

Somerset West and Taunton Council

Annual Council – 4 May 2021

Somerset West and Taunton Council Committees, Terms of Reference, Committee Allocation and Appointments to Committees

This matter is the responsibility of the Leader of the Council

Report Author: Amy Tregellas, Governance Manager and Monitoring Officer

1. Executive Summary / Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The Council Procedure Rules within the Council's Constitution require that the following items of business are transacted at the annual meeting of the Council:
- a) To decide which Committees to establish for the municipal year;
 - b) To decide the size and terms of reference of those Committees;
 - c) To decide the numerical allocation of seats to political groups on Committees in accordance with the political balance rules;
 - d) To make appointments to Committees
- 1.2 At the time of writing this report, two reports are going through the democratic process that would potentially amend the committee make-up, terms of reference, numerical allocation and appointment to Committees. Both reports are due to be considered by Special Full Council on the 29 April 2021 and relate to:
- a) The Council Governance Arrangements Working Group Report
 - b) Update to the Constitution Report
- 1.3 In light of the above, the recommendations for this report will be split into two options. The first option will make the assumption that there will be no changes from the 2020/2021 Municipal Year. The second option will make the assumption that the two reports going before Council on 29 April 2021 are approved and this will reflect the relevant changes.
- 1.4 The Monitoring Officer will ensure that an update note is published as an addendum to the Annual Council Meeting as soon as is practicable following the Special Council meeting on 29 April 2021.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Option 1
No changes from the 2020/2021 Municipal Year

The Council approves:

- a) The Committee structure as set out in section 4.2 of this report
- b) The size of each Committee as set out in section 4.4 of this report
- c) The Terms of Reference of those Committees as set out in Appendix A

- d) The numerical political allocation as set out in Appendix B
- e) The Councillor appointments to Committees as set out in Appendix C

2.2 Option 2

Changes arising from the Council Governance Arrangements Working Group Report and Update to the Constitution Report

The Council approves:

- a) The Committee structure as set out in section 4.3 of this report
- b) The size of each Committee as set out in section 4.6 of this report
- c) The Terms of Reference of those Committees as set out in Appendix D
- d) The numerical political allocation as set out in Appendix E
- e) The Councillor appointments to Committees as set out in Appendix F

3. **Risk Assessment**

- 3.1 If the Council doesn't allocate Councillors to Committee seats there would be a risk that the Council's business could not be transacted

4. **Background and Full details of the Report**

- 4.1 The Somerset West and Taunton Council Constitution sets out the matters which the Council must consider at the Annual Meeting.

Establishment of Committees for the 2021/22 Municipal Year

- 4.2 In the 2020/2021 Municipal Year (as well as having Full Council and Executive) the Committees were established as:

- Scrutiny Committee
- Audit, Governance and Standards Committee
- Planning Committee
- Licensing Committee

- 4.3 At the time of writing this report, a report from the Council Governance Arrangements Working Group is going through the democratic process, and is due to be considered by the Executive on 27 April 2021 and Special Full Council on the 29 April 2021. If the Council resolves to make the changes set out in the report, the Committees for the 2021/2022 Municipal Year would be, (in addition to the Full Council and Executive):

- Corporate Scrutiny Committee
- Community Scrutiny Committee
- Audit and Governance Committee
- Planning Committee
- Licensing Committee
- Standards Committee

Size and Terms of Reference for those Committees

- 4.4 The size of the Committee's set out in section 4.2, and as per the current Constitution are:

Committee	Size
Scrutiny Committee	15
Audit, Governance and Standards Committee	11
Planning Committee	15
Licensing Committee	15
Total Committee seats	56

4.5 The Articles and Terms of Reference for each Committee, based on Option 1 are set out in Appendix A to this report.

4.6 The size of the Committee's set out in section 4.3, if the recommendations in the Council Governance Arrangements Working Group report and Update to the Constitution Report are approved would be:

Committee	Size
Corporate Scrutiny Committee	15
Community Scrutiny Committee	15
Audit and Governance Committee	11
Planning Committee	11
Licensing Committee	11
Standards Committee	9
Total Committee seats	72

4.7 The Articles and Terms of Reference for each Committee, based on Option 2 are set out in Appendix D to this report.

The numerical allocation of seats to political groups on Committees in accordance with the political balance rules

4.8 The numerical allocation of seats to political groups on Committees for Option 1, can be found in Appendix B to this report.

4.9 The numerical allocation of seats to political groups on Committees for Option 2 can be found in Appendix E to this report.

4.10 In respect of both appendices they are based on 58 Councillors, following the resignation of Cllr Martin Hill. Due to the Coronavirus Regulations ending on 6 May 2021 and the possibility of Councils not being able to continue to hold virtual meetings after this date, we have brought forward the Annual Council Meeting to the 4 May 2021. However, this means it will now take place before the Trull, Pitminster and Corfe by-election being held on 6 May 2021. A further report on the numerical allocation will come back to the next Council meeting setting out the allocation of seats to political groups based on the full complement of 59 Councillors.

Appointments to Committees

4.11 The current appointments to Committees can be found in Appendix C to this report.

4.12 The schedule for appointments to Committees for Option 2 can be found in Appendix F to this report. Discussions are ongoing with Group Leaders and this can only be completed once the decision of Council on 29 April 2021 is known. As outlined in section 1.4, an addendum will be published as soon as is practicable after the 29 April 2021 meeting including an updated schedule of appointments.

5. **Links to Corporate Strategy – N/A**
6. **Finance / Resource Implications - None**
7. **Legal Implications - None**
8. **Climate and Sustainability Implications - None**
9. **Safeguarding and/or Community Safety Implications - None**
10. **Equality and Diversity Implications - None**
11. **Social Value Implications - None**
12. **Partnership Implications - None**
13. **Health and Wellbeing Implications - None**
14. **Asset Management Implications - None**
15. **Data Protection Implications - None**
16. **Consultation Implications - None**

Scrutiny/Executive Comments/Recommendation(s) – N/A as this is a Council Report

Democratic Path:

- **Scrutiny/Corporate Governance or Audit Committees – not applicable as Council function only**
- **Cabinet/Executive – not applicable as Council function only**
- **Full Council – Yes**

Reporting Frequency: Annually

List of Appendices

Appendix A	Option 1 - Articles and Terms of Reference for all Committees
Appendix B	Option 1 - The Political Allocation
Appendix C	Option 1 - Councillor appointments to Committee
Appendix D	Option 2 - Articles and Terms of Reference for all Committees
Appendix E	Option 2 - The Political Allocation
Appendix F	Option 2 - Councillor appointments to Committee

Contact Officers

Name	Amy Tregellas
Direct Dial	0300 304 8000
Email	a.tregellas@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk