Governance Committee

Wednesday 28 February 2024 at 10.00 am

Town Hall, Sheffield, S1 2HH

The Press and Public are Welcome to Attend

Membership

Councillor Fran Belbin (Chair)
Councillor Sue Alston
Councillor Simon Clement-Jones
Councillor Dianne Hurst
Councillor Mary Lea
Councillor Mike Levery
Councillor Laura Moynahan
Councillor Alison Norris
