

**Political Management Arrangements**

---

**1.0 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report updates members on developments given the decisions taken at the last meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2013.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 To consider the issues identified in the report and make recommendations to Council;
- 2.2 To agree a process for the final detailed consideration of the extension of area committee remit; and
- 2.3 To note the Monitoring Officer will bring forward proposals in regard to conduct issues.

**3.0 DETAIL**

- 3.1 The SLWG agreed at its meeting on 9th September as follows;

1. The Group identified 3 models of operation based on options:-

4 – (return to a traditional model of Council and a limited number of Service Committees);

5 – (Run with a revised remit for a centre all- purpose Policy and Resources Committee with or without call in powers to refer decisions to full Council if say 6 members not on the all-purpose Policy and Resources Committee require it);

and a version of 4 that included a finance/improvement Committee as well as other service Committees to allow officers to provide specific advice on the detail of these models including:-

- Adequate re-call powers
- Specific delegations
- Arrangements to allow Members to speak and vote on local matters
- Financial and resource implications of adopting the model

- 3.2 It is relevant to the deliberations of the SLWG to note that since the last meeting the Council Leader has resigned and a new Leader and Depute Leader have been appointed. The Council was informed that a new administration involving the Alliance and TALIG had been established.
- 3.3 It is understood that following informal soundings the SLWG is asked to consider in detail a proposal to adopt a structure that would involve a Policy and Resources Committee, Community Services Committee (including education, health, housing and social work), Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee, together with the existing PPSL, PRS and Audit Committee. Please refer to **Appendix 1**.
- 3.4 The detailed remits for each Committee would need to be finalised after input from all members and would be subject to further detailed consideration at the Council. It would be important, however, to give consideration to some matters of principle as follows:

- A. The SLWG determined that there should be a call in provision, and a model SO is attached at **Appendix 2** for members' information.

It is also for members to consider whether the call in should be to the Policy and Resources Committee or the Council and officers would offer the following points for consideration;

Call in to Policy and Resources Committee

Pros	Efficient as it would meet more often than council so reduce delay in decision making. Policy and Resources would be charged with advising Council on strategic matters it is therefore the correct level to exercise scrutiny of delegated matters.
Cons	May not involve all members in consideration of the matter at issue. Model assumes no call in of matters delegated to Policy and Resources.

Call in to Council

Pros	Involves all members. Could refer from Policy and Resources if so minded.
Cons	Inefficient too long a delay for a decision to be dealt with. Wrong level for delegated decisions to be subject to scrutiny could be subject to external criticism.

- B. The SLWG determined that there should be an SO to allow participation in the work of the service Committees and a model SO is attached at **Appendix 3** for information.

The model SO permits all members to attend and speak at any Committee, but limits voting to pre notified ward specific matters. The

issue around permitting voting as outlined is at the centre of current scrutiny of the existing political management arrangements, which recognised that the full Council model doesn't work and if there is no restriction on voting then it could result in the new model making no progress on this central issue. If all members can speak and vote at a Committee on any item then that is effectively the current system renamed and the new model will be a number of versions of the Council and, therefore, even less efficient than the current model that members have determined is not fit for purpose.

If members are minded to adopt such a model officers could not recommend progressing such a model for the reasons outlined. It would also appear contrary to the agreement at full Council that the current model was not sustainable.

The Proposal to allow any member to speak at any centre Committee is a substantial extension of any previous provision and the ward rule for voting ensures that we avoid the possibility of having Council meetings in all but name.

- C. It has not been possible to develop detailed provisions for the delegations to each Committee, particularly as there is some discussion required on relationship with area matters. In general the areas of business could be:

#### Policy and Resources Committee

- Finance and HR
- Policy Development /overview
- General competence for matters not otherwise delegated
- Economic Development (advised by the service Committee)
- Strategic Projects

#### Communities Committee

- Culture
- Education
- Social Work
- Housing
- Health Issues

#### Environment Development and infrastructure Committee

- Environment including Amenity Services, Carbon Management and Renewables
- Development including advice to Policy and Resources on Economic Development Policy but excluding matters dealt with by PPSL
- Infrastructure including Facility Services and Asset Management
- IT
- Piers, Harbours and Roads

- Fleet
- Tourism

Members views on the foregoing suggestions will inform the development of more detailed delegations.

- 3.5 The initial meeting of the SLWG was given a range of options for the extension of powers to area Committees and that detail is attached again at **Appendix 4**. In addition, discussions at earlier meetings identified that the Area CHORD Board function could be discharged by Area Committees, and other additions might be to determine up to a set financial limit requests for cash flow funding and the development of a public petitions function. The SLWG may wish to identify a process to take forward a final detailed consideration of what additional powers should be delegated to Area Committees.
- 3.6 Once the Council has made a final determination of the structure, the additional resources required to support the new arrangements can be assessed, but it is envisaged that a parallel restructuring of the Area Governance Team could address issues related to the more general support to members, as well as the additional Committee workload that will arise, reducing the net cost of these proposals, which at an indicative level might incur a cost of around £120k. The costs could be evenly split between the Committee function and general support to members, which has been the subject of comment and concern from across the Council area.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 The issues highlighted in the report take forward the agreed direction of travel of the SLWG and the political developments since the last meeting.

#### **5.0 IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Policy - Will improve development and decision making.  
5.2 Financial - As set out in the report but indicative only.  
5.3 Legal - None  
5.4 HR - None at this stage  
5.5 Equalities - No negative impact.  
5.6 Risk - To be assessed when preferred model agreed  
5.7 Customer Service - Improved transparency of decision making

#### **6.0 APPENDICES**

- 6.1 Appendix 1  
6.2 Appendix 2  
6.3 Appendix 3  
6.4 Appendix 4

**Sally Loudon**  
**Chief Executive**