

DECISION MAKING

Workbook



Note: Although in some parts of the British Isles Scout Counties are known as Areas or Islands – and in one case Bailiwick - for ease of reading, this publication simply refers to County/Counties. In Scotland there is no direct equivalent to County or Area. In Scotland, Scouting is organised into Districts and Regions, each with distinct responsibilities. Some 'County' functions are the responsibility of Scottish Regions, whilst others lie with Scottish Districts. The focus of responsibility is outlined in Scottish Variations from POR.

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Decision Making workbook

What is the purpose of this workbook?

This workbook is aimed at managers and supporters in Scouting. The purpose of this workbook is to provide the learner with the processes, methods and structure of decision making within the Scout Association.

The total learning time for this resource is approximately 30 minutes.

Learning objectives

After completing this workbook, you should be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the principles of making a decision and the methods that can be used to aid decision making.
- Understand how decisions are made within The Scout Association, and the structure that supports decision making.

How to complete this workbook

Reading through this workbook and completing the tasks will give you an understanding of how The Scout Association is structured and how decisions are made. If you are unsure about any of the information or tasks then discuss this with your Training Adviser or line manager, before coming back to complete the workbook.

While using the workbook you will see the following symbol:



Task: activities, discussions or reflections for learners to undertake

Throughout this workbook you will be undertaking practical activities, making notes and reflecting on relevant examples from your Scouting experience. We hope that this workbook will provide you with useful knowledge to assist you in your role in Scouting.

What resources do I need to accompany this workbook?

- Your role description

Decision Making in Scouting

As a manager or supporter in Scouting, you will be required to make a number of decisions based on Scouting as a whole. These might be decisions you can make alone or might have to be made in partnership with others, such as the local Scout Executive Committee, other leaders or young people. Your role description will be a useful tool for reference as to the types of decisions that you will be involved in.

Listed below are example decisions and who would be involved in making them;

Individual decisions - recommending an adult to take on a leadership role, granting a permit.

Executive Committee decisions - financial decisions, physical resources, risk management and the formation of sub-committees.

Scout Council decisions - approving executive committee members, receiving and considering the annual report and accounts.



Exercise 1

Use the table below to list the types of decisions that you will be involved in, in your role in Scouting. You may find it useful to look through your role description.

Decisions you may make individually in your role	Decisions you may collaborate with others in

Making decisions is not always easy, as there can be many different variables and factors involved, that affect the decision to be made. There are several different strategies to help you arrive at a decision,. Here is one example of a strategy using seven steps

Basic steps of making a decision:

1. Define and clarify the issue
 - Do you need to gather any additional information that can help you make an informed decision?
 - Are you the sole decision maker or do you need to collaborate with others?
2. Does it need action now?
 - Is it urgent/important/both – Information on what is Urgent/Important, along with some tools to help identify this, can be found the factsheet [“How to Prioritise”](#).
3. Consider all the possible outcomes
 - Brainstorm all of the possible options or solutions.
4. Compare the pros/cons of each option
5. Select the best option
 - Avoid vagueness and/or a weak compromise.
6. Explain your decision to those involved/affected
 - Communicate to all those affected by the decision.
 - Keep a few notes on how and why you have made a decision. This can be beneficial if anyone wants to understand your reasoning or for future reference.
7. Follow up to ensure the decision has been implemented

Barriers to decision making

Decision making can sometimes be challenging, due to various factors, including:

1. Information
 - Not enough information – it can feel like you are making a decision with only half a story or missing information. Make sure you feel confident that you have enough information on which to base the decision.
 - Too much information – you could be overwhelmed with a wealth of information from various different sources. If this is the case can you may wish to condense the information into manageable chunks or you can highlight the most important information and discount the rest.
2. People
 - Too many people – making decisions by committee can be difficult, as everyone has their own views, opinions and values. However there are some decisions that are the responsibilities of committees, where a majority voting method may have to be used if consensus cannot be achieved.
 - Vested interests – some people involved in the decision making process may have their own agenda, which is not the primary focus for the decision that needs to be made. At times it may be necessary to refocus discussions.
3. Emotions
 - Emotional attachment – some people can be reluctant to embrace change and can become resistant to an idea that upsets the status quo.
 - No emotional attachment – sometimes it is harder to make a decision if you don't have a strong feeling or interest in the outcome. Having a structured process can help you to make a decision.



