

5. Area Committees and Joint Arrangements

5.1 This section describes the powers of the Council to delegate its decision making to other member bodies. The options which the Council has identified include Area Committees / Forums and Joint Committees. Decisions may also be delegated to officers, the arrangements for which are set out in Section 6 of this Constitution.

5.2 Area Committees / Forums

5.2.1 The Council may appoint area committees or area forums with specific decision making powers applicable to a defined area within the District if it is satisfied that to do so will improve service delivery in the context of Best Value and secure more efficient, transparent and accountable decision-making.

5.2.2 The Council will consult with relevant Parish and Town Councils and the Chairs of relevant Parish Meetings when considering whether and how to establish area committees.

5.3 Joint Arrangements

5.3.1 The Council may establish joint arrangements with one or more local authorities for the latter to exercise some / all of its non-Executive functions or to advise the Council. The Executive may establish joint arrangements with one or more local authorities to exercise functions which are Executive functions.

5.3.2 Such arrangements may involve the appointment of a joint committee with these other local authorities.

5.3.3 The Executive may only appoint Executive Members to a joint committee if:

- (a) the joint committee has functions for only part of the area of the authority;
- (b) that area is smaller than two-fifths of the authority by area or population; and
- (c) the member councillor(s) are those whose ward is wholly or partly contained within the area.

5.3.4 Those appointments need not reflect the political composition of the local authority as a whole.

5.3.5 The Council has established joint arrangements in relation to the Strata Service. Strata is a partnership which shares ICT services between East Devon, Exeter and Teignbridge District Councils. Strata is a stand-alone limited company which is owned and controlled equally by the three councils. The company is made up of ICT staff from each of the councils ensuring that vital experience and expertise is retained within the organisations.

- 5.3.6 The [Strata - Joint Executive Committee \(JEC\)](#) makes operational decisions for Strata in accordance with the business plan and service plans, which it will agree. The JEC will provide strategic direction to the Board and be accountable to the Councils as shareholders. The JEC's responsibility for governance and performance includes budget monitoring, all of which will be supported by the Joint Scrutiny Committee.
- 5.3.7 The [Strata -Joint Scrutiny Committee \(JSC\)](#) scrutinises the operation and performance of Strata and its governance arrangements.
- 5.3.8 The Council has established a joint Committee between East Devon District Council, Exeter City Council and Teignbridge District Council to ensure that appropriate mitigation measures in respect of sites of European importance are delivered across the three administrative areas. East Devon District Council administer the Committee: [South and East Devon Habitat Regulations Executive Committee - East Devon](#)

5.4 Delegation to / from Other Local Authorities

- 5.4.1 The Full Council may delegate non-Executive functions to another local authority or, in certain circumstances, the Executive of another local authority. The Executive may delegate Executive functions to another local authority or the Executive of another local authority in certain circumstances.
- 5.4.2 The decision whether or not to accept a delegation from another local authority shall be reserved to the Council meeting.

5.5 Contracting Out Functions

Provided there is no delegation of the Council's discretionary decision-making, the Council (for non-Executive functions); and the Executive (for Executive functions), may contract out to another body functions which may be exercised by an officer and which are subject to an order pursuant to Section 70 Deregulation and Contracting Out Act 1994 (as amended from time to time), or under contracting arrangements where the contractor acts as the Council's agent under usual contracting principles.