

APPENDIX 4: RISK MATRIX

Option 1: No change in governance arrangements		
Risk	Mitigation	Risk RAG
Opportunity lost to improve cross party collaboration to improve efficient decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councillors expand the use of appropriate cross party working group activities for key priority areas. 	Likely /Medium
Opportunity lost to have more councillors involved in decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councillors expand the use of appropriate cross party working group activities for key priority areas to inform the options to be decided upon. 	Likely /Medium
Negative impact on non-executive decision making in a minority administration causing inefficient decision making and use of available resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councillors consider how to improve cross-party working arrangements 	Likely /High

Option 2: To approve the change in governance from a cabinet to a committee system		
Risk	Mitigation	Risk RAG
The current council would be committing any incoming new administration in 2025 to a different form of governance, for the next 5 years, which it did not have the opportunity to choose.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain the current cabinet governance arrangements. Seek to make a change sooner than 5 years by way of a referendum but this would then lock in the new change for 10 years. Also, any subsequent change must then also be by way of a referendum. Ability to apply to the secretary of state to change the governance model. 	Likely /Low
Critical decision-making (e.g., budget setting, major contracts) efficiency may be impacted as a committee system involves more councillors, potentially leading to conflict, longer deliberations and slower decision-making processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training and mentoring of councillors and officers to ensure committees carry out business effectively within the terms of reference. Committee work plans to be maintained so there is clarity on future decisions required. Ensure councillors are aware of the committee's responsibilities and deadlines for key decisions. Committees can refer key decisions to the Policy, Resources and Finance committee or Full Council if required. Ensure adequate officer delegations are in place to allow for urgent decisions. Improved relationships between officers and all councillors of the council Arrange 6-month review to assess impact 	Likely /High

Option 2: To approve the change in governance from a cabinet to a committee system

Risk	Mitigation	Risk RAG
<p>There is a risk that accountability and transparency may be negatively impacted as a committee system distributes decision-making authority, which can make accountability less apparent.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure robust reporting mechanisms are in place with regular public updates and transparent decision records. • Ensure the agreed decision-making structure is mapped and understood by all councillors and staff. • Communications protocol in place and committee spokespersons clearly identified. • Arrange 6-month review to assess impact 	<p>Unlikely /Low</p>
<p>Committee recruitment, attendance and active participation may be challenging in a small council of 39 councillors and with small political groups leading to unfilled committee places and inability to make critical decisions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the commitment required within the role is fully identified and acknowledged to ensure the workload expectations are understood to reduce turnover of membership. • Ensure an appropriate quorum level is agreed for each committee. • Appropriate provision in the constitution to ensure places are filled. • Arrange 6-month review to assess impact. 	<p>Likely /Medium</p>
<p>The statutory scrutiny functions for health, flood risk management and crime and disorder will sit within specific service committees which may significantly increase the workload of these meetings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring officer and committee chairs to structure committee meetings to ensure statutory scrutiny functions are covered appropriately. • Explore options of splitting meeting agendas into normal business then statutory scrutiny to ensure both functions are covered appropriately. • Chairs, councillors and officers work on timings of these meetings to ensure sufficient time and appropriate breaks. • Consider provision for daytime meetings. • Arrange 6-month review to assess impact 	<p>Likely /High</p>
<p>Single aligned and/or non-aligned or ungrouped councillors may find themselves excluded from committees through proportionality arrangements during committee appointments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with group leaders to ensure the selection for committee appointments is inclusive. • Ungrouped councillors can join or form a group 	<p>Unlikely /Low</p>

Option 2: To approve the change in governance from a cabinet to a committee system		
Risk	Mitigation	Risk RAG
Critical decision-making will become more siloed within the separate committees with less strategic overview and involvement from other parts of the council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor to councillor briefings and sharing of key papers to ensure cross council understanding of linked areas of business. • Policy, Resources and Finance committee councillors (made up of the chairs of the other committees) work together on overarching strategy and ensure their committees understand the wider impacts of key decisions. • Senior officers work with committee chairs to ensure strategic impacts are understood. • Arrange 6-month review to assess impact 	Likely /Medium

