

COUNCIL

23 JANUARY 2018

REPORT OF HEAD OF GOVERNANCE AND LEGAL SERVICES

A.6 COMMITTEE STRUCTURE REVIEW

(Report prepared by Ian Ford)

PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To consider the recommendations made by the Electoral Review Working Group in relation to the ongoing implementation of a new committee structure.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council, at its meeting held on 21 November 2017 (Minute 94 refers), considered a report of the Head of Governance and Legal Services (A.6) which had provided the recommendations made by the Electoral Review Working Group in respect of –

- (a) approving, in principle, the proposed new committee structure; and
- (b) adopting the proposed timetable for the implementation of the new committee structure.

Council had **RESOLVED** that:-

- (a) *the proposed committee structure, as set out in the Appendix to item A.6 of the Report of the Head of Governance and Legal Services, be approved, in principle, subject to the Audit Committee and the Standards Committee not being merged; and*
- (b) *the proposed timetable for the implementation of the new committee structure, as detailed in the Executive Summary to the aforementioned report, be adopted.*

Three members of the Electoral Review Working Group attended an informal meeting held on 8 January 2018. Those Members gave consideration to the proposed terms of reference, size and committee names etc.

The key issues considered were:-

- i. the terms of reference for the two new Overview and Scrutiny Committees;
- ii. the names of the new Overview and Scrutiny Committees (Community Leadership Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee were proposed by Officers);
- iii. whether to have a member of an “opposition” group as the chairman of the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- iv. the number of meetings in a year of the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee (8 meetings a year were proposed by Officers);
- v. the size of the two Overview and Scrutiny Committees (11 members on each was proposed for 2018/19 with a review in May 2019);
- vi. how the task and finish groups would operate (it was proposed by Officers that provisional work programmes be presented to the Annual Council meeting in April 2018 with the first meeting of the new overview and scrutiny committees considering this and determining firm work programmes and the role the task and finish groups

- would take);
- vii. cross-membership of the Local Plan and Planning Committees; and
 - viii. whether the Planning Committee should meet in the daytime.

Those three Members of the Working Group **AGREED** that further consideration was required for 2019 in relation to –

- (1) cross-membership of the Local Plan and Planning Committees;
- (2) whether the Planning Committee should meet in the daytime; and
- (3) training of Members, the related rights to attend certain committees of the Council and the implications for the Council's Constitution.

In addition, having considered the other key issues set out above those three members of the Working Group **AGREED** to recommend to Council that –

- a) the proposed terms of reference for the two new overview and scrutiny committees be approved;
- b) the names of the two new overview and scrutiny committees be the Community Leadership Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- c) the Chairman of the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee be a member of a political group that is not represented on the Cabinet;
- d) eight ordinary meetings of the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee be held in any municipal year;
- e) the size of the Community Leadership Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee be set at eleven (11) members each for the 2018/2019 municipal year (with a review of that number of seats to be undertaken in readiness for the 2019/2020 municipal year); and
- f) provisional work programmes for the two new overview and scrutiny committees be presented to the Annual Meeting of the Council in April 2018 with the new overview and scrutiny committees, at their respective inaugural meetings, considering those provisional work programmes, as appropriate, and determining their actual work programmes and the role that task and finish groups will take to implement those work programmes.

Those recommendations were then submitted by Officers to the other members of the Working Group for their comments. Suggestions made by those Members in respect of the terms of reference for the new overview and scrutiny committees were:-

1. To clarify that the whole committee will need to agree the arrangements for the task and finish groups

Under the general role (6.01) 7 (ii) to add something in to express that the terms of reference of any task and finish group would be agreed by the relevant overview and scrutiny committee prior to commencement. Then under 6.02 (ii) to include: “but with the Chairman able to call additional formal meetings. Meetings of task and finish groups can be called as required, following the terms of reference being agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.”

2. To clarify the distinction between setting policy and scrutinising policy

To amend 6.02 2. to read: “Act as a consultee on policy development and review of policies.”

If Council approve the proposed terms and reference of the overview and scrutiny committees, further work will be undertaken by the Monitoring Officer to review the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules in order to ensure consistency. Should any amendments be required to those Procedure Rules, they will be reported to Full Council at its meeting on 27 March 2018.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended to Council that, with effect from the Annual Meeting of the Council on 24 April 2018,:-

- (a) the proposed terms of reference for the two new overview and scrutiny committees, as set out in the Appendix to this report, be approved; and**
- (b) the other recommendations made by the Electoral Review Working Group, as detailed in the Executive Summary above, be adopted.**

PART 2 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION

BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR THE DECISION

None

APPENDICES

Appendix A - Proposed new terms of reference for the two new overview and scrutiny committees