budget for the unitary council.

6.3 The creation of a Joint Committee will place a formal governance structure around the preparations for the implementation of the new unitary council.

7 Legal Implications

- 7.1 The LGR Joint Committee will be a joint committee of the executives of the Constituent Councils for the purposes of Part VI of the Local Government Act 1972 and Part 1, Chapter 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 and the provisions applicable to joint committees of the executive will apply to the LGR Joint Committee. The LGR Joint Committee will therefore exercise those functions delegated to it by the Constituent Councils on their behalf and without further (formal) recourse to them. These functions and proposed joint committee arrangements therefore only require approval by each council's executive / cabinet.
- 7.2 Each of the partners' legal teams and Monitoring Officers have been involved in the development of the Terms of Reference. The Terms of Reference set out the membership, functions and operations of the Joint Committee and the requirements upon the Constituent Councils in supporting it.
- 7.3 The HR implications relate to officer support for the Joint Committee. The Terms of Reference will appoint Somerset County Council as the Administering Authority for the Joint Committee. This activity will impact on the Finance, Legal and Governance service. The main implications will fall on the Monitoring Officer and the Democratic Services Group in terms of administering the meetings of the Joint Committee and the pre-meeting arrangements. In addition, it should be highlighted that collaborative support and advice from Finance, Legal and Governance services within the four district councils and the county council will also be provided to support the LGR Committee.
- 7.4 The associated costs of supporting the Joint Committee will be met from approved budgets made available for implementation of the unitary council business case.

8 Climate and Sustainability Implications

N/a

9 Safeguarding and/or Community Safety Implications

N/a

10 Equality and Diversity Implications

The Terms of Reference sets out that the Joint Committee will take decisions having regard for Human Rights law and for the Constituent Council's Public Sector Equality Duties. Before making any decision, the Joint Committee will take into account the equalities implications of that decision.

11 Social Value Implications

N/a

12 Partnership Implications

N/a

13 Health and Wellbeing Implications

N/a

14 Asset Management Implications

N/a

15 Data Protection Implications

N/a

16 Consultation Implications

The Terms of Reference have been discussed and endorsed by the Leaders and the Chief Executives of each of the Somerset Councils.

17 Scrutiny Comments

The proposed decision has not been considered by a Scrutiny Committee, however the Chair of Corporate Scrutiny Committee and the Chair of Community Scrutiny have been consulted on the proposals set out in this report.

Democratic Path: Executive

Reporting Frequency: Ad-hoc

List of Appendices

Appendix 1	LGR Joint Committee Terms of Reference
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Contact Officers

Name	Alison North
Email	a.north@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk
Name	Kevin Williams
Email	k.williams@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk

Appendix 1

Local Government Reorganisation Joint Committee – Terms of Reference

Purpose

1. Mendip District Council, Sedgemoor District Council, Somerset County Council, Somerset West and Taunton Council and South Somerset District Council will establish an executive joint committee, known as the Local Government Reorganisation Joint Committee (LGR Joint Committee) for the purpose of discharging the functions set out in paragraph 17 below in relation to the implementation of the Secretary of State's decision to implement a single tier of local government in Somerset and any related matters.
2. The LGR Joint Committee is a joint committee of the executives of the councils for the purposes of Part VI of the Local Government Act 1972 and Part 1, Chapter 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 and the provisions applicable to joint committees of the executive will apply to LGR Joint Committee.
3. The LGR Joint Committee will take decisions in accordance with the principles of good decision-making namely:
 - giving consideration to all options available;
 - having regard to due consultation;
 - giving consideration to professional advice from officers;
 - having clarity of aims and desired outcomes;
 - that the action proposed must be proportionate to the desired outcome;
 - having respect and regard for human rights and for the councils' Public Sector Equality Duties;
 - a presumption in favour of openness, transparency and accountability;
 - only relevant matters being taken into account;

- due weight being given to all material considerations (including opportunities and risks);
- proper procedures being followed.

Term

4. The LGR Joint Committee will exist until the provisions of the Structural Change Order (“SCO”) which establish the Implementation Executive (or another body named in the SCO) as the committee responsible for the discharge of the main transitional function throughout the period of transition to the new unitary council in Somerset come into effect.

Membership and voting

5. The LGR Joint Committee will be made up of 9 members drawn from the existing authorities as follows:
 - the Leader of Somerset County Council ex officio;
 - 4 other members of the executive of Somerset County Council (to be nominated by the Leader of that Council);
 - the Leaders of each of the 4 district councils ex officio.
6. Each member will have one vote.
7. In the event of a non-ex officio member of the LGR Joint Committee ceasing to be a member or executive member of their appointing council, that council shall appoint another member in their place.
8. Each council leader may designate members of their executive to act as substitutes for the member(s) appointed under paragraph 5 above if the appointed member(s) is unable to attend a meeting of the LGR Joint Committee. Substitutions may only be made on a meeting-by-meeting basis. Any substitutions must be notified to the Monitoring Officer of Somerset County Council by 9.00am on the day of the relevant meeting.
9. For the avoidance of doubt, it is a matter for the respective councils’ leaders to appoint their members/substitutes.

