COMMITTEE STRUCTURE REVIEW

THAME TOWN COUNCIL

March 2024

SUMMARISED FEEDBACK

to note

GENERAL FEEDBACK

- Overall positive
  - More streamlined structure and little overlap

- Delegations
  - Need to be greater to avoid repeating discussions
  - Bring all Terms of Reference / Delegations into one document
  - Working groups to report into committees rather than Full Council

- Skills audit – Good idea but needs to be kept up to date

- External Organisation reports
  - Some support for 'Champions' or 'Portfolio Holders' – to report / focus on areas within the council and be more collaborative / build connections with the community. Need to establish role and responsibilities.
  - Some organisations we are liable for. Not a 'one size fits all'.
  - Need to establish time commitment
  - Create template for grant reports

- Meeting frequency – minimum number of meetings set, with option to call more.

- Budget monitoring
  - Committees need to have oversight of whole council budget
  - Reports to include estimated impact on budgets

- Committee functions – environment, equality, diversity and inclusion considerations to apply to all actions

- Wider strategy – need to establish what TTC must do, has a key role in, is a key stakeholder for, and aspires to do/be.

FEEDBACK
Corporate Governance Committee

Suggested committee names:

- Corporate Governance

- Policy & Resources

- Resources Management

Feedback/comments

- Noted overlap with planning / assets regarding land disposal

FEEDBACK
Community Services Committee

Suggested committee names:

- Community

- Community Development – this name is being suggested as 'services' can have connotations of 'us and them'

Feedback/comments

- Include tourist information and promotion of walks/footpaths

- Include older people as well as young

- Clarify town centre amenity

FEEDBACK
Planning Committee

Suggested committee names:

- Planning & Transportation

- Planning & Neighbourhood Plan

Feedback/comments

- (x2) NP (and future iterations) should be part of P&E

- Should be land allocations rather than housing allocations

- NP Steering Group
  - Must reflect different areas of Thame – residents associations may not be the best way to do this
  - Needs to have TTC representatives to offer expertise
  - Partnership working with SODC

- (x2) Support for proposals to cut down on planning applications requiring a report / debate at P&E

- Include sustainability / energy efficiency on built environment

- Aspiration to redesign town centre traffic system

- Aspiration to re-evaluate / reinvigorate Conservation Areas – could be CAAC's remit, or another group

- Need to differentiate between 'built' and 'green' environment

FEEDBACK
Environment & Assets Committee

Suggested committee names:

- Environment & Outside Services

- Assets & Green Environment

Feedback/comments

- Reporting 3-4 times a year on GLP would be sufficient – GLP website being updated to show project progress

- Add benches, trees and hedges

FEEDBACK
Personnel Committee

Suggested committee names:

