DOCUMENT 1 - GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

Governance and Decision Making – How does the Council manage its business and take decisions across its full range of responsibilities?	
Leadership	
What kind of Governance arrangements are in place for the Authority?	Wiltshire Council operates a Leader and Cabinet model form of governance. The Leader has appointed eight Cabinet Members to the Executive out of a maximum of nine permitted by law. The 10-year business plan does not anticipate a change in this model.
How many portfolios are there?	The Cabinet Members between them hold 9 Portfolios: • Leader • Children, Education and Skills • Corporate Services, Heritage, Arts and Tourism • Economic Development and Housing • Finance, Procurement, ICT and Operational Assets • Highways, Transport and Waste • Spatial Planning, Development Management and Property • Communications, Communities, Leisure and Libraries • Adult Social Care, Public Health and Public Protection In addition to the Cabinet Members, who are the formal members of the Executive who can make delegated decisions and vote at Cabinet, 16 'Portfolio Holders' are assigned who assist the Cabinet Members. These 'Portfolio Holders' have no statutory decision-making powers but are an additional resource providing extra capacity to Cabinet Members' work, undertaking in-depth work with Directors and functioning as an extra contact point for non-executive Councillors. The latest review of member allowances by an Independent Remuneration Panel 2017 concluded the role justified a special responsibility allowance higher than all but three non-executive special responsibilities.
Describe how a Cabinet Member carries out his/her work on a day to day basis	The main responsibilities of Cabinet Members are to give political direction to officers working within their portfolio and to support them in the implementation of policy. They are accountable for individual delegated decisions and performance within their portfolio both internally and externally, to partners and the community. They have an overview of the performance management, efficiency and effectiveness of their portfolio and make executive decisions relating to it.

To what extent are decisions delegated to Cabinet Members or are most decisions taken by the full Cabinet? What is the volume of decisions taken? How many decisions are taken by officers?	Cabinet members may exercise any executive functions within their allocated areas of responsibility, as set out in Part 3C of the Constitution. This does not include executive functions which are specifically reserved to the Council, the Leader and/or Cabinet or others. Approximately 20-30 delegated executive decisions are taken annually. Most decisions are taken by the full executive. Finalisation and signing of contracts and other major matters are often delegated to officers by Cabinet as a whole, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet member.
Do Cabinet (or other) members serve on other decision-making partnerships, sub-regional or national bodies?	The Leader and Cabinet Members sit on various decision making partnerships and bodies, from joint committees with Swindon such as the Joint Strategic Economic Committees, to bodies such as VisitWiltshire for the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Tourism, to the Public Service Board, which brings together leaderships of public sector organisations in the county. Many other member serve on sub-regional bodies and partnerships via appointments to Outside Bodies, detailed in a question later in this document.
Is the role of Cabinet considered to be full time?	A survey undertaken in 2013 and a survey undertaken in 2017/8 for this Electoral Review indicate the role of Cabinet Member is considered effectively full time and remunerated as such, with the latest survey indicating an average of 30 hours per week for a cabinet member on top of the hours for the basic role of a councillor.
Regulatory	
How does the Council discharge its regulatory functions? How many members are involved in committees?	**Planning** The council has five planning committees: A strategic planning committee covering applications across the council area defined in the constitution as significant, and four regional area planning committees to enable more localized decision making which determine applications 'called-in' by elected members. For the council term 2013-2017 the planning committees met for a combined total of 489 hours across 225 meetings. 52 out of 172 total council committee places are allocated to planning committees (with chairman of the area committees also serving on Strategic), and they are usually very well attended and engaged with by the public. **Licensing** The Licensing Committee is comprised of 12 members. It's function is to deal with all functions relating to licensing and registration as set out in Schedule 1 to the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 and any other similar licensing and registration functions. Applications for new, variation or review of licences if objected to are determined by sub-committees made up of three members or substitutes of the Licensing Committee. There are approximately 11-12 sub-committees per year.