Exercise 2

Think of a decision you have to make, within your current role. After you have gone through the steps below, you could discuss this with your Training Adviser.

Issue involved	
Is there further information you require? Where will you find this or who will you ask?	
Will you reach a decision on your own, or with others? Who else will be involved?	
Is this matter urgent/important or both? Are there other issues that will take priority?	
Briefly, list all the possible options or solutions	
Compare pros and con	Pros
	Cons
After due consideration, what do you consider to be the best option?	
Who do you need to communicate your decision to (including for information only)?	
How will you follow up on this issue, to check that your decision has been implemented fully	

Methods of Decision Making & Prioritising



Exercise 3

Below are some examples of decisions made in Scouting. Who has the final decision, and who else is involved? Complete the table below

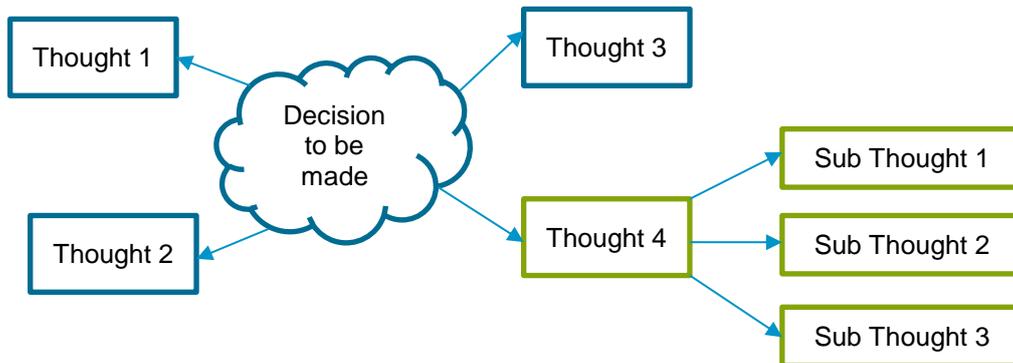
Scenario	Who makes the final decision?	Who else is involved in the decision?
Approving an activity permit		
Deciding on the outcome of a complaint		
Recommending a wood badge		
Allowing a Scout Troop activity to go ahead		
Agreeing an appointment in the District		
Deciding on Group development plan priorities		

Processes & Methods

There are several different tools that can help you make a decision, or focus your thinking when trying to make a decision. Below are several examples that you may find useful.

Mind Map

Mind maps can be a useful tool to see all of the possible options. This can help get all your thoughts on to paper, so you can then begin to structure them.



T-Chart

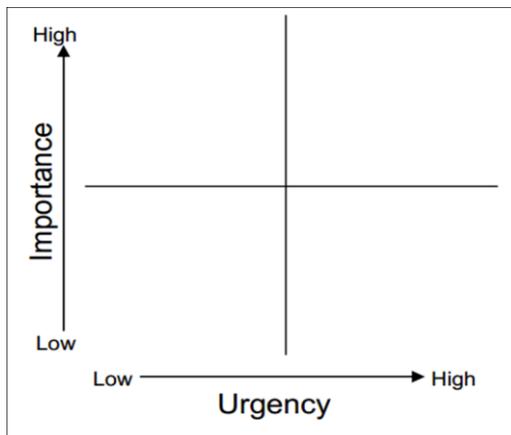
T-Charts enable you to examine two facets of a topic, for example;

- advantages v disadvantages,
- facts v opinions,
- one product v another product
- indoor event v outdoor event

Decision to be Made	
Date	
Pro	Con
Conclusion / Decision Made	

Prioritisation Grid

This grid helps to find out what's important when prioritising decisions. It enables you to focus on what is important and then to manage tasks effectively in the face of demands on time.



Points Matrix

The points matrix is a useful tool when you have lots of tasks to complete and therefore need to prioritise.

