



# ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCIL GOVERNANCE

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

REPORT 83/13

14 OCTOBER 2013

The purpose of this report is to ask Members to consider if they wish to enter a corporate view of the options currently being consulted on about future governance arrangements for County Councillors' decision making structures.

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**No.    DETAIL**

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**1)    BACKGROUND**

- a) The new administration's *Framework for Change* document expressed the need for changes to member level decision making processes so that they would be more open, more transparent, provide an opportunity for all members to have input to policy development and allow individual members to raise issues for consideration by the Cabinet.
  - b) The Annual Meeting of the Full Council established a *Constitution Review Working Party* to propose arrangements meeting these criteria to come into effect from the Annual Council Meeting of 19 March 2019.
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**2)    OPTIONS**

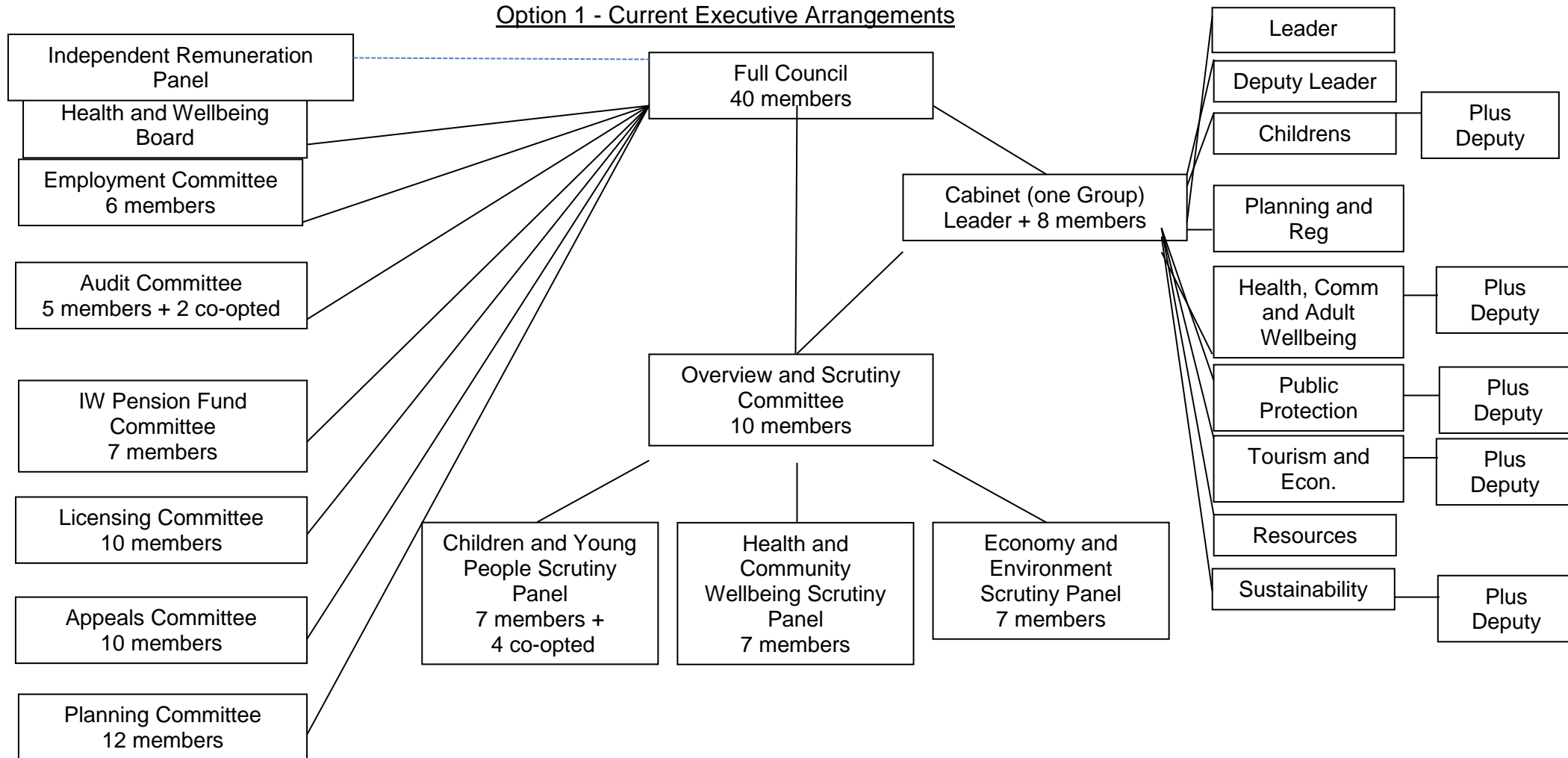
- a) The Working Party has considered three options and assessed each in respect of transparency, accountability, inclusiveness and member/officer resources.
  - b) The three options are attached to this report.
  - c) They are now open to consultation with members of the public and Town and Parish Councils until 31 October with the results being reported to the November meeting of the full Council.
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**3)    RECOMMENDATION**