- Staffing

Feedback/comments

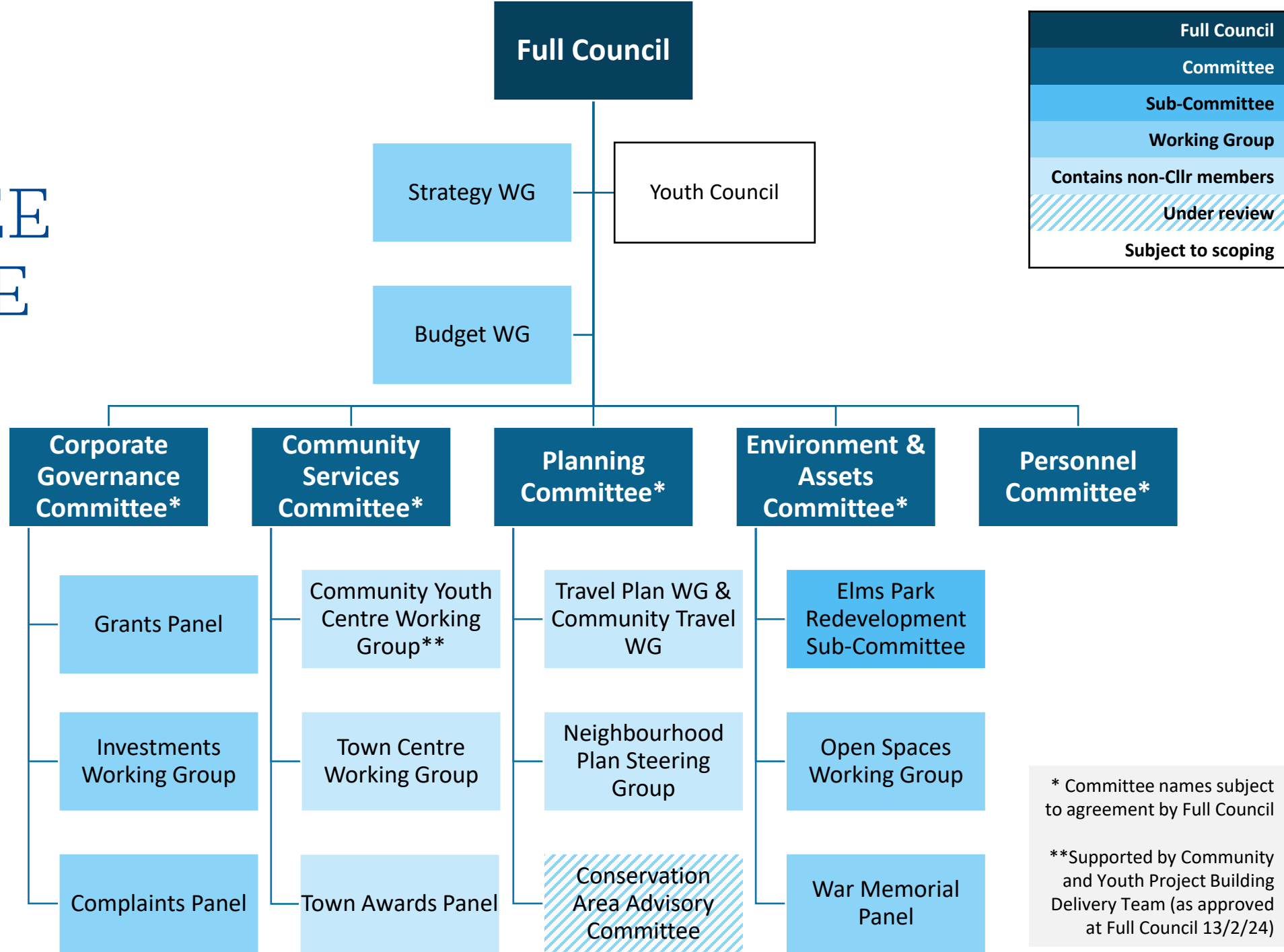- Change resourcing to 'Human Resources'

FEEDBACK – WHAT'S MISSING?

- Need to improve comms (internal and external) regarding project progress

- (x4) Health

  - Format could be a sub-committee (e.g. Wantage), Working Group or Forum

  - Not something that TTC is currently allocating resources to. Could be an aspiration within committee terms of reference / TTC strategy

ITEMS TO APPROVE

on 5 March 2024

PROPOSED COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

Full Council

Strategy WG

Youth Council

Budget WG

Legend:
- Full Council
- Committee
- Sub-Committee
- Working Group
- Contains non-Cllr members
- Under review
- Subject to scoping

Corporate Governance Committee*
- Grants Panel
- Investments Working Group
- Complaints Panel

Community Services Committee*
- Community Youth Centre Working Group**
- Town Centre Working Group
- Town Awards Panel

Planning Committee*
- Travel Plan WG & Community Travel WG
- Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
- Conservation Area Advisory Committee

Environment & Assets Committee*
- Elms Park Redevelopment Sub-Committee
- Open Spaces Working Group
- War Memorial Panel

