

New Committees – Proposal

At the meeting of the Urgency Committee on 24 May, it was agreed that proposals to create two new committees would be drawn up in consultation with the political groups.

Legal context

Since 2001, Lancashire County Council has operated a cabinet system. Under such a system, all executive decisions must be taken by the leader and cabinet. In law, there is a clear distinction made between decisions reserved for the executive and decisions reserved for full council and its committees.

The proposal is as follows:

Executive Scrutiny Committee

Membership: To be agreed (will be politically balanced)

Meeting frequency: monthly, one or two days before cabinet

Type of committee: Scrutiny committee

Roles and Responsibilities: Pre-decision scrutiny of cabinet decisions. The Executive Scrutiny Committee would meet shortly before cabinet each month, and would give consideration to any decisions due to be made by cabinet. The Executive Scrutiny Committee will also, at its meeting, scrutinise key decisions due to be made by individual cabinet members or cabinet committees.

The Executive Scrutiny Committee would have the right to require any cabinet member or executive director to attend to answer questions. It is expected that cabinet would take into account any comments or recommendations made by the Executive Scrutiny Committee when considering the relevant decision. In any case, a response to recommendations made by the Executive Scrutiny Committee should always be provided in writing within 2 months.

Budgetary Scrutiny Working Group

Membership: To be agreed (will include representation from all four groups)

Meeting frequency: as required during the budget setting process in December / January

Type of committee: Scrutiny working group, reporting to the Executive Scrutiny Committee

Roles and responsibilities: To make recommendations to cabinet on the cabinet budget proposals to full council. The Budgetary Scrutiny Working Group (BSWG) will meet as required over the budget setting period to consider the budget proposals. The BSWG will be able to require any cabinet member and executive director to attend to provide evidence and answer questions.