Option 3: Committee system implementation from 15 May 2024		
Risk	Mitigation	Risk RAG
There is a risk that as this change has happened at pace a significant issue may have been missed impacting on delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This risk needs to be accepted. • Arrange 6-month review to assess impact. <p>To support the change to date there has been commissioned external governance advice, dedicated internal resources and regular Future Governance Working Group meetings.</p>	Likely /High
There will be insufficient time to hold detailed councillor and officer training including mock committee meetings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This risk needs to be accepted 	Likely /High
The short timescale may mean that councillors feel inadequately supported to operate effectively under the committee system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This risk needs to be accepted. • Identify additional funding to secure trained support from within the council or external organisation. 	Likely /High
The short timescale may mean that officers feel inadequately supported to operate effectively under the committee system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This risk needs to be accepted. • Identify additional funding to secure trained support from within the council or external organisation. 	Likely /High
Councillors and officers will have short notice of committee dates, which might result in them being unable to attend some meetings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This risk needs to be accepted 	Likely /Medium

Option 3: Committee system implementation from 15 May 2024		
Councillor and officer workloads may be negatively impacted resulting in increased pressure and potentially longer working hours until the new system is embedded.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This risk is short term and needs to be accepted 	Likely /High
Councillors and officers will have a limited time (2 weeks) to prep until are the papers for the AGM and ensure all the committee posts are nominated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This risk is short term and needs to be accepted. Prepare as much in advance of Annual Council meeting as possible. Work with group leaders to identify potential nominees in advance of the decision 	Likely / High
Officers may not have enough time in the 2 weeks between decision and implementation to set up all the required processes to run a committee system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This risk is short term and needs to be accepted. Prepare as much in advance of Annual Council as possible. 	Likely /High
Committee meetings may take longer than usual as councillors and officers get used to the new system. This may mean the meetings will run out of time leading to additional meetings being added to the calendar impacting on resources and cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This risk needs to be accepted. Allow additional time for the meetings when planning and advising on dates and times. Chairs will manage agendas appropriately whilst understanding of the new system builds 	Likely /High
The rapid pace of change may lead to confusion amongst councillors, officers and the public. This may increase the workload of key officers and the democratic services team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This risk needs to be accepted 	Likely /High
The council would not be able to change its governance model for a period of 5 years from the 1 May 2024.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This risk needs to be accepted 	Unlikely /High
There may be a need for more decisions to be delegated to senior officers in a committee system if an urgent decision is required, especially whilst the new system embeds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training and mentoring of councillors and officers to ensure committees carry out business effectively within the terms of reference. Committee work plans to be maintained so there is clarity on future decisions required. Ensure the appropriate systems and processes are in place to enable authorised and appropriate office level decisions to be made swiftly. Ensure officers understand the decision-making structure 	Likely/ Medium

Option 4: Committee system implementation from 14 May 2025

Risk	Mitigation	Risk RAG
<p>The council would not be able to change its governance model for a period of 4 years (5 years from the date of decision).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This risk needs to be accepted 	<p>Unlikely /Medium</p>
<p>Committee meetings may take longer than usual as councillors and officers get used to the new system. This may mean the meetings will run out of time leading to additional meetings being added to the calendar impacting on resources and cost</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This risk needs to be accepted. Allow additional time for the meetings when planning and advising on dates and times. Chairs will manage agendas appropriately whilst understanding of the new system builds. Shadow arrangements can be put in place leading up to the change. 	<p>Likely /High</p>
<p>There may be a need for more decisions to be delegated to senior officers in a committee system if an urgent decision is required, especially whilst the new system embeds.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training and mentoring of councillors and officers to ensure committees carry out business effectively within the terms of reference. Committee work plans to be maintained so there is clarity on future decisions required. Ensure the appropriate systems and processes are in place to enable authorised and appropriate office level decisions to be made swiftly. Ensure officers understand the decision-making structure 	<p>Likely /Medium</p>