Personnel Committee*

- 5 standing committees
- 1 sub-committee
- 1 advisory committee
- 13 working groups/panels
- Option for a Youth Council

* Committee names subject to agreement by Full Council

**Supported by Community and Youth Project Building Delivery Team (as approved at Full Council 13/2/24)

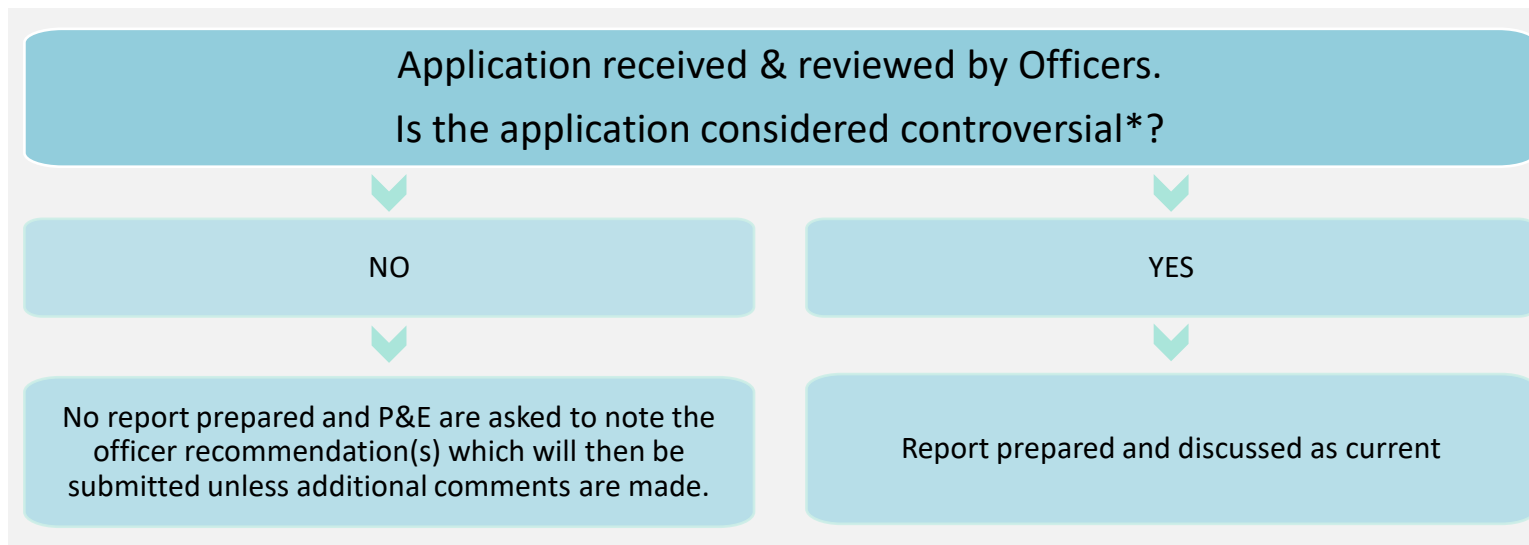# PROPOSED COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES
(HIGH LEVEL)

Corporate Governance	Community Services	Planning	Personnel	Environment & Assets	Full Council
Council finances, policies and resources, office management, and legal services	Community, events, communications, town vibrancy, and customer service	Leading on planning and related policy, and monitoring the impact and delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan	Developing and agreeing personnel policies and practices in relation to salaries, recruitment, grades, conditions, health & safety issues and pensions	Asset development & maintenance, environment, open spaces	Consideration of all major council matters, strategic planning, committee appointments, all matters which cannot be delegated
Financial Management	Events	Land Use and Development	Pensions / LGPS	Asset Management	Appointments
Risk Management / Internal Control	Community Safety & Wellbeing	Planning Policy Consultations	Staff Wellbeing	Existing Buildings & Community Assets	Strategic Planning
Office Management	Community Support & Engagement	Transport	Resourcing	Existing Green & Open Spaces	Financial & Risk Management
Legal Matters	Town Vibrancy & Promotion	Reporting Issues to Relevant Agencies	Staff Monitoring Data	Partnership Assets / Open Spaces	Committee Manangment
Democratic & Civic Services	Young & Elderly People	Neighbourhood Plan	Salaries & Grades (recommendations to FC)	Environmental Projects	Town-wide matters
Information Management				Maintenance Team	Council Documents & Procedures

- This proposed committee responsibilities list (if approved) is expected to be implemented from May 2024.