Describe the arrangements for the delegation of decisions in respect of regulatory functions? To what extent are decisions delegated to officers?	Delegation arrangements are set out in Part 3D of the Constitution. The majority of planning and licensing functions are determined by officers. For licensing for the year April 2016-March 2017 there were 698 applications which could potentially lead to a decision made by a sub-committee, of which 19 were. This means 97% of applications were dealt with by officers. For Planning - Based on the last quarter that was reported to DCLG (Jul-Sept 17) 96% of planning applications were delegated to officers.
Is committee membership standing or rotating?	Membership of all committees is determined at the annual meeting of council with changes if requested at other meetings of Full Council. Planning Committee membership is standing, Licensing Sub-Committees are selected from the standing Licensing committee for each hearing.
Are meetings ad hoc, frequent and/or area based? How are the Chairs allocated?	Planning meetings meet on a four-weekly cycle. Licensing Committee meets quarterly. Licensing sub-committees meet on an ad hoc basis. Although named on an area basis for administrative purposes, the licensing sub-committee memberships of three per hearing are selected on availability basis, not area. The Chairs of planning committees and the licensing committee are appointed at the annual meeting of council. Licensing sub-committees elect a chair for each ad hoc meeting.
Other Committees	
Are meetings ad hoc, frequent and/or area based? How are the Chairs allocated?	Cabinet meets at least 11 times per year. Other than the area planning committees, and area boards (discussed below), all committees cover the entirety of the council area. Other than the area boards, the formal committees appointed by council are listed below along with how frequently they are scheduled: • Strategic planning and 4 area planning committees – 12-13 times per year • Licensing Committee – 4 times per year • Overview and Scrutiny Management – 6-7 times per year • Children's Select Committee – 5-6 times per year • Health Select Committee – 5-6 times per year • Environment Select Committee – 5-6 times per year • Standards Committee – 4 times per year • Audit Committee – 4 times per year • Police and Crime Panel (joint with Swindon borough council) – 6 times per year • Staffing Policy Committee – 6 times per year • Officer Appointments Committee – ad hoc

- Pension Fund Committee – 4 times per year
- Appeals Committee – 0 times per year (sub-committees meet ad hoc to determine school transport and rates relief appeals)

Chairs for the committees are appointed at the annual meeting of council, with the exception of the scrutiny committees and police and crime panel, who appoint their chairs at the first meeting after the annual meeting of council.

In total, there are 174 committee places in 2017 (in 2009 there were a total of 172 committee places). In addition, the standing Corporate Parenting Panel and Safeguarding Children and Young People Panel have 8 members each, resulting in effectively 190 committee places.

Committees May 2013-April 2017	Meetings Held	Total Hours (nearest)	Additional info
Strategic Planning	36	89	
NAPC	59	120	
EAPC	32	54	
SAPC	50	128	
WAPC	48	98	
Council	20	110	
Cabinet	47	81	
Capital Assets	21	11	No longer active
Cabinet Transformation	5	7	No longer active
Overview and Scrutiny Management	35	77	
Children's Select	25	56	
Environment Select	23	48	
Health Select	24	68	
Police and Crime Panel	26	66	
Audit	18	27	1 meeting no time specified
Licensing	12	12	45 sub-committees

Staffing Policy	23	26	1 meeting no time specified
Pension Fund	24	67	8 investment sub committees
Standards	13	16	30 review subs, 1 hearing sub
Health and Wellbeing Board	21	33	3 meetings no time specified

Area Boards

Wiltshire has 18 area boards to cover its 20 community areas.

Each area board is an area committee and choose their own chairs at the first meeting following annual council. Area boards are an integral part of the council's promotion of the development of stronger and more resilient communities through:

- Efficient, transparent and accountable decision making;
- Effective collaboration with public, voluntary and private sector partners locally to meet the aspirations of local people;
- Shaping the delivery of local services;
- Addressing local issues;
- Building community leadership and local engagement.

As discussed more in the representational role of councillors section, there have been significant increases in devolved budgets to the area boards, with community grants, youth grants, community transport grants and more. The 10-year business plan states it is intended to '*build on our existing local working in area boards and with parish and town councils to devolve services to local areas*', including delivering more decision making at a local level.

What level of attendance is achieved? Are meetings always quorate?	Across the four-year council term May 2013-April 2017, statistics indicate the overall attendance of councillors at committee meetings they were expected to attend was 87% (10,319 'expected' attendances vs 8932 'actual' attendances, across 104 councillors due to by-elections) with substitute arrangements in place on most. Councillors also often attend and contribute at meetings at which they were not required to attend, for example attending planning meetings when local items are considered, or Cabinet to question the Leader. As noted above there are also many local or regional bodies to which councillors are appointed, as well as time required to attend briefings, committee workshops, consultation meetings and more.

