

Report on	Council & Committee Governance Arrangements 2023-2027
Date of Meeting	Thursday 6 th April, 2023
Reporting Officer	J McGuckin, Head of Strategic Services & Engagement
Contact Officer	P Moffett, Assistant Director Org Development, Strategy and Performance

Is this report restricted for confidential business? If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	Yes	
	No	X

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To update committee members of the existing council and committee governance arrangements and those to be applied during the new Council term 2023-2027.
2.0	Background
2.1	The committee will be familiar with the council's form of governance in considering and arriving at decisions of council to be subsequently actioned by officers. Business has been transacted through a traditional committee system, where it is initially considered by one of its committees forming part of its governance decision-making framework and then recommendations presented to full Council in the form of minutes. In some instances, delegated authority on matters has been delegated to Committees, particularly on planning and licensing arrangements.
2.2.	Sec. 19 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 confirms that <i>"A Council must operate a committee system unless the council decides to operate executive arrangements or prescribed arrangements"</i> . The Council, however, may resolve to operate executive arrangements or prescribed arrangements and a decision to do so must be arrived upon by way of a qualified majority.
2.3	The traditional committee system of governance has facilitated the transaction of council business since its establishment on 1 st April 2015 and during the 'shadow' period leading to local government reform on the aforementioned date.
2.4	The traditional committee system method of decision making is summarised as; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Chair and Deputy Chair being nominated under Sch. 1 of the 2014 Act (i.e. d'Hondt) as positions of responsibility • Membership being filled under Sch. 2 of the 2014 Act (i.e. Quota of Greatest Remainder) • Establishment of as many Committees as is required • Committees having as many members a determined by council • Committees being able to appoint one or more sub-committee

3.0	Main Report																		
3.1	<p>Current committees, membership and those identified for the new Council term, 2023-2027 are as detailed;</p>																		
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3.2	<p>The Council's document, <i>Terms of Reference & Delegation to Committees</i>, sets out and confirms those matters referred to each committee for consideration and recommendation to Council. This is contained within the Council Constitution available from our website. The Policy & Resources Committee, in addition to the matters referred to it also considers issues that do not fall within the remit of any of the other committees.</p>																		
	<p><u>Meeting Arrangements</u></p>																		
3.3	<p>That the committee meetings to be held, as detailed (unless to avoid for example, public holidays);</p>																		
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3.4	<p>That the Council meeting is held on 4th Thursday of every month as confirmed within the Council Standing Orders. All meetings will be hybrid both in person and virtually, as the current provisions have been renewed for a further six months until 24th September 2023 and when an Assembly is operational, it is likely that the required legislation will be made permanent.</p>																		
	<p><u>Working Groups</u></p>																		
3.5	<p>During the 2019-2023 term, committees considered it necessary to establish a number of working groups of members to consider and make recommendations on a series of non-policy related and/or to help in the formulation of policy on a task and finish basis. Committees have chosen to establish working groups to progress issues through the former. Working Group membership extends to 10 members of Council from the relevant committee.</p>																		
3.6	<p>The working groups officially report to and make recommendations to the committee from which it is formed and does not have power to exercise on behalf of the council. Appendix A provides detail on the working groups established. Sec. 11 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 allows for establishment of one or more sub-committees, similar to that of working groups, by the relevant Committee.</p>																		

	<p>The working groups convened by committees and council and still in operation are detailed within Appendix A.</p> <p><u>Outside Bodies to Council</u></p> <p>3.7 The current outside bodies to which Council has representation are accessible on our website via the following Link to Outside bodies</p> <p><u>Pre-Election Period of Sensitivity</u></p> <p>3.8 Attached at Appendix B for members information is NILGA’s advice for the pre-election period of sensitivity which will commence on 6th April. While the status of the information is “guidance”, it is recognised as good practice and has been implemented by previous Councils.</p>
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: not applicable
	Human: not applicable
	Risk Management: not applicable
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: Consideration given to these aspects in line with Local Government Act 2014 requirements.
	Rural Needs Implications: not applicable
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	<p>That the committee reviews and approves the Council and Committee governance arrangements for new council term 2023-2027 agreeing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the operation of a traditional committee system of governance • the committee membership as outlined under 3.1
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	<p>Appendix A: Mid Ulster District Council Working Groups (current)</p> <p>Appendix B: Pre-Election Period of Sensitivity</p>