- A high-level committee responsibilities is proposed at this stage to give flexibility to adapt the finer detail as work continues over the coming months.

- A more detailed version will be presented at the April Full Council meeting.

P&E AGENDAS

- Based on positive feedback, if this flowchart is approved at Full Council on 5 March, there is the option to trial this for the April & May P&E committees scheduled prior to the Annual Meeting.

- This will sit as an addendum to the current P&E Terms of Reference but will be incorporated into the updated Terms of Reference once approved at the April FC.

Application received & reviewed by Officers.

Is the application considered controversial*?

NO	YES
No report prepared and P&E are asked to note the officer recommendation(s) which will then be submitted unless additional comments are made.	Report prepared and discussed as current

Benefits:

* Provides opportunity for Cllrs to raise concerns

* Maintains audit trail of decisions

* Enables public to speak as application still on the agenda

* Removes need to discuss each application

* Saves Officer time in writing a report.

*Definition of controversial
- any FUL application
- any application where the recommendation is to object due to non-conformance with TNP/2 policies, Local Plan, or national standards
- any application where there has been (or expected to be) local objection, even if the application is in conformance with planning policies
- Any application where an amendment changes the Town Council's original recommendation.

All major applications with town-wide impacts will be considered at Full Council in line with P&E ToR.

NEXT STEPS / TIMELINE

to note

IN PREPARATION FOR FULL COUNCIL IN APRIL:

Committee documents

- Review external organisation reports – although current external organisation reports can continue past May, with a view to sort this as soon as practicable after the Annual Meeting

- Draft Terms of Reference for each committee

- Prepare Schedule of Meetings for 2024/25

- Draft protocol for formation of WGs/sub-committees

Processes

- Transition Councillors' OneDrive over to Sharepoint (scheduled for mid-March) – further details to follow. The aim is to remove single sign-on and gradually move over to Teams to improve efficiencies, communications and collaborative working. The option to access council papers via file explorer will continue.

WHAT NEXT?

DATE	ACTION
8 January 2024	• Review Strategy Day outcomes and establish next steps based on that **(Mandy)** • Consider some draft ideas for structure **(Lizzie)** • Feedback your ideas **(Strategy WG)**
16 January 2024 (FC)	Brief update presented to Full Council following SWG and next steps
January/February 2024	• Consult TTC Staff / Team Meetings and make any changes following FC feedback. (completed 8/2/24) • Circulate draft structure via Councillor OneDrive for Councillors to review individually. (completed 29/1/24)
13 February 2024	Additional Full Council to include a closed session to discuss / present first draft structure / hold a strategy workshop with whole council
5 March 2024 (FC)	Approve committee structure (including names) & high-level responsibilities – to be implemented from May 2024
30 April 2024 (FC)	Approve committee terms of reference & detailed responsibilities – to be implemented from May 2024. Approve Schedule of Meetings 2024/25
14 May 2024 (FC)	Appoint committee membership. Approve protocol for formation of Working Groups / Sub-Committees etc. Option to approve / review ToR for Working Groups if ready.
June/July 2024	Committees to approve/re-appoint ToR for Working Groups. Dates of committee meetings tbc.
August 2024	Full Council approve final WG / external organisation appointments
August 2024	All changes implemented and communicated (internally and externally)
Approx. November 2024	Review new structures at 6 months in and make changes as required. Date of Full Council meeting tbc.