

For Council Constitution

AREA COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

PURPOSE

The purpose of Area Committees is to provide better solutions to local problems and improve services by giving some key decision making powers to ward Members, and bringing decision making closer to the public.

ROLES

The roles of area committees will be:

- To exercise functions, powers or duties delegated to them by the Council or Council Cabinet;
- To engage the community in tackling problems and improving services;
- To prepare area community plans;
- To pursue neighbourhood renewal;
- To assist the Council's Scrutiny Committees with the development of policy and the scrutiny of decisions;
- To help the Council achieve best value and manage the performance of local services;
- To work with local partners; and
- To improve community cohesion.

NUMBER AND BOUNDARIES

There will be nine area committees (see map).

Area	Wards
1	Belgrave, Latimer and Rushey Mead
2	Humberstone, and Hamilton & Thurncourt
3	Coleman, Evington and Stoneygate
4	Charnwood and Spinney Hill
5	Knighton and Castle, excluding the city centre (see map)
6	Aylestone, Eyres Monsell and Freeman
7	Braunstone Park & Rowley Fields, Western Park and Westcotes
8	New Parks and Fosse
9	Beaumont Leys and Abbey

To begin with, Area Committees will be set up in [insert names of first areas].

AREA COMMITTEE PROCEDURE RULES

Area Committees are committees of the Council.

Functions delegated to Area Committees must be carried out in accordance with the policy framework of the authority, as set by the full Council.

Area Committees may exercise functions, powers or duties delegated to them by the Council or Cabinet. Area Committees may refer issues to Cabinet for comments or decision.

An Area Committee may make recommendations to a Scrutiny Committee. The Scrutiny Committee will report to the Area Committee the action it proposes to take on any recommendation.

In accordance with the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 (the 1990 Regulations), Area Committees

- need not be politically balanced where they meet the requirements of regulation 16A of the 1990 Regulations;
- can only include members of the local authority who are members for wards wholly or partly contained within the area for which the committee has functions;

- must not have functions in respect of an area of the local authority which is larger than two-fifths of the local authority in terms of either area or population;
- can include voting members who are not members of the local authority in respect of functions of the local authority that are described in regulations 4 and 5 of the 1990 Regulations.

MEMBERSHIP

The membership of an Area Committee shall consist of all of the ward Members for the wards covered by the Committee.

QUORUMS

The quoracy levels for Area Committees shall be:

a) There must be at least one Member present from each ward covered by the Area Committee; and

b) There must be at least 2 or 3 Members present as follows:

Total number of Members on Area Committee	Quorum
5	2
6	2
7	3

VOTING

As far as possible, Area Committees should seek to reach agreements by consensus rather than vote. But, the Chair of the meeting shall decide whether a matter should be decided by a vote. Each member of the Area Committee shall have one vote. Issues put to the vote shall be decided by a majority of the members present at the meeting and voting on the issue. In the case of equal votes, the chair of the meeting shall have the second or casting vote.

INVITEES

An Area Committee may invite individuals or representatives of private, voluntary, community and statutory sector organizations to the Area Committee meetings.

TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING

The meetings of each Area Committee shall be decided in advance each year by all Members of the committee. If a special meeting is planned, the time and place shall be decided by the Chair of that meeting, in consultation with the other members of the Committee.

CHAIR OF MEETING

The Chair of each Area Committee meeting shall be decided at the previous meeting of the Area Committee.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Area Committee meetings shall be subject to Access to Information Procedure Rules

PUBLIC NOTICE OF MEETING

Notice of the time and place of Area Committee meetings shall be published at Council offices, on the Council's internet site, in Link magazine and in public places in the area concerned.

Notice of Area Committees shall be published at least five clear days before the meeting. (Five clear days excludes the day of notice, the day of the meeting, Bank Holidays and Saturdays and Sundays).

Notice of the meeting shall specify the agenda for the meeting,

AGENDA

The agenda for the meeting shall be agreed in advance by the Chair for that meeting.

The agenda will include:

- Approving the minutes of the previous meeting
- Declarations of interest
- Half an hour for the public to raise questions
- An opportunity for the public to submit petitions
- A report on progress with questions asked and petitions submitted at previous meetings

Other items will be decided by the Chair.

CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS

If a Member is sitting on a Scrutiny Committee that is considering specific decisions in relation to functions delegated to an Area Committee of which he or she is also a member; he or she cannot speak or vote on that item at the Scrutiny Committee unless given permission to do so by the Standards Committee before the scrutiny meeting.

However if the Scrutiny Committee is simply reviewing policy related to a delegated function, there is not considered to be a conflict of interest. So in that case the Member must declare his or her interest orally before the item and can remain and speak and vote on the item.

TOOLKIT FOR AREA COMMITTEES

The Council will follow the current version of the 'Toolkit for Area Committees' in making arrangements for and conducting Area Committee meetings.