

**Select Committee Terms of Reference**  
Procurement, Contract Management, and Commissioning

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## 1. Background/ Purpose

City of Wolverhampton Council are looking an opportunity to re-energise political structures and increase Councillor involvement and influence, with a focus on key issues.

As a trial to support the above City of Wolverhampton Council are completing a Select Committee trial. The topic will be Wolverhampton Pound with a focus on Procurement, Contracts and Commissioning.

To support this the Council will be seeking input from expert witnesses to gather feedback and help shape future improvements.

## 2. Remit, Scope and Terms of Reference

To consider the following lines of inquiry:

***‘How do we engage with local businesses and the community and voluntary sector in relation to procurement, contract management and commissioning and how do we ensure inclusivity and equality in these approaches?’***

***How do we engage with partners, local businesses and the community and voluntary sector to make the City a catalyst for change by ensuring that all contracts reflect our values in areas such as climate change, equality, diversity and inclusion, retaining and growing local wealth and having a real presence in the City?’***

The Select Committee is a cross-party group of non-executive councillors who will work as a team to produce a report and draft recommendations in relation to an agreed matter.

The Select Committee will be non-political in its approach.

The Select Committee will agree the terms of reference as set out. At this stage some potential witnesses from whom the committee particularly wants to hear for example senior officers and partner organisations may be sent a list of more specific questions and requests for information.

The Select Committee will meet in public to hear evidence from officers, partner organisations and individuals. The select committee will meet in private to consider the evidence they receive and agree the draft report and recommendations.

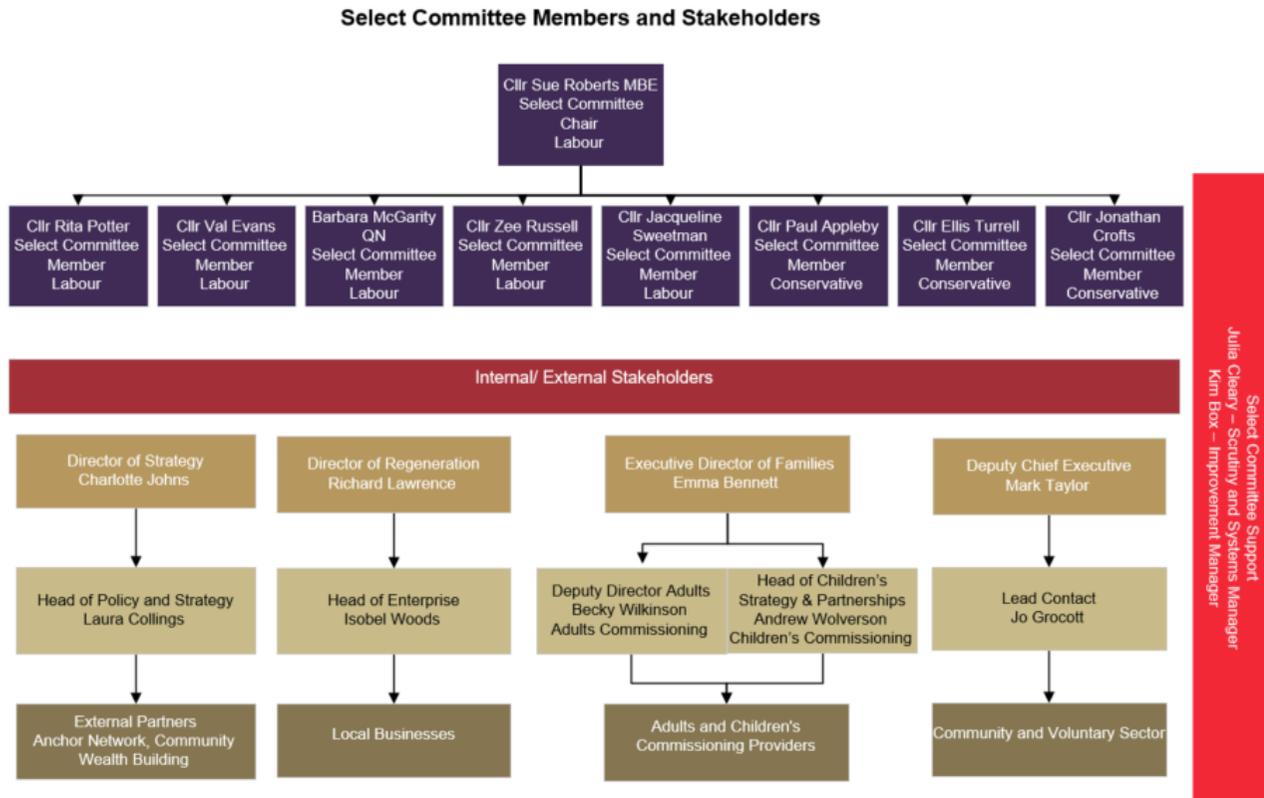
The Select Committee will pursue the goals of equality, diversity, and inclusion in relation to witnesses, membership and work undertaken.