Tasks	Category				Total Score
	Urgency 1- High 2- Medium 3- low	Importance 1- High 2- Medium 3- low	Effort 1- High 2- Medium 3- low	Priority 1- High 2- Medium 3- low	

Tops Tips for effective decision making

Pretend you are advising others

Sometimes taking a step back and looking at the situation, as if someone was asking you for advice on how they should make a decision, can help focus your thoughts on the subject. After asking yourself “how would I advise a friend” write down what you would say so that you have a record of your thoughts?

Take a break

Becoming overwhelmed with making a decision can be counterproductive to finding an answer. If you have been preoccupied with making a decision, try taking a break and distracting yourself for a while. Whilst taking a break is healthy, procrastinating can be unhealthy. Taking a break that is relaxing or gives you a different focus, can be the space that you need.

Focus on the goal

When making decisions some people lose focus on the goal and the real purpose needed to make a decision. Writing down the goal and purpose and keeping it visible can be a productive way of way of keeping the goal and purpose at the forefront of the decision making process, helping to cement the reason for making the decision.

Space

Find a space that is conducive to helping you make a decision, whether that is on your own or in a group. Some people thrive on being in a busy bustling environment while others wince at the very idea.

Considering Values

Scouting is a values based organisation and the Adult Training scheme encourages members to look at the values we have and how they influence our Scouting journey. The corresponding training to this can be found in [Essential Information](#), [Essential Information for Executive Committee Members](#) and [Fundamentals of Scouting](#).

Make your decision

Giving yourself a deadline or set of timescales, by which to make your decision, can help focus your thoughts and bring the task in line with you other priorities. Once you have a timeframe, be sure to keep to it wherever possible, so as not to add any extra pressure on yourself. Once you have made your decision, write it down along with your reasoning. Now that a decision has been made, stick to it unless any other information that was not available at the time comes to light.

Following up your decision

Once you have made a decision, be sure to communicate it to all those who need to know. This may include detailing the impact or carefully considering your response. If you then delegate actions that support your decision make sure you follow up with those responsible for actioning your recommendation, to ensure that progress is made.

Youth Shaped Scouting

Youth Shaped Scouting has been an integral part of Scouting since the movement was formed in 1907. In recent years this has been formalised with the introduction of Youth Commissioners and the introduction of a youth shaped strategy.

In recent years Youth Shaped Scouting has been formalised with the introduction of Youth Commissioners at all levels down to the District. Youth Commissioners are champions that encourage and lead the Youth Shaped Scouting work to ensure that Scouting in the County/Area/District is shaped by young people in partnership with adults.

Youth Commissioners are ex-officio members of the local Executive Committee allowing them the opportunity to represent the views of Young People to the Committee. Youth Commissioners have the right to vote at the committee meetings and so have a responsibility to understand what impact they have on committee decisions.

In Scotland, roles that support Youth Shaped Scouting are different. Youth Involvement Commissioners are appointed at Country, Region and District levels and Youth Commissioners are elected young people, who chair Youth Advisory Groups.

Informally young people can be part of any committee that feels their expertise would add value to the committee. It is best practice where practically possible to have young people help inform any decision that affects the young people as an individual or group.

The Explorer Scout Unit should have opportunities for the members to take part in the decision making process. Any forum or committee should have both Explorer Scouts and Leaders working together.

As adults, it is our responsibility to ensure that young people are given opportunities to participate fully in decision making and to help shape their own Scouting experience e.g. as part of the programme, within Executive Committees etc.

The Scout Association has a dedicated area for members to find out more about **Youth Shaped Scouting** including useful resources for adult members to benchmark the involvement of young people in the decision making process.

Using POR

Policy, Organisation and Rules (POR) defines the structure of Scouting in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man and provides information about the management and training of the organisation. If you need to consult POR it can be found **scouts.org.uk/por**

POR provides support and guidance to help us all run Scouting and is a useful document to refer to when making decisions. It is worth researching which POR sections relate to your area of responsibility and the decisions you may be involved in.

Variations from POR

It is useful to note that Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland may have a few different rules that govern national Scouting in these Countries. This is primarily due to difference in legislation, charity structure, education systems. Currently, this only applies to Scotland, however.

Scotland

The Scottish variations from POR can be found at **scouts.scot/scottish-por**

National Structure

The Scout Association is governed by the Council of The Scout Association, consisting mainly of representatives from all Counties/Areas and Branches.

