

Report on the Re-Structuring of Committees and Working Groups

Policy and Resources Committee 13th December 2021

1. Background

This report follows on from the report of the same name dated 17th May 2021, which looked at reducing the number of face-to-face meetings after the ending of special Covid-19 legislation allowing virtual meetings.

2. Considerations

The return to face-to-face meetings

We were among many parish and town councils which reverted to sub-committees/working groups to enable the continuation of virtual meetings. Whilst it may be appropriate for some working groups to remain closed to the public; allowing others to be held virtually has not enabled a larger representation from the public, as previously anticipated.

The Town Council should now consider the full return to face-to-face meetings from May 2022 to enable effective decision making to take place in a timely manner (subject to any legal restrictions). Only a small number of working groups should remain virtual, specifically those which are task and finish and not open to the public.

Committees, sub-committees and working groups

The Town Clerk reviewed the committee structure in March 2020 and May 2021 and this report will look again at the structure. Appendix A shows current committees and working groups. Appendix B shows the proposed structure with the following Standing Committees:

- Policy & Resources
- Planning
- Active Travel – 20's Plenty and LCWIP
- Environment – Public Spaces and Climate and Biodiversity
- Youth and Community – Youth Working Group

It is difficult to reduce the number of committees when there is so much activity, which relates much to the doing of activities; holding events, community engagement etc, rather than the maintaining of public services, which would be undertaken directly by staff (eg grass cutting, waste collection).

The option for task and finish groups, set up by the Standing Committees, should remain but with clear terms of reference including an anticipated end date.

Appendix C provides a draft calendar of meetings for the next civic year.

3. Recommendations

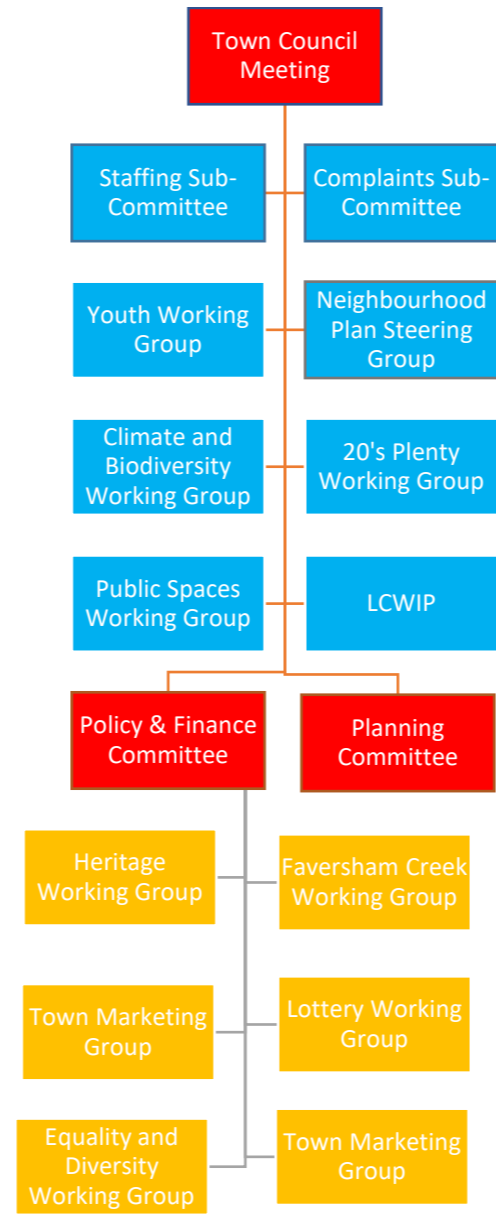
The following recommendations are made:

The Town Council:

- a. agrees to a return to face to face meetings for Standing Committees from May 2022 (subject to any legal restrictions)
- b. considers the restructuring of committees to enable less duplication of subjects
- c. terms of reference for Standing Committee to be agreed
- d. investigates hybrid meetings to allow the public to attend virtually

Louise Bareham
Town Clerk

Faversham Town Council Meeting Structure @ December 2021



Faversham Town Council Meeting Structure Proposed @ May 2022