### **3. Members of Select Committees**

Group Leaders will be requested to put forward names of councillors to sit on the select committee. The process for getting appointed to a select committee varies from party to party, although the method should be transparent and democratic. The size of select committees varies. Most select committees have 5 or 7 members. Each party is entitled to a number of seats on select committees in proportion to the number of councillors they have.

The Leader of the majority group will appoint the chair of the select committee and the Chair of the minority group will appoint the vice chair of the select committee.

### **4. Select Committee Structure**



## 5. Time Commitment – Select Committee Membership

To participate effectively in the work of a select committee, councillors will need to set aside time for at least one fortnightly meeting of probably two to three hours alongside at least 5 half or full day enquiry sessions.

Where possible nominated councillors to the Select Committee should have some prior knowledge or experience in relation to the agreed line of enquiry.

Members of the Select Committee will be expected to undertake some independent research and will be expected to formulate considered and measured lines of questioning.

Members will also require reading time as a substantial number of papers will be circulated by committee support staff, including, among other things:

- written evidence submissions
- briefs containing suggested questions for public evidence sessions
- oral evidence transcripts
- correspondence from witnesses and others
- draft reports and suggested amendments to them
- responses to those reports

A minimum commitment of the equivalent of a standard working day each week is expected.

## **6. Role of the Chair**

The Chair will have a casting vote if a formal decision is required. The Chair will have a great deal of influence over how the committee works.

Among the key elements of the role of the Chair are:

- ensuring that the meetings remain focused on the agreed line of inquiry
- ensuring that the committee work as a team and that party political issues do not impact on the debate
- providing support and direction to the committee's support staff between formal meetings to ensure that all the required information is requested in good time and can be made available.
- ensuring that committee members can actively contribute to the inquiry topic, oral evidence sessions and reports
- providing the committee's public face

The Chair will also be expected to spend a good deal of time working behind the scenes, for example, maintaining good relationships with executive members and meeting businesses or partners that want to attract the committee's attention or promote a subject for inquiry.

The Select Committee may delegate specified routine decisions to the chair, for example, the timing of meetings and the details of the organisation of evidence sessions.

The Chair will take formal responsibility for proposing the draft report as agreed by the select committee to Scrutiny Board, Cabinet and Full Council.

Once the select committee members are appointed, the chair will write to its members with the date, time, and place of the first meeting.

## 7. Process

The Select Committee will pursue an agreed line of enquiry in relation to a specific issue, in this case - **The Wolverhampton Pound: Procurement, Contracts and Commissioning**.

This will be carried out by gathering information and insight from council officers, partner organisations, local businesses and the community and voluntary sector.

Council officers, partner organisations, local businesses and representatives from the community and voluntary sector will be invited to appear before the select committee as experts in their field to help inform the work of the Select Committee and the final report and recommendations.

The purpose of the Select Committee is not to scrutinise the work of these groups but to understand and learn from current working practices, the context within which they operate in the City and to make recommendations as to where improvements might be made, and real value added.