- a) A web-based survey for recording responses has been provided and is available [here](#).
  - b) In addition to the opportunity to respond individually, Members are recommended to consider whether they would wish to enter a corporate response from Ventnor Town Council and, if so, to determine what it should be.
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# APPENDIX 1

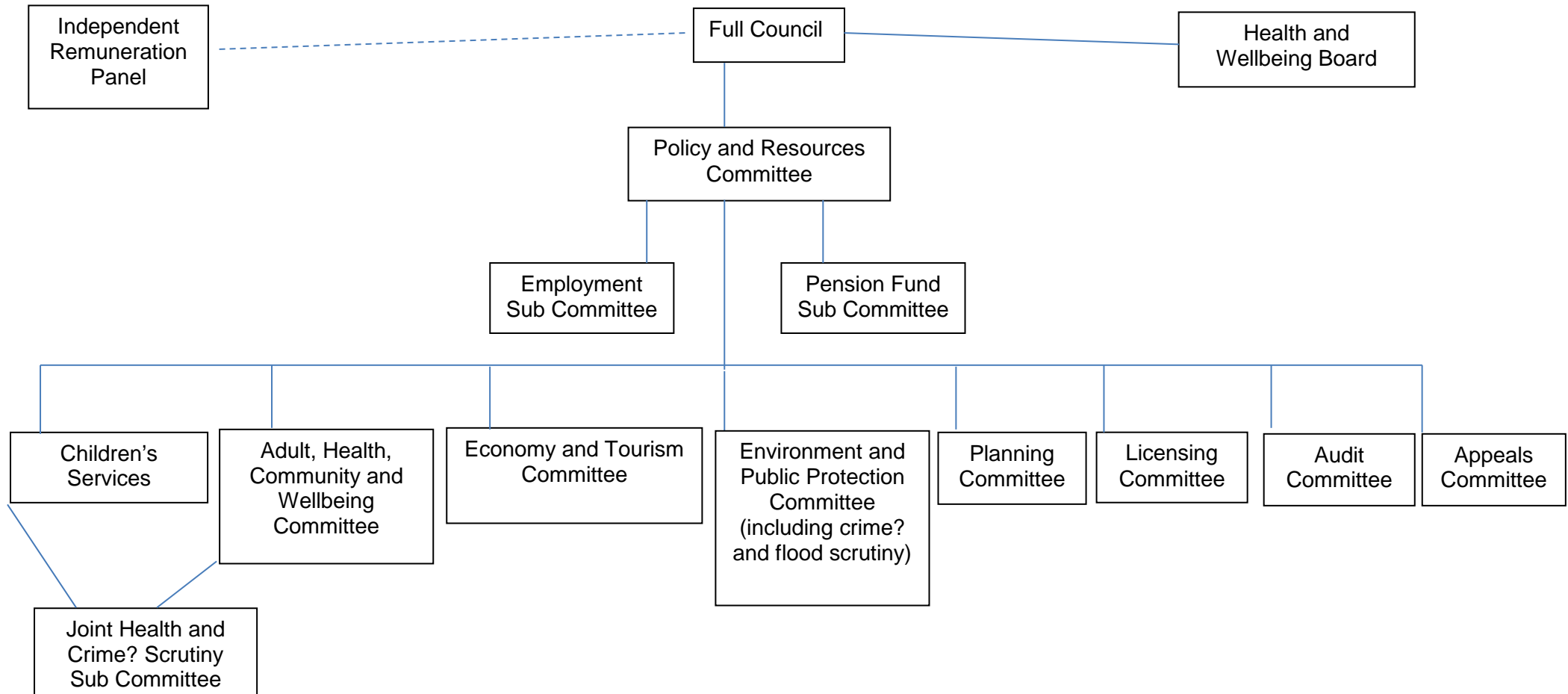
## Option 1 - Current Executive Arrangements



## 1. Current one party Cabinet/Leader/Scrutiny Model:

- a. In this model the Leader is appointed by full council and they appoint up to 9 members to form a cabinet which does not have to be politically proportionate. These 9 members are usually drawn from the majority group. The cabinet make the vast majority of the decisions and although legislation allows for individual cabinet members to make decisions in certain circumstances, at the annual meeting in May 2013 the council removed the delegation allowing individual cabinet members to take decisions – so all executive decisions are either delegated to officers or will be determined by the cabinet.
- b. In addition to the cabinet there are a range of other committees (such as employment, pension fund, planning, licensing, audit and appeals) known as regulatory matters, which consider matters that the legislation determines must not be determined by the cabinet. There is also a health and wellbeing board, a statutory body whose membership consists of members and officers and partners. These committees and the health and wellbeing board will exist under all of the different options.
- c. There is also an overview and scrutiny function to hold the cabinet to account. The current structure for this is one overview and scrutiny committee that deals with the call in arrangements (a device to allow members to look again at decisions made by cabinet and to offer recommendations on those decisions to the cabinet). This is supported by 3 scrutiny panels who look at issues relating to various specific service areas.
- d. These arrangements give a total of 94 seats (including cabinet) (plus full council). Assuming an even distribution amongst all members this means an average of members having to attend at least 3 meetings a month (including full council). On top of that are the various ad hoc meetings (licensing for example) and informal meetings.

