

MEMBER OFFICER WORKING GROUPS - PROCEDURES

- (1) A Committee may establish a working group following the submission of a joint Report by a Director and the Chief Executive. The Report will set out the proposed remit for the working group.
- (2) A committee may also recommend establishment of a working group by requesting that the Chief Executive submit a Report to the next Meeting.
- (3) Working groups are not Committees or Sub-Committees of the Comhairle. They can also be established for the following purposes:
 - (a) to investigate a proposal for future action
 - (b) to monitor a project
- (4) A working group can be established as a working group of elected members or as a member officer working group.
- (5) The committee establishing the working group will appoint the elected members of the working group. These members need not be members of that committee. The number of elected members to be appointed will be determined by the Committee. Officer members will be appointed by the Chief Executive.
- (6) Meetings of working groups shall be called in writing by the Chief Executive and giving reasonable notice. All business to be transacted will be the subject of a written Report unless otherwise agreed by the Chief Executive.
- (7) Attendance by an elected member at a meeting of a working group either as a member of the working group or by specific invitation will be an approved duty of that member and he/she will be entitled to claim travelling and subsistence allowances in respect of his/her attendance.
- (8) The quorum for each working group will be three members. In the case of a member officer working group, at least two shall be elected members.
- (9) The members of the working group shall appoint a chairman. The chairman of a member officer working group may be an elected member or an officer. A chairman may be appointed for the term of the working group or for one meeting or a number of meetings at the discretion of the working group.
- (10) Meetings of working groups shall not be open to the public. A working group may invite to any of its meetings any elected member, officer or external person whom the working group considers can assist in carrying out its remit. A working group can request that the parent committee appoint an elected member or external representative to the working group.
- (11) Working groups are intended as discussion groups and to reach their conclusions and decisions through consensus. The Comhairle's formal procedures relating to motions, amendments and debates are not appropriate to working groups and shall not apply.
- (12) In fulfilling its remit a working group may take such decisions as it considers necessary to that end, without reference to its parent committee. However, a working group cannot commit the Comhairle to future revenue or capital expenditure or act in such a way as to exceed any budget available for its purpose. Similarly, a working group shall not have authority to approve the implementation of any project which it has been asked to study.
- (13) At the end of its period of appointment, or at shorter intervals if the appointing committee requests, the working group shall present a Report on its activities, including any recommendations for action. As a matter of good practice a working group should produce an interim Report not later than half way through its period of appointment and must report any issue which affects its work at the earliest opportunity.

- (14) A committee may extend the term of appointment of a working group if it is advantageous to do so in order to ensure completion of a task. Similarly, a working group can request that its appointment be extended if it has become clear that it cannot complete its purpose within the time period allowed. Such a request will be made in a progress Report to the appointing committee setting out the reasons for the extension to term.
- (15) After completion of its purpose and submission of its final Report to the appointing committee, a working group shall be disestablished automatically.