	Some Area Boards have only 3-4 members and with the exception of two Boards joined under a single area committee, there are no substitute arrangements. At 4 meetings across the period above a Board was inquorate.
Does the council believe that changes to legislation, national or local policy will influence the workload of committees and their members which would have an impact on council size?	The council is not aware of changes to legislation or national policy at this stage which would impact the workload of its committee or its members. The 10-year business plan intends the council to continue to innovate in how it works, working closely with communities, businesses and public-sector partners to deliver services and efficient and effective performance, with a suitable number of councillors necessary to direct and scrutinise the continued transformation and evolution. In particular there is an intention to build on existing local working in Area Boards and with parish and town councils to devolve services to local areas.
Demands on Time	

Has the Council defined the role of councillors? Has the Council adopted arrangements for training and developing Councillors and supporting them in their role?	The role of councillor and its responsibilities is set out in part 11 of the constitution including
	
	   To champion your division
	   To be a community leader
	   To keep in touch with constituents
	   To contribute to decision making
	   To fulfil your responsibilities as a "corporate parent" for children and young people in the care of the local authority
	   To represent the council externally
	
	Part 11 expects councillors to commit to a programme of continued learning and development. Specific ongoing training is provided for scrutiny, pensions, planning as necessary, and others.

Has the Council assessed how much time members spend on Council business?	A survey of current councillors has returned an average of approximately 24 hours per week hours per week needed to perform the basic role of Wiltshire Councillor effectively (excluding time spent on roles with special responsibilities). This is an increase of 3 hours from the last survey of members undertaken in 2013.
Do Councillors generally find that the time they spend on council business is what they expected?	From the same survey as above, around 60% of councillors responding indicated that the time they spend on council business is what they expected, although many also stated that the workload had increased over time since the council's formation.

What is the extent of Councillors representational role on and appointment to outside bodies? How many are involved in this activity and what is their expected workload?	The council is currently reviewing the role of councillors on outside bodies by asking all outside bodies to ask how many councillors they think should be appointed to them, if any, and to justify this, including how many meetings per year they should attend and whether they have a vote on that body and so on. Some of these bodies are locally based with an expectation the local member be involved, others are county wide, some are appointed by areas boards, and some allocated by political group leaders. There are presently approximately 150 outside bodies. Of those around half involve formal voting rights on decisions. There are variable activities and workloads, but given the total numbers it can be a significant additional workload.
Does the Council have difficulty in retaining councillors or attracting new candidates?	In 2009, 353 candidates stood for election to 98 divisions. It was the first election to the unitary council. (98 CON candidates, 94 LD candidates, 55 Labour candidates, 48 UKIP candidates, 29 Independents, 12 BNP candidates, 8 Green candidates, 5 English Democrat candidates, 4 Devizes Guardian candidates).

In 2013, 308 candidates stood for election to 98 divisions, and 6 divisions were uncontested. 70 councillors were the same as those elected in 2009. (98 CON candidates, 61 Labour candidates, 59 LD candidates, 54 UKIP candidates, 27 Independents, 5 Green candidates, 4 Devizes Guardian candidates).

In 2017, 322 candidates stood for election to 98 divisions, and 1 division was uncontested. 69 councillors were the same as those elected in 2013. (98 CON Candidates, 89 LD candidates, 72 Labour candidates, 26 Independents, 25 Green candidates. 8 UKIP candidates, 3 Devizes Guardian candidates, 1 'Together We Can Reform' candidate). |
| Have there been any instances where the Council has been unable to discharge its duties due to a lack of Councillors? | No. |
| Do Councillors have an individual or ward budget for allocation in their area? If so, how is the system administered? | No – area boards receive funds for various grants such as youth funding, community transport, community projects, and vote on them together as a board. Councillors can also nominate projects for funding.

Community Engagement Managers, Local Youth Facilitators and Highways Officers oversee the funding allocations and prepare reports. Youth funding and transport funding involves groups with external members assessing and recommending whether to accept grant applications. |