## 8. Witnesses and Oral Evidence

The committee will choose the people it wishes to give oral evidence, including but not limited to the following:

- The Director for Strategy, City of Wolverhampton Council
- The Head of Strategy, City of Wolverhampton Council
- The Director of Regeneration, City of Wolverhampton Council
- The Head of Enterprise, City of Wolverhampton Council
- The Director of Finance, City of Wolverhampton Council
- The Head of Procurement, City of Wolverhampton Council
- Representatives from Preston who have been involved in Community Wealth Building
- Representatives from the Anchor Network
- Representatives from Local Business
- Representatives from the Community and Voluntary Sector
- CLES – the national organisation for local economies
- Executive Members if required

Committee support staff will invite the witnesses. Oral evidence sessions will then be held, in public, with members of the committee questioning the witnesses.

Committee support staff will prepare a background briefing paper for each oral evidence session, sometimes including a number of suggested questions but committee members can also ask their own questions.

Questioning at oral evidence sessions is intended to draw evidence from the witnesses, rather than being a means for attendees to make statements or outline their own views.

All witnesses will be treated with respect and courtesy and the chair is expected to ensure this happens.

Witnesses can participate remotely in oral evidence sessions with the agreement of the Committee.

The committees will set a forward programme of meetings that still leaves some space for any urgent responses to changing events or as new information emerges.

Oral evidence is not the only way of getting the information needed. The Committees may seek written evidence and can use a variety of other methods of gathering information.

All questions must:

- seek information or clarification of a point
- be inline and link to the remit and line of inquiry
- be about something a witness is responsible for
- be based on fact, not speculation
- use neutral language and not contain unnecessary information
- not ask for information which is readily available
- not be political in nature

## **9. Reports by the Select Committee**

The inquiry will conclude with a report containing recommendations to the council, the wider Government, and sometimes other partner organisations.

Once the oral evidence sessions are concluded, the chair, working with the committee support staff, will be responsible for commissioning a draft report for the whole committee to consider.

There will one or more meetings when the committee will discuss a proposed structure for the report and an outline of the narrative and recommendations. This is a vital element in enabling the committee support staff who will draft the report to gather the input which will help them to express the committee's opinions.

## **10. Considering and amending reports**

Reports are agreed in private committee meetings. Once a draft report is ready, members will be sent a copy and will be given time to suggest amendments.

Amendments should be provided in writing before the meeting so that they can be circulated to the whole committee. The committee support staff will assist members in writing amendments if requested.

Draft reports are presented to the committee by the chair. At the meeting, the chair will hold an informal discussion to see whether any differences agreed consensually.

The chair may then move on to informal consideration of each paragraph or section of the report to clarify decisions on any changes. Amendments can be made informally if everyone agrees.

If agreement can't be reached informally (or where there is a desire to record a minority opinion), the chair may then take the committee formally through the report paragraph by paragraph, including the proposing of formal amendments and the making of formal decisions on these. Votes will be held if the committee is unable to agree. These votes are included in the formal minutes, which are published with the report.

The Committee should seek to proceed by consensus, with conclusions and recommendations backed by the whole committee.

## 11. Cabinet or Council Responses

The Cabinet or Council are expected to reply to the recommendations in a select committee report within two months of publication.

Responses should focus on the conclusions drawn, and recommendations made, rather than on the more general narrative or argument.

The Committee may seek a further response if they are not satisfied with the initial response.

After publication, the committees, to increase the impact of their work, should check the progress the relevant organisation has made on implementing actions agreed in their response. There are a variety of ways in which the committees can do this, including by writing to the organisation or holding another oral evidence session.

## 12. Members of the Select Committee

Name	Title	Role
Councillor Sue Roberts MBE	Labour Party Councillor	Select Committee Chair
Councillor Rita Potter	Labour Party Councillor	Select Committee Member

Councillor Val Evans	Labour Party Councillor	Select Committee Member
Councillor Barbara McGarity QN	Labour Party Councillor	Select Committee Member
Councillor Zee Russell	Labour Party Councillor	Select Committee Member
Councillor Jacqueline Sweetman	Labour Party Councillor	Select Committee Member
Councillor Paul Appleby	Conservative Party Councillor	Select Committee Member Vice Chair
Councillor Ellis Turrell	Conservative Party Councillor	Select Committee Member
Councillor Jonathan Crofts	Conservative Party Councillor	Select Committee Member

### 13. Select Committee Meeting Details

Meeting 1 - Community Wealth Building (including Anchor and Community Wealth Building experience)

Meeting 2 - Procurement, Finance and Commercial

Meeting 3 - Commissioning

Meeting 4 - Business Support

All above provide an overview of the offerings, support and tools to engage.

