

**MINUTES of MEETING of SHORT LIFE WORKING GROUP ON POLITICAL MANAGEMENT  
ARRANGEMENTS held by MICROSOFT TEAMS  
on WEDNESDAY, 22 DECEMBER 2021**

**Present:** Councillor Robin Currie (Chair)

Councillor Audrey Forrest	Councillor Liz McCabe
Councillor George Freeman	Councillor Yvonne McNeilly
Councillor Kieron Green	Councillor Aileen Morton
Councillor Jim Lynch	Councillor Sandy Taylor

**Attending:** Douglas Hendry, Executive Director  
David Logan, Head of Legal and Regulatory Support  
Tricia O'Neill, Governance Manager  
Stuart McLean, Area Committee Manager  
Shona Barton, Area Committee Manager

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest intimated.

**3. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Short Life Working Group held on Tuesday 30 November 2021 were approved as a correct record.

**4. POLITICAL MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS - ENGAGEMENT**

At the first meeting of the SLWG on 30 November Members agreed to engage with all 36 Elected Members seeking their views on how the current Political Management Arrangements were working. The SLWG considered and discussed the feedback received from Members highlighted at Appendix 1 and agreed the next steps to progress the review of the Political Management Arrangements (PMAs).

**Decision**

The Short Life Working Group agreed to include the following in a draft report for consideration at the next meeting:

**Strategic Committees (Questions 1 & 2)**

General consensus that Strategic Committees should remain, but that consideration should be given to their remits and their meeting frequency.

SLWG acknowledged that increased participation from all members enriches policy discussion, consequently encouraging attendance of non-committee Councillors to be included within the Members induction programme following Local Government Elections scheduled for May 2022. This should also make specific reference to how decisions are made and how non-committee Councillors can influence policy.

Given the nature of the rural economy within the area there could be enhanced arrangements to consider more rural issues such as agriculture and fishing.

Further consideration to be given to:

- the retention of the reports for noting section on Agendas.
- the scale / remit of the Community Services Committee including the possibility of a separate Education Committee or Audit and Scrutiny taking on the role of scrutiny of Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue and the Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership (Integrated Joint Board).
- more presentations to Council for scrutiny as in previous political management arrangements.

### **Area Committees (Questions 3 & 4)**

Recognition that while Business Days are not decision making meetings the discussions had are useful.

Opportunities for increased local Scrutiny and enhanced responsibilities such as participatory budgeting.

Further consideration to be given to possible synergies between Area Committees and other groups, such as Area Community Planning Groups and HSCP Locality Planning Groups.

### **Future Arrangements (Questions 5 to 9)**

Consideration of Executive Leadership Team providing updates at Area Committee Business Days and management of public question issues at area committees.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Legal and Regulatory Support dated December 2021, submitted)

## **5. NEXT STEPS**

The Short Life Working Group noted that Officers would produce a first draft of a report which would be the main item of business of discussion at the next meeting on 25 January 2022.