The Board of Trustees maintains a UK Headquarters with various Departments to implement the policy and to provide the services and material necessary for the development of Scouting. It has delegated certain powers to various Committees and to sub-teams



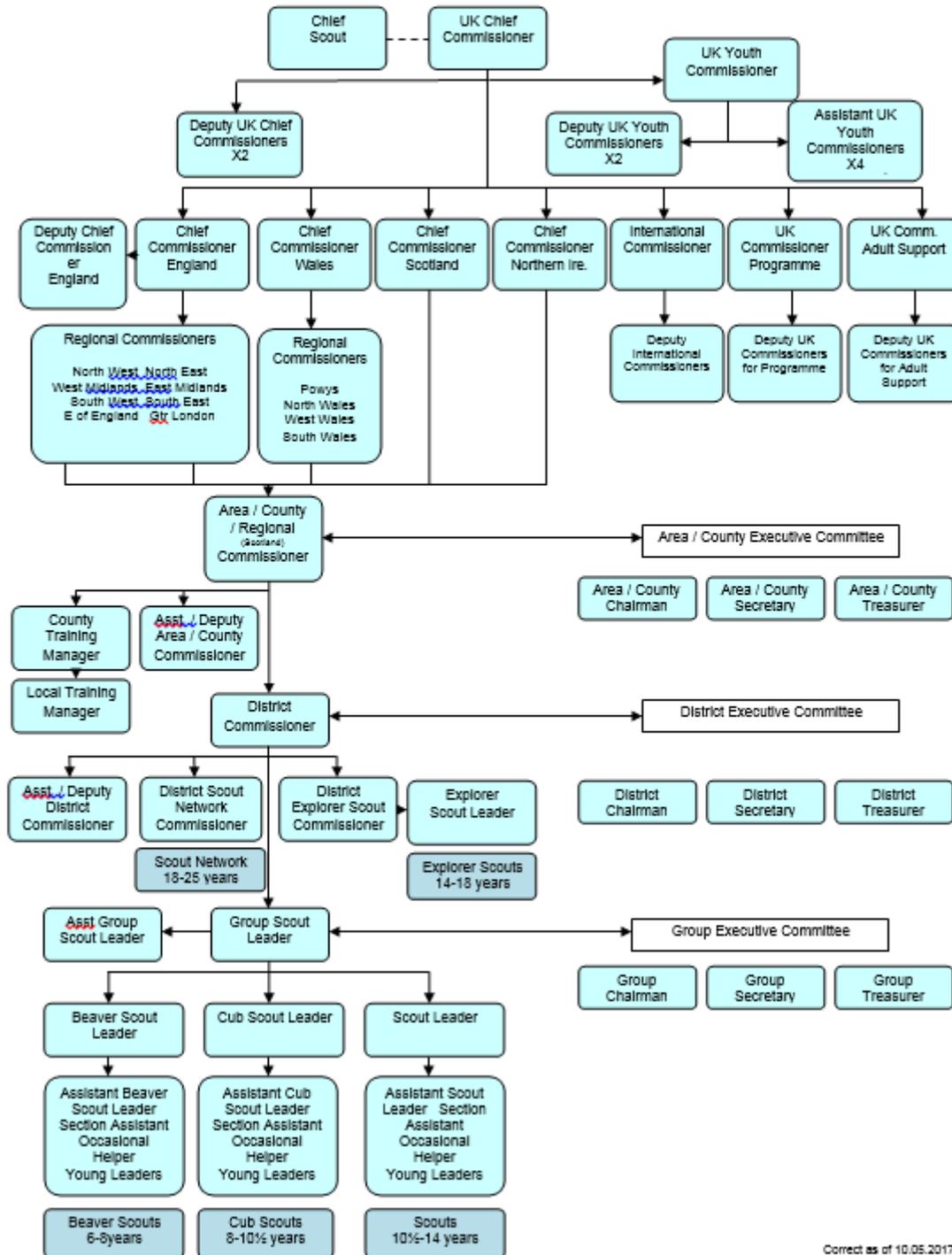
- Council of The Scout Association
 - Approximately 450 members
 - Ex-officio, Elected, Nominated and Nominated Youth Representatives