Meeting 5 - Engagement event – Local Businesses

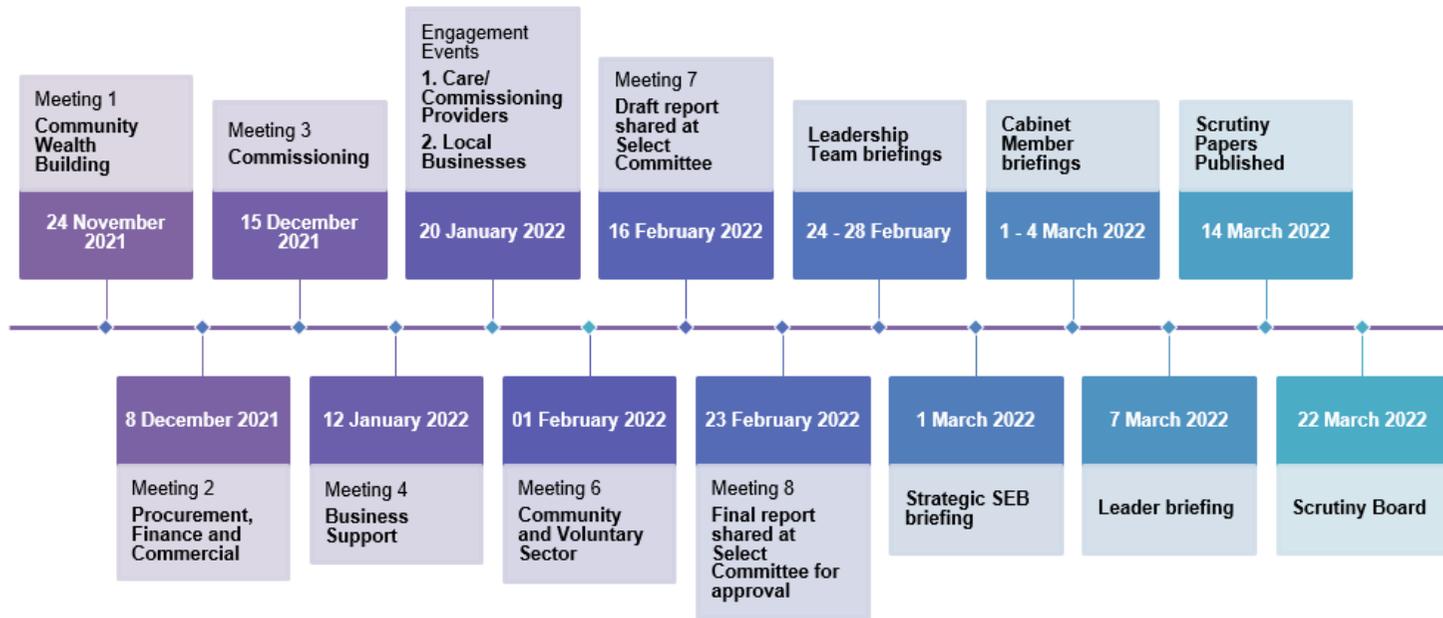
Meeting 6 - Engagement event – Commissioning

Meeting 7 - Community and Voluntary Sector feedback

Meeting 8 - Wrap up and Recommendations



## Select Committee – Meeting Plan



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wolverhampton.gov.uk

## 14. Select Committee Reporting Timescale



## 15. Accountability and Escalation

The group reports to:

- Scrutiny Board
- Cabinet
- Full Council

## 16. Quorum

The required number of Select Committee members to allow a meeting to proceed is three.

**17. Administrative Support**

Scrutiny and Business Improvement will provide clerical support for Select Committee meetings – specifically recording and distributing agendas, actions and decisions.

**18. Frequency of Meetings**

The meetings are set to occur a minimum of one Select Committee per month.  
Informal meetings to be arranged as and when required.