

GOVERNANCE AND ETHICS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 24 APRIL 2017

Councillors Present: Jeff Beck (Vice-Chairman), Graham Bridgman, James Cole, Barry Dickens, Lee Dillon, Anthony Pick and Quentin Webb

Also Present: Andy Walker (Head of Finance), Jo Reeves (Principal Policy Officer)

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting: Councillor Steve Ardagh-Walter and Councillor Keith Chopping

PART I

1 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

2 Proposed New Model for Scrutiny (C3311)

The Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 3) concerning proposed changes to the way that scrutiny would operate within the Council. It was proposed that the Council integrated its policy development activities associated with scrutiny into its work which was already ongoing. The Council would appoint a group of "scrutineers" who would be incorporated into the individual project groups associated with the Corporate Programme.

The new model would also recognise other current policy development activities ongoing such as the work associated with the Planning Policy Task Groups.

Councillor Lee Dillon expressed the view that the balance between evening and daytime meetings should be carefully considered to enable Members who worked to be involved. He also expressed concern that there were 44 projects in the Corporate Programme and with only 12 members on the Overview and Scrutiny Commission (OSMC) there would be a large workload. Councillor Dillon further commented that OSMC should be politically proportionate. He suggested that the number of Members required to call-in an item should be reduced in order to facilitate better scrutiny of the Executive.

Councillor Bridgman expressed the view that the new scrutiny arrangements should be allowed to bed in before making any changes to the call-in requirements. Councillor Cole stated that the proposal was better than the current arrangements.

Councillor Dillon stated that the call-in requirements were in the Committee's gift to change and at present the Opposition was not able to call in decisions of the Executive. Councillor Bridgman responded that the call-in requirements should not be determined by the Council's politics. Councillor Dillon expressed the view that the Opposition's right to hold the Council's Executive to account was important. Jo Reeves advised that the Committee, if minded to approve the report, could make a recommendation to the Council to amend the number of Members required to call-in an Executive decision. Alternatively, the Opposition Group could propose an amendment to the report at the Council meeting.

A discussion was held regarding whether the new arrangements would permit appointing members not on OSMC to project boards, if they had a particular skill set they could contribute. Councillor Bridgman proposed the acceptance of the report and asked that

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some thought be given to project restricted co-option for Members with demonstrable skills, to be determined by the two Group leaders.

RESOLVED that the Governance and Ethics Committee recommend to Council the approval of the proposed new model for scrutiny as outlined in sections 6 and 7 of the report and that this be implemented with immediate effect.

(The meeting commenced at 18:10 and closed at 18:40)

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature