NEIGHBOURHOOD COMMITTEES

Details of the Neighbourhood structure are set out in Article 10 of the Constitution and the functions for which Neighbourhood Committees are responsible are set out below. Each Neighbourhood Committee is composed of the Councillors representing the electoral wards within the Neighbourhood.

The role of the Neighbourhood Committees broadly comprises three distinct but complementary elements; to exercise the formal powers and duties of the Council in respect of certain services and functions, to support and complement the work of the Strategic Committees and to use their positions of leadership and influence to actively engage with and empower the respective local communities and build capacity and resilience within them.

POWERS

Each Neighbourhood Committee may exercise the following powers and duties of the Authority provided that:

- they are within Council policy / there is no conflict with Council policy;
- any decision taken is properly within the remit of the Neighbourhood Committee concerned;
- any financial implications of decisions taken are capable of being contained within the approved budget;
- they do not involve matters of a highly controversial nature as identified by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair of the Neighbourhood Committee concerned.

The Local Environment

1. Responsibility for Development Control matters, excluding the determination of those categories of planning applications which are the responsibility of the Development Control Committee. (Matters that, for whatever reason (e.g. where a significant number of Members have a pecuniary interest) cannot be dealt with at Neighbourhood level to be dealt with by the Development Control Committee.)

Street based issues

3. Responsibility for Area revitalisation and minor environmental improvement schemes within the Area, including local shopping centres. The exercise of the powers relating to untidy land under Section 78 of the Public Health Act 1936 and Section 34 of the Public Health Act 1961.

4. Highway and verge maintenance, street signs, traffic signs and furniture, land drainage; the approval of traffic management schemes in respect of single roads and the recommendation of traffic management schemes of wider application to the relevant Strategic Committee; and agreements for the execution of highway works.

5. The making and implementation of on street parking restrictions; the approval of advisory parking bays for people with disabilities; and the exemption of roads from the footway parking ban.
6. The maintenance of Coombe Estate roads (under the Maldens and Coombe UDC Act 1933) (Maldens and Coombe).

7. The provision and location of recycling facilities; the control of litter; the provision and maintenance of highway trees and policy on Neighbourhood Community Noticeboards and managing community information sharing in the Neighbourhood.

8. Town Centre Management, including Shopmobility.

9. The management and operation of caravan sites.


Leisure and Recreation

11. The management of public parks and the promotion and control of events therein and the management of playgrounds within parks.

12. Operation and management of community halls and the Market House (Kingston Town).

Licensing and Regulation

13. Responsibility for Licensing and Regulation functions that do not fall to be dealt with under the Licensing Act 2003. (Set out at Annex 1)

14. The designation by Order, as appropriate, of public places within their areas under S.13 of the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001, where nuisance/annoyance to the public or disorder has been associated with the consumption of alcohol in that place.

Community

15. To oversee the operation of a scheme for the allocation of Community Grants to voluntary organisations by the relevant Neighbourhood Manager in consultation with the Chair and individual Members as appropriate.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP, INFLUENCE, EMPOWERMENT AND ENGAGEMENT

In addition to the exercise of its formal powers and duties, each Neighbourhood Committee is expected to:

1. engage with and respond to local residents, businesses, campaign groups and voluntary and community sector organisations in order to give them a voice and enable them to effectively participate in and influence the development of local services and policies and to identify solutions to local needs.
2. act as a conduit for consultation with and feedback from the local community and to develop and maintain an annual Community Engagement Plan and a Communications Plan

3. work with the local community in order to identify local priorities and approve and maintain a Community Plan.

4. empower the community, build capacity and resilience within it and encourage self-help schemes and volunteering programmes and opportunities, and to promote and engage the voluntary sector on community issues

5. facilitate access by local residents to the decision making process and to regularly host community forums to which Portfolio holders, partner agencies and other community leaders, including representatives of schools, social care services, residents associations, the Police and health providers, will be invited to participate alongside Neighbourhood Members. The Forums will provide an opportunity for discussion of issues of local concern and for the creation of action plans and policies to meet the locally identified vision for the area.

6. have a local community leadership role and to empower and support individual Members to act as community leaders.

7. be responsible for representing the interests of residents of the Neighbourhood in relation to the effectiveness and demand lead provision of services by other public agencies.

8. act as a conduit for bringing together the community and providers of educational, children’s and youth services. Within Community Forums and Community Panels, to focus on opportunities for young people around social activities provision, employment and engagement.

9. include Young People representation and views in all aspects of Neighbourhood work building communities for the future.

**SUPPORT FOR CORPORATE FUNCTIONS AND SERVICES**

Each Neighbourhood Committee may support, promote and assist the work of the Council and its Strategic Committees in the following ways (responsibility for the management and implementation of the respective services and functions remains a matter for the relevant Strategic Committee)

1. Within such discretionary budget as may be allocated, the ability to incur expenditure for the general benefit of the Neighbourhood. This could be for example, the promotion or subsidy of courses and activities at leisure facilities, the promotion of community use of facilities or other appropriate activities.

2. Scrutiny of the provision of Council services within the area, including the monitoring and use of Neighbourhood service data.

3. To comment on proposed specifications for any Borough wide contracts where service delivery is likely to impact on the Neighbourhood and to monitor performance of the contractor where appropriate.
4. To promote and support Local health provision, campaigns and GP engagement and to promote, support and engage with public health services to achieve greatest benefit to residents.

5. Encourage and support and promote existing and new community lead local cultural, artistic and sporting initiatives, events and participation by public agencies to strengthen community wellbeing.

6. Support and promotion of emergency services community safety campaigns and initiatives providing Ward based community assurance during incidents and encouraging community cohesion and building community resilience.

Strategic Matters

1. Where any matter under consideration by a Neighbourhood relating to Kingston Town Centre or the District Business Centres is deemed by the Committee to be strategic (i.e. with implications extending significantly beyond the town centre and impacting on other neighbourhoods) it shall be referred to the Policy and Finance Committee for final decision along with any recommendation for action by the Neighbourhood Committee.

2. Cross Neighbourhood Boundary issues should be considered by both Neighbourhoods with the Neighbourhood where most impact and cost will fall having the overall and final decision.

3. In cases of doubt as to whether a particular matter under consideration falls within the definition of “strategic”, and where at least three Members of the Committee so request, advice shall be sought from the Monitoring Officer. In such cases no further action will be taken in respect of the matter until the Committee has met and considered the Monitoring Officer’s advice.

4. This procedure shall not apply to:

   ● development control matters where there is already provision within the terms of reference of both the Committee and the Development Control Committee for significant planning matters to be dealt with by the Development Control Committee; or

   ● Licensing and regulation matters where there is already provision within the terms of reference of the Committee and the Licensing Committee for significant licensing and regulatory matters to be dealt with by the Licensing Committee.
NEIGHBOURHOOD LICENSING AND REGULATION FUNCTIONS

1. To consider reports from officers where it is considered that the most appropriate course of action in respect of a dwelling is the making of a demolition Order or the declaration of a clearance area and to determine the most appropriate course of action in respect thereof subject to the receipt of any representations;

2. To consider representations from any person, including tenants, having an interest in a property where hazards exist and which may be the subject of a demolition order and to determine the course of action to be taken under the Housing Acts;

3. To consider representations from any persons having an interest in the buildings which may be included within a clearance area and to determine the declaration of such an area under the Housing Acts;

4. To consider and determine appeals from any person aggrieved by a decision under the Council's Housing Renewal Policy (as revised):
   a) appeals against a decision by officers that a grant be withheld, repaid, recalculated or redetermined or where the applicant is aggrieved by any of the discretionary conditions applied as a prerequisite to grant approval;
   b) whether to demand repayment where there has been a breach of grant conditions, and, if so, how much;

5. To consider and determine applications for licences, registrations and other consents (other than in respect of the Licensing Act, 2003 and the Gambling act, 2005) where the appropriate officers feel unable to grant such consents under their delegated authority, this to include the consideration of representations;

6. To exercise the Authority's final discretion as to the showing of films, where appropriate;

7. To determine applications for the grant of sex establishment licences for the first time in respect of any premises and to consider applications for the renewal or transfer of licences where there are objections;

8. To consider and determine any statutory appeal against the rejection of an application for the grant or renewal of a consent under the Marriage Act, 1994;

9. To review decisions made by the appropriate officers in relation to the Access to Personal Files (Housing) Regulation 1989, where the tenant is, or under the Act is treated as, the subject of relevant information held by the Authority and where he or she or a member of his or her family is aggrieved by any decision concerning access to, or correction or erasure of, that information;
10. Responsibility for markets and street activities, including the allocation of stalls and pitches, and the issue of licences for street trading and street cafes. This to include:
   a) to hear and determine appeals by market traders against suspension;
   b) to determine the allocation of Market Stalls where this is necessary;
   c) to consider and determine appeals by street traders against the refusal, revocation or suspension of a licence;
   d) to consider and determine applications for street cafés where objections have been received following public consultation;

11. Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages including Civil Partnerships;

12. The Council’s Health and Safety at work functions where the Council is regulating other businesses, including the issue of Licences for storage of petroleum and to licence and close premises for the keeping and selling of explosives;

13. Environmental Protection functions in respect of control of pollution, (air, land and water) regulation of statutory nuisances and other such environmental protection functions.