- Board of Trustees
 - Elected Members [9]
 - Elected Youth Representatives [3]
 - Appointed Members
 - Chair*
 - Treasurer*
 - Others [3]*
 - Ex-officio Members
 - UK Chief Commissioner*
 - Chief Executive*
 - Attending Member (Non-Voting)
 - Company Secretary*
 - Invited to attend
 - Senior Leaderships Team*
 - Other persons invited by the Chairman*

Local Structure

The Scout Association has a structure that supports the management of local Scouting. Below is the national structure for the UK, variations to this structure for the devolved nations are detailed in the following pages. The role descriptions that support this structure are located [here](#) and help members to understand their decision making responsibilities.

The Scout Association's Volunteer Structure



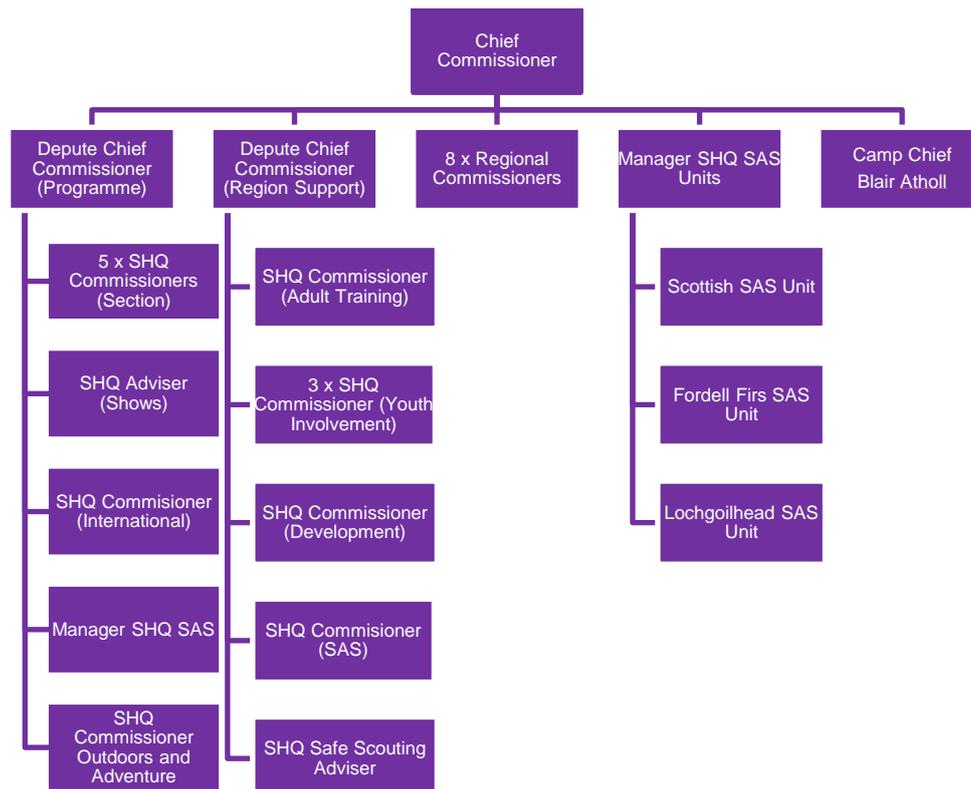
Correct as of 10.05.2017

National Variations

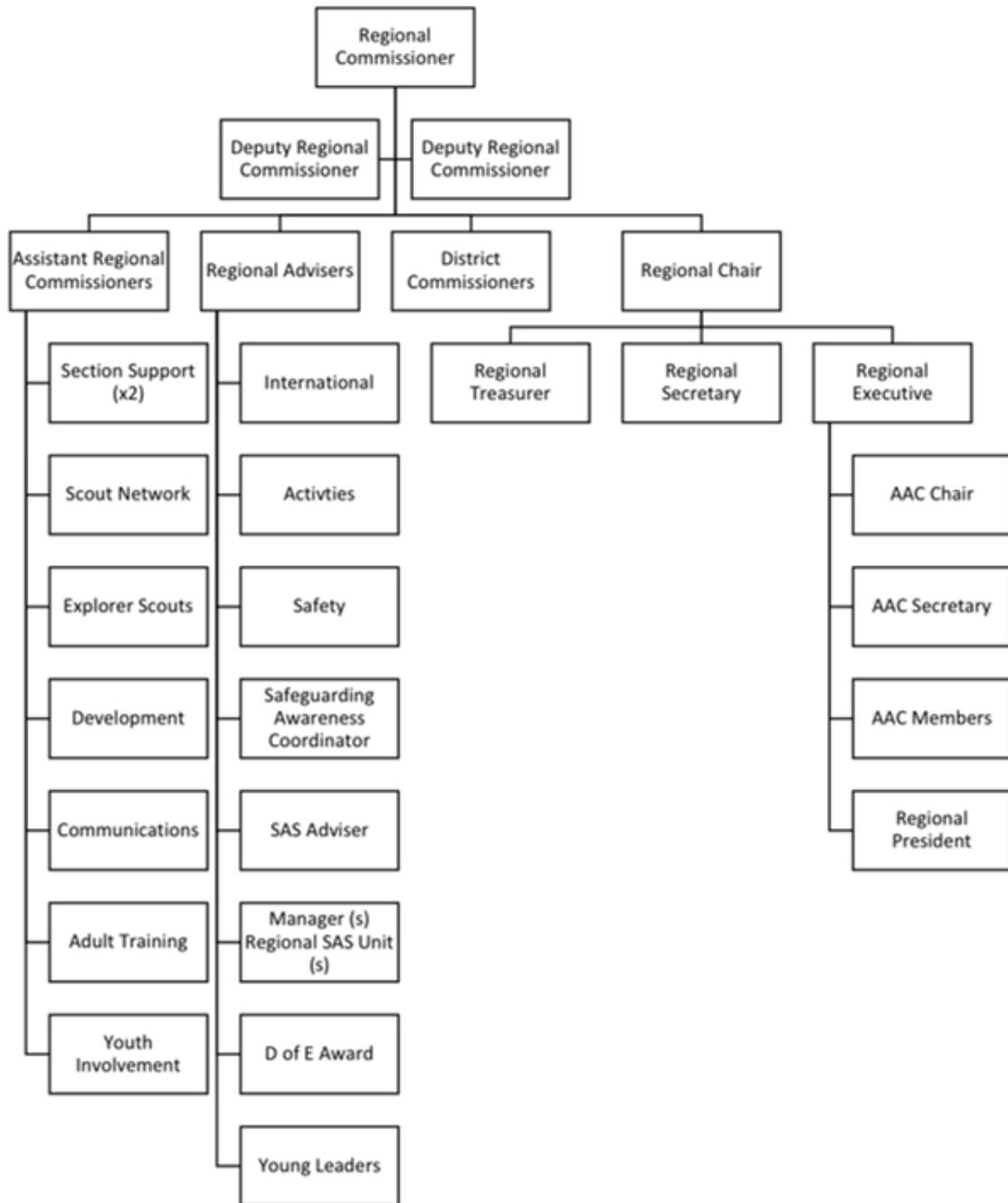
To reflect operational differences across the devolved nations that make up the UK, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have different structures to those in England.