10. The Chairperson of the LGR Joint Committee will be the leader for the time being of Somerset County Council. The Vice Chairperson will be elected by the LGR Joint Committee at its inaugural meeting. If neither the Chairperson nor the Vice Chairperson are present, the LGR Joint Committee will elect a Chairperson for the meeting from the members present.
11. The quorum for the LGR Joint Committee will be 5 members, including at least 1 member from a district council. Unless the law provides otherwise, all matters shall be decided by a majority of the votes of the members present and voting; if there are equal numbers of votes for and against, the Chairperson of the meeting shall exercise a second, casting vote.

Meeting arrangements

12. Somerset County Council will act as administering authority to the LGR Joint Committee and provide all necessary governance support.
13. The LGR Joint Committee will meet at least monthly and otherwise as may be determined by the Chairperson. Where either a majority of members or at least three district council members submit a signed request for an extraordinary meeting in writing to the Chairperson (or the Vice-Chairperson in the absence or incapacity of the Chairperson), the Chairperson (or Vice-Chairperson as the case may be) must make arrangements to call an extraordinary meeting within 10 calendar days of receiving the request.
14. The administering authority will give notice of time, date and venue for the meetings in accordance with the provisions of the access to information requirements of the Local Government Act 2000 as amended and ensure compliance with The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.
15. At the inaugural and subsequent meetings of the LGR Joint Committee the standing orders of the LGR Joint Committee will be those of Somerset County Council. The LGR Joint Committee may at any time approve its own set of standing orders which will take effect thereafter or at such other time as the LGR Joint Committee may determine.
16. Meetings of the LGR Joint Committee could take place in a number of locations around the county of Somerset. The LGR Joint Committee will determine a programme of meeting locations for the period of its constitution at its inaugural and/or subsequent meetings.

Functions

17. The LGR Joint Committee will prepare for and facilitate the economic, effective, efficient and timely transfer of the councils' functions, property, assets, rights, liabilities and investments in relation to the reorganisation of local government in Somerset, and in particular will fulfil the following executive functions, at all times having regard to the duty to cooperate and to the views of the Local Government Reorganisation Advisory Board:

- Oversee the Implementation Plan for the unitary council;
- Agree the level of requests to be made to each Council for allocation from each council's revenue and capital allocations for the LGR Joint Committee, and subsequently the Implementation Executive to support delivery of the Implementation Plan;
- Agree the allocation of revenue and capital expenditure to be made for delivery of the Implementation Plan from the budget delegated by each council to the LGR Joint Committee, and subsequently the Implementation Executive
- Agree the form, function and constitution of Local Community Networks;
- Approval of joint submissions to MHCLG in relation to the preparation of the Structural Change Order and of any consequential orders and directions including those dealing with civic and ceremonial matters. This includes all matters relating to the transition of mayors, sheriffs, chartered trustees and insignia. For the avoidance of doubt:
 - (i) if the majority of county members or any district member votes against any particular proposed submission then, provided a request was made at the meeting when the decision was taken, those members may require their dissent and the reasons for it to be noted on that submission; and
 - (ii) if a majority of county members or district members vote against a submission that is approved by a majority of committee members, the submission will be deemed not to be a joint submission.
- Oversight of the development of the Constitution and the Schemes of Delegation for the unitary council to be established in Somerset;

- Approval of plans to align existing change activities across the councils;
- Development of the unitary council’s annual budget 2023/24 and the associated medium term financial plan;
- Development of policies for the unitary council and protocols across the five councils for use during the transition period to support the implementation of the unitary council and delivery of its annual budget 2023/24.
- Consultation on and an expectation that any comments arising from that consultation with the LGR Joint Committee will be taken into consideration by the councils’ executives in respect of the recommendations that they make to their full council on:
 - the budgets to be set by each of the councils for the financial years 2022/23 and any medium-term financial plan to be set by the councils (or any of them); and
 - any policies or plans to be implemented by any of the councils and which will have a material impact on the delivery of the Implementation Plan or the rights and/or obligations of the new unitary council in Somerset on its establishment.

Links between the LGR Joint Committee and other bodies of the Somerset Local Authorities

18. The councils will separately constitute a joint scrutiny committee or panel, the purpose of which will be to scrutinise the work of the LGR Joint Committee.
19. The LGR Joint Committee will receive advice from the LGR Advisory Board but for the avoidance of doubt will not be bound by its recommendations.

