

SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL LOCAL JOINT COMMITTEES

CONSTITUTION

1. **Composition**

- 1.1 The Local Joint Committees (LJCs) will be constituted in accordance with Sections 101 and 102 of the Local Government Act 1972 and will be Joint Committees for decision making.
- 1.2 Committees will be established across the county on the agreed geographies as approved by the Implementation Executive 19th March 2009. Details are attached at Appendix 1. The geographies will be kept under regular review.

2. **Membership**

- 2.1 Membership shall be drawn from representatives of Shropshire Council and Parish/Town Councils from the electoral division(s) and ward(s) within the LJC area, such representatives to be determined by each relevant authority.
- 2.2 All Shropshire Council members will normally be appointed to serve for their period of office. Parish and Town Councillors will normally be appointed to serve for one year. Membership will cease if, for whatever reason, membership of the relevant body ceases.
- 2.3 Each member will have equal voting rights.
- 2.4 Parish and Town Council substitutes at meetings will be allowed provided the represented body informs the Chair and Secretary 3 days prior to a meeting.
- 2.5 LJCs may co-opt representatives of other local bodies to participate in its deliberations but such representatives shall have no voting rights.

3. **Functions**

- 3.1 The remit for the LJCs will be to encourage public participation and engagement in the decision making of the Council and in doing so:-
 - (a) to scrutinise local service delivery by the Council and Town/Parish Councils with the power to request members of the Executive or senior managers to attend and explain decisions affecting the locality and service “failures” i.e. the local committees will have a strong role in the performance management of services in local communities;

- (b) to determine expenditure of a delegated budget. This must be spent within policy to improve service standards. It could also be used to support the delivery of service improvements identified in parish plans or to provide grants to local voluntary organisations;
- (c) to hold other public service providers including the Parish/Town Councils listed in paragraph 2.1 above to account by requesting them to attend local meetings and scrutinise service delivery in the locality;
- (d) to act as a decision maker with regard to the local delivery of a range of services and to prioritise resource allocation in their area e.g. the local discretionary highways maintenance budget can be determined and prioritised at the LJC, as could the opening hours of the local library or leisure centre but any changes can only be within existing countywide standards and policy;
- (e) to refer matters of concern regarding service to service Scrutiny Committee or of policy to Cabinet and for the Chair to have the right to speak at those bodies of Shropshire Council in order to represent the views of the locality;
- (f) to act as a formal consultation mechanism for the Council over and above that taken with individual Parish and Town Councils.

4. **Budgets**

- 4.1 Each LJC will have a delegated budget referred to in 3.1 b above. The budget will be confirmed on an annual basis. The LJC must use the standard guidelines and application form when granting funding to 3rd parties.
- 4.2 The LJC budgets will be subject to Shropshire Council's audit procedures.

5. **Meetings and Chairing of Meetings**

- 5.1 Each LJC will meet at least four times each year with other meetings being called as necessary with the prior agreement of the Chairman or if more than half the members of the Committee are in favour.
- 5.2 The Chairman of an LJC shall be a member of Shropshire Council and will be appointed annually by the LJC. The Vice Chair will be appointed by the LJC annually and may be a representative of any of the authorities listed at 2.1 above.
- 5.3 Ordinary meetings will take place in the local area and shall normally commence at 7.00 pm.
- 5.4 An invitation to attend together with the agenda for each meeting and the minutes of the previous meeting shall be sent by the Secretary to each member no less than five clear days before each meeting.

5.5 The Secretary will also give at least five clear days notice to the public of the time and place of each meeting by posting details at the Council's offices and on its website. Copies of such notice will also be sent to each Parish/Town Council in the area.

5.6 All meetings of the LJC will normally be open to the press and public.

5.7 The Chairman of a LJC may invite any person to attend a meeting for the purpose of making a presentation or participating in discussion on any item relevant to that body's functions.

6. Public Participation

6.1 So as to encourage public participation and engagement in the business of the LJC, members and officers shall ensure local people are informed, involved and consulted about any issues relevant to the Local Joint Committee (excluding regulatory matters).

6.2 Each Local Joint Committee will decide how best to achieve this objective.

7. Agenda Setting

7.1 The Agenda for each meeting will be set by the Chairman in conjunction with the Lead Officer and the Secretary, following prior consultation with all members of the Joint Committee.

8. Voting

8.1 Any matter will be decided by a simple majority of all voting members of the LJC present at the time the question is put.

8.2 **Where Committees exist with voting Councillors that represent both Shropshire Council and their Town Council, such "twin hatted" Councillors will have two votes.**

8.3 In the event of an equality of votes for and against, the Chairman will have a casting vote, but there will be no restriction on how he/she chooses to exercise this right.

9. Quorum

9.1 The quorum for all meetings will be three members with voting rights.

9.2 Where small Committees exist, ie 4 or less voting members, each Town/Parish Council will be entitled to nominate 2 representatives to serve on the Committee.

10. Referral to Cabinet

10.1 On occasion where the Committee is not quorate due to personal and prejudicial interests disqualifying Councillors from voting on a budget decision, the decision item will be referred to Shropshire Council Cabinet for decision.

11. Minutes

11.1 The minutes of all meetings will take the form of a decision list. These will be presented to the Chairman to sign at the next suitable meeting.

11.2 The Chairman will move that the minutes of the previous meeting be signed as a correct record and no discussion shall take place on the content except with regard to their accuracy.

12. Secretary

12.1 The Secretary of each LJC will be Shropshire Council's Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services) or such other person as he/she shall appoint.

12.2 The responsibilities of the Secretary in respect of the business of the LJC's will be:

- (a) to assist the Chairman and Lead Officer to set the Agenda for each meeting.
- (b) to collate and despatch all relevant papers and publicise the date, time and place of each meeting.
- (c) to produce a decisions list following the deliberations of each meeting and circulate this to all participants within ten days of the meeting.
- (d) to support the Lead Officer to produce a schedule of dates and venues for meetings.

13. Officer Support

13.1 Each LJC will be supported by a Lead Officer who will be employed by Shropshire Council.

13.2 Each LJC will be assigned a Community Working Officer to support the Committee and the Lead Officer and ensure maximum impact and community engagement.

13.3 The duties of the officers in respect of the business of LJC's will be:

- (a) to provide general advice and support to members.

- (b) to ensure meetings are scheduled, publicised and serviced in liaison with the Secretary.
- (c) in liaison with the Chairman and other members, to identify the matters to be included on the Agenda.
- (d) to support the Chairman and members in engaging and consulting local residents.
- (e) to ensure that where appropriate reports are produced and that all members/officers/partners who are invited to meetings are aware of the purpose of their attendance.
- (f) to ensure that all necessary actions are taken promptly to implement decisions.
- (g) to monitor the implementation of decisions and report back to the community and where appropriate refer any decision to the relevant Shropshire Council directorate, partner or Parish/Town Council bodies for further consideration.

14. Review

This Constitution may be reviewed should local needs require it.

15. Interpretation

- 15.1 The decision of the Chairman on the interpretation of this Constitution shall be final.