Scotland

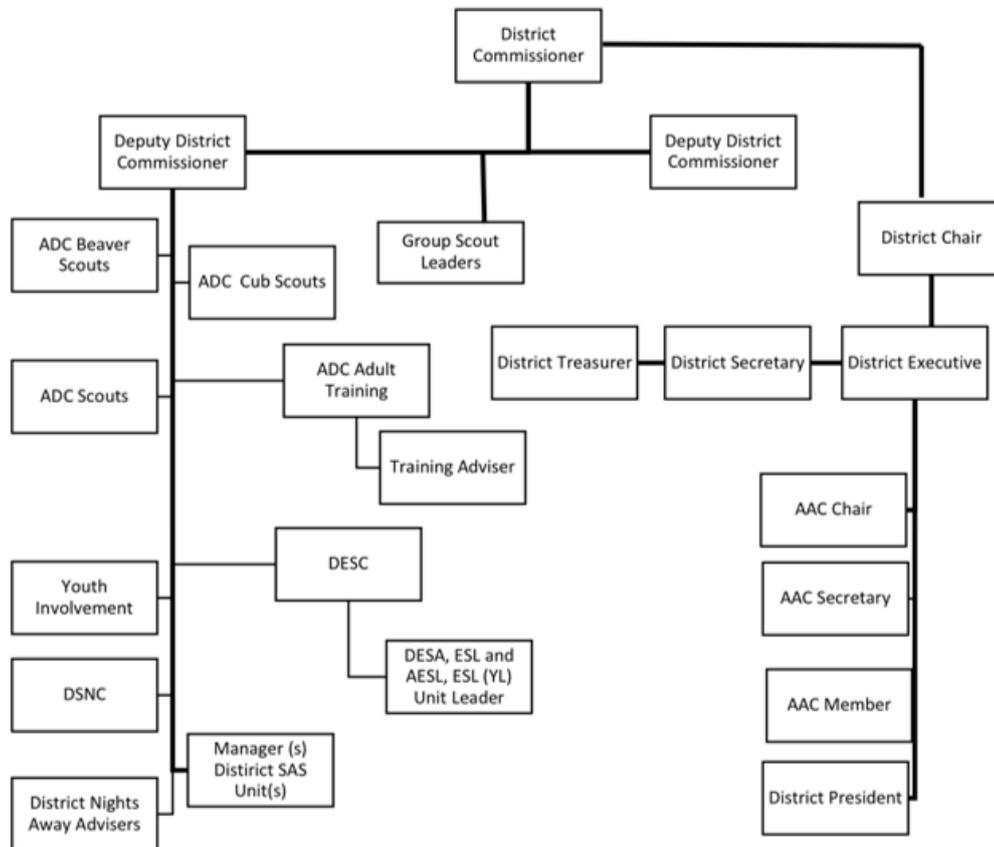
Scottish Headquarters Structure



Scottish Regional Structure



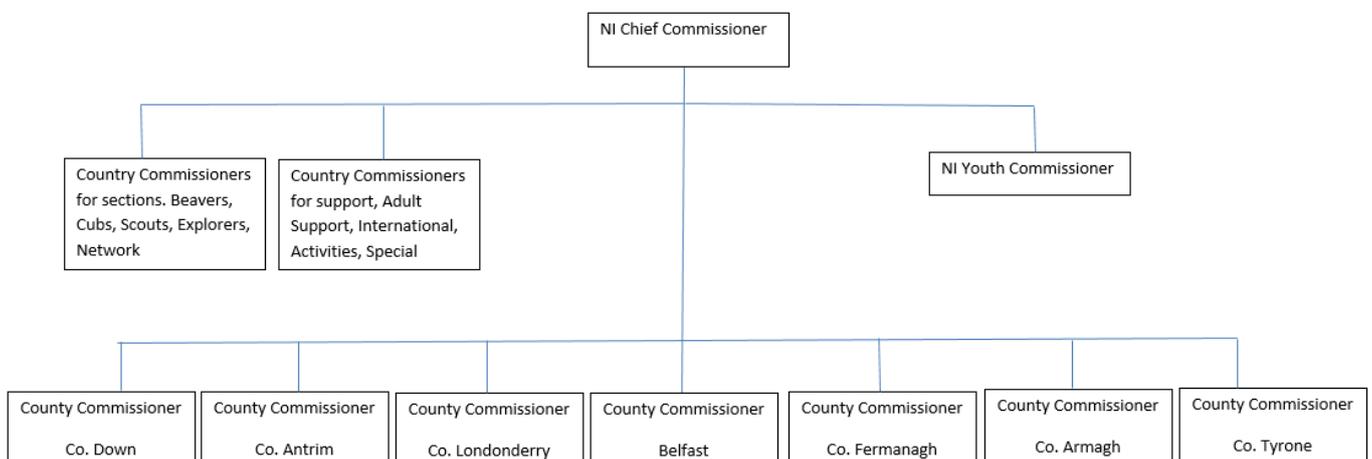
Scottish District Structure



Northern Ireland

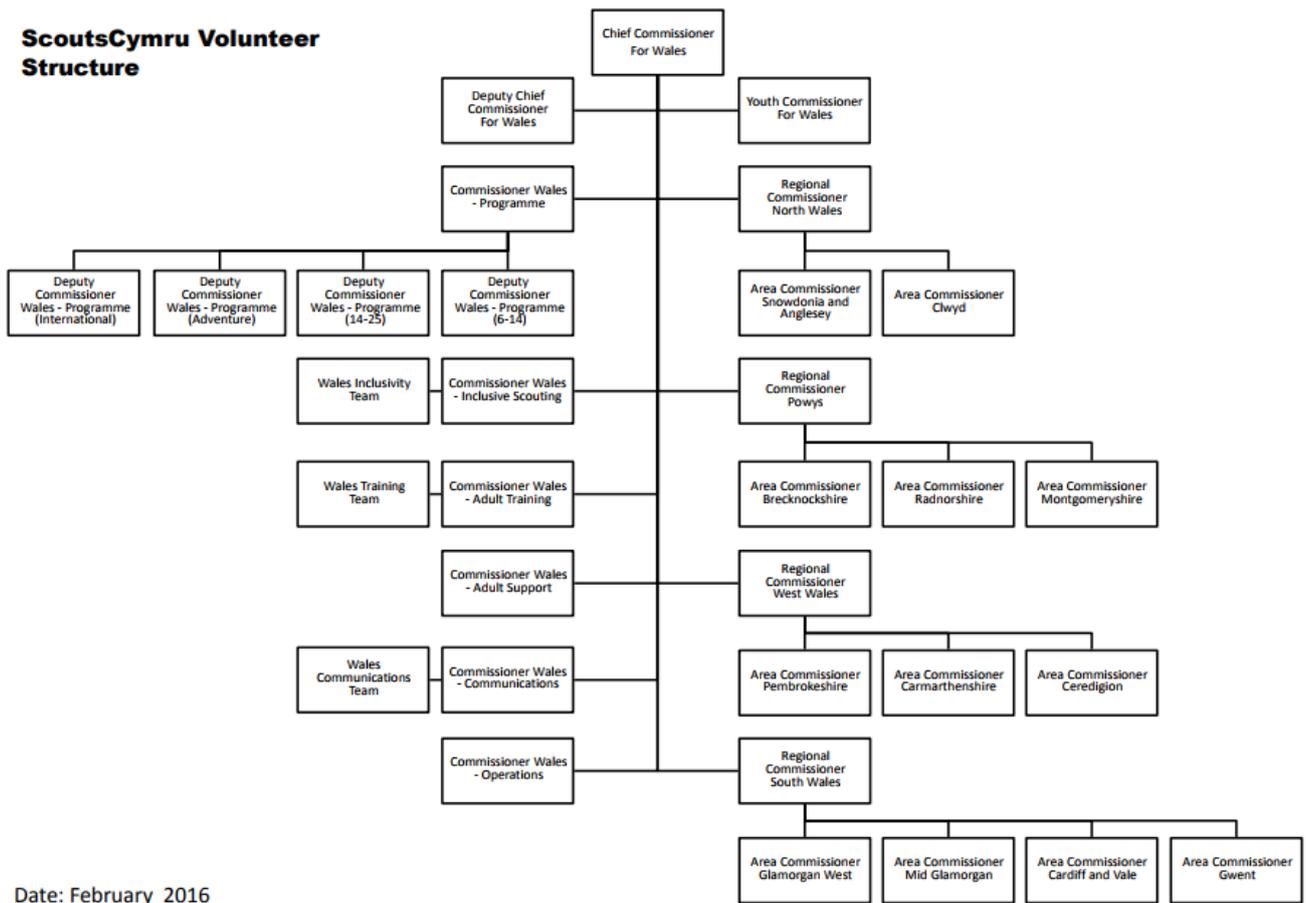
The Structure in Northern Ireland is compact to reflect the size of the country. The flowchart below shows the layout with everything below County Commissioner being the same as England.

Northern Ireland Scout Volunteer Structure



Wales / Scouts Cymru

ScoutsCymru Volunteer Structure



Date: February 2016