

Joint Committees Terms of Reference (draft final)

Purpose

1. To influence decisions and help shape initiatives and their delivery for the benefit of the whole town taking into account the needs of the town, customers, employees, residents, visitors, traders, property owners and developers.
2. To develop and encourage public participation and engagement and take into consideration the resident voice in the work of the Committee.

Objectives

To:

1. Help improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural vitality of the town.
2. Ensure a partnership and collaborative approach to achieve the delivery of town regeneration, including influencing Section 106 funding for town centre improvements and community facilities.
3. Opportunities to delegate funding decisions to the Committees should be explored, such as Section 106 spend on community facilities.
4. The Committee will make decisions on any joint funding allocated to it.
5. Influence and help shape strategies / plans infrastructure that impact on the future viability of the town.
6. Provide a forum for briefing Members of the Joint Committee on all key issues affecting the town, at the discretion of the Chairman and Vice Chairman.
7. Make recommendations on strategically significant projects to the relevant Council's decision-making committees, including Committees of the Town Council.
8. Refer items for overview and scrutiny discussion to Central Bedfordshire Council Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordination Panel.
9. Develop and maintain joint branding of communication, agendas and minutes.
10. To enable communities to discuss services and influence decisions at the local level as to how these services are delivered.

11. To provide a forum for two-way communication about public service delivery and the implementation and effectiveness of policies affecting the town.
12. Promote resilience by encouraging communities to do more for themselves and champion local solutions.

Membership

1. Four Councillors from Central Bedfordshire Council and four Councillors from Biggleswade Town Council (Biggleswade Joint Committee)
2. Four Councillors from Central Bedfordshire Council and four Councillors from Houghton Regis Town Council (Houghton Regis Partnership Committee)
3. Five Councillors from Central Bedfordshire Council and five Councillors from Leighton - Linslade Town Council (Leighton -Linslade Partnership Committee)
4. Five Councillors from Central Bedfordshire Council and five Councillors from Dunstable Town Council (Dunstable Joint Committee)

who must be elected representatives of wards in the area, or immediately adjacent to / or hold Executive responsibility.

5. Two named substitutes from each Council will be permitted to attend meetings as full Committee representatives. Central Bedfordshire Council councillors shall not substitute a Town Councillor on the Committee.

Substitutes must hold Executive responsibility or be Chairman or Vice Chairman of a Town Council Committee or sub-committee. In the absence of a named substitute any Executive Member or Town Council Committee or sub-committee Chairman/Vice Chairman may attend to ensure the meeting is quorate.

6. Members are appointed annually.
7. All Members should have the interests of the town as a priority, not their own wards.

Meetings and Quorum

1. At least three Members from each Council must be in attendance for the meeting to be quorate.

2. Meetings will be held a minimum of once per year and up to a maximum of 4 per year and take place at venues in the area
3. The Committee may also organise extra ordinary meetings at the discretion of the Chairman and Vice Chairman.
4. In addition to the Committee meetings the Committee can organise other forms of engagement to take place such as themed discussions / task and finish groups and community conferences.
5. All meetings will be open to the public unless exempt items are discussed.

Chairman and Vice Chairman

1. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman shall be appointed from and by the Joint Committee's core membership each Council must be represented in either role.
2. The appointed Chairman and Vice-Chairman will hold their post for a period of one year , after which they may stand for re-election.
3. The Vice Chairman will preside in the absence of the Chairman. If neither is present, the Committee members in attendance will appoint a Chairman from among them for the duration of that meeting.
4. The Chairman and Vice Chairman will be responsible for the content of the Committee agendas and will allow committee members and other stakeholders to submit agenda topics which will be included unless the proposed agenda item is not relevant to the Purpose and/or Objectives of the Joint Committee.

Secretariat

1. Either Council can administer the Joint Committee, according to their own Standing Orders. The Committee will decide at its first meeting of each municipal year which Council is to administer the Committee.
2. Agendas, minutes and press releases will be issued under joint branding.
3. The secretariat will prepare, monitor and keep up to date an annual work plan to set the broad direction and priorities for the Committee.

Decision making arrangements

1. Only members of the Committee can vote. Co-opted Members have no voting rights
2. The Committee will not have any decision-making powers regarding planning applications and will not seek to duplicate or hinder the work of Central Bedfordshire Council as the Local Planning Authority.
3. The Committee will reach decisions by a simple majority. The Chairman will have the casting vote in the case of a tie.

Co-option

1. To support engagement with local stakeholders the Committee can co-opt members from local representative groups, as appropriate up to a maximum of 15. Each co-opted Member will be able to engage fully in all discussions but will not have any voting rights. Co-opted members can be removed from the Committee by joint agreement of the Chairman and Vice Chairman.

Governance

1. The work plans and action log for each meeting will be presented to CBC's Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordination Panel Committee for referral to other OSC committees as necessary. The detail of how this will be presented will be determined by Central Bedfordshire Council.