

Advice note: Committees

General

A council can appoint one or more committees for the purpose of discharging its functions.

A Committee, unless otherwise directed by the Council, may arrange for the discharge of its functions by a subcommittee.

If the council delegates functions to a committee, the decision of the committee does not need to be ratified by the Council. Note: there are functions that cannot be delegated i.e. the setting of the precept.

The members and terms of office of a committee are fixed by the Council.

Any arrangements made by a local council or its committee(s) for the discharge of functions by a committee or subcommittee do not prevent the council or parent-committee from continuing to exercise those functions.

Committee composition

The number of members is determined by the council. A committee (but not a finance committee) may include persons not elected to be councillors (co-opted committee members).

Non-councillor members do not have voting rights.

Persons co-opted to the council as council members are classed as elected councillors.

Membership will not continue beyond the next annual council meeting.

Operational considerations

The Council may make standing orders for a committee.

The desirable minimum quorum is 3.

The same rules that apply to a council meeting apply to committee meetings.

- The meeting is open to the public. Exceptions apply.
- The agenda must be published three working days before.
- Minutes are produced.
- Decisions are made by voting and the majority vote prevails.
- The chairman of the committee has a second vote where there is an equality in votes.

If the committee has not been given the power to decide a particular matter, it sends its decision as a recommendation to the Council.

The Council can overturn the decision of a committee via existing standing orders.

The Council determines the frequency at which the committee meets. There are no statutory requirements as there is with full council meetings (the annual meeting plus three others as a minimum)