## Option 2 – Committee system

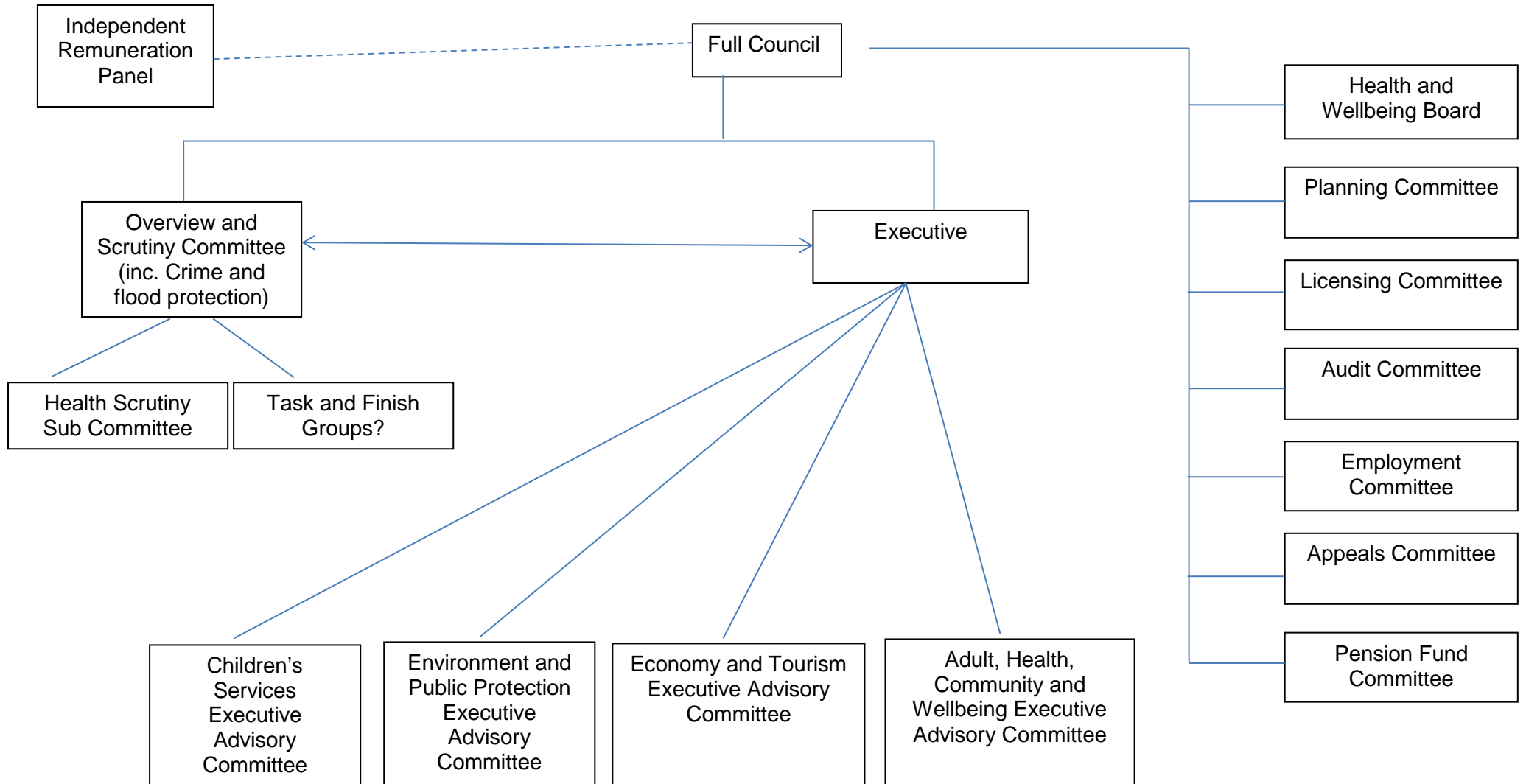


## Committee Model

- a. The relevant committees would make decisions relating to their own areas (except for those delegated to officers), subject to the policy and resources set by council and the policy and resources committee, who would also deal with cross cutting matters.
- b. It is suggested that initially all meetings are held 6 weekly (not August other than planning) except audit, appeals, employment sub, pension fund, and health and wellbeing board which will be held quarterly as necessary.
- c. This will give a total of 105 meetings in a year replacing the current total in a year of 119 (excludes education appeals and DT etc which continue).
- d. The suggested membership of the committees is:
  - i. Policy and resources committee: leader (chairman), deputy leader (vice chairman) plus the 8 committee chairman and 2 others from a cross cutting perspective – total 12
  - ii. Children's services committee – 10
  - iii. Adult, health, community and wellbeing committee – 10
  - iv. Economy and tourism committee – 10
  - v. Environment and public protection committee -10
  - vi. Planning committee – 12
  - vii. Licensing committee – 10
  - viii. Appeals committee - 10
  - ix. Audit – 5
  - x. Employment sub – 6
  - xi. Pension fund sub – 7
  - xii. Health and wellbeing board – 4 (leader and chairmen of the children's services; adult, health and wellbeing; and environment and public protection committees)
- e. This gives a total of 106 seats (plus full council). Assuming even distribution amongst all members will mean average out at members having to attend at least 3 meetings a month (including full council). On top of that will be the various ad hoc meetings (licensing for example) and informal meetings.
- f. Reporting to full council – be by submission of the minutes of the meeting of the committee, chairman having a limited time to highlight, more time for presenting any recommendations to council.

# APPENDIX 3

## Option 3 – Executive with Committees



## Executive Committees

- a. This is a hybrid solution where the cabinet remains (but is called the Executive) as the decision making body (as at present) but this is supported by a number of executive advisory committees (each chaired by the relevant executive member) which are politically proportionate but help develop policy and consider decisions and recommend possible solutions to the executive. The separate overview and scrutiny function remains to handle call ins and scrutinises the decisions made by executive.
- b. As a lot of the detailed work would be undertaken by the executive advisory committees it is suggested that (other than planning) the meeting cycle could move to 6 weekly (not August other than planning). The following would still meet quarterly (or as necessary): audit, appeals, employment, pension fund, health and wellbeing board, and the health scrutiny sub-committee.
- c. This is still a cabinet governance model, as decisions are made by a cabinet (to be called the executive), so there would still need to be a scrutiny function with an overview and scrutiny committee, with a separate health scrutiny sub-committee. There could be task and finish groups created as and when necessary but resources would need to be specifically agreed for each, as there may be a resource issue.
- d. As this is still a cabinet governance model it could, if so wished, be implemented prior to annual council as it could run as a trail/interim measure as a further change to the committee system model of governance could be made within the life of the council.
- e. This would give a total in year of 113 meetings replacing the current total in a year of 119 (excludes education appeals and DT etc which continue).
- f. The suggested membership is:
  - i. Executive – 9 (including leader - all from the majority group as at present)
  - ii. 4 Executive advisory committees – 7 members each – politically proportionate but to be chaired (as one of the 7) by the relevant executive member) to help develop policy and consider decisions and recommend possible solutions to the executive
  - iii. Overview and scrutiny – 10 – if all members agree at full council may make it reverse politically proportionate – if not politically proportionate
  - iv. Health scrutiny sub-committee – 7 – politically proportionate
  - v. Task and finish groups (as agreed) – up to 5 members each
  - vi. Planning committee – 12

- vii. Licensing committee – 10
  - viii. Appeals committee – 10
  - ix. Pension fund committee – 7
  - x. Audit committee – 5
  - xi. Employment committee – 6
  - xii. Health and wellbeing board – 4 elected members (plus others)
- g. This gives a total number of seats across all the committees of 108. Assuming even distribution amongst all members will mean average out at members having to attend at least 3 meetings a month (including full council). On top of that will be the various ad hoc meetings (licensing for example), and informal meetings.
- h. The frequency of the executive (and executive advisory committee) meetings could be held on a 6 weekly cycle in that the executive advisory committees would be doing more of the detailed consideration and therefore proposals will be well developed and worked up before recommendations are submitted to the executive. This reduces the need for executive to debate the issues in great depth as this will have already been undertaken, but there is the risk that debates will be duplicated or repetitive and this would have potential resource implications.
- i. Executive advisory committees will be politically proportionate and hence involve members other than executive members. They would be chaired by the relevant executive member, and their role would be to help develop policy and consider reports on decisions to make recommendations to the executive, but the actual decision making would still be with executive so there is a risk of having debates on the same issue twice, which may lead to duplication of both member and officer resources.
- j. There would still have to be an overview and scrutiny committee to carry out the statutory scrutiny functions (health, crime and flooding) and hold the executive to account and, deal with call-in. This would also have the ability to investigate the effectiveness of earlier decisions and recommend possible future policy development. Care will need to be taken to ensure that this does not create duplication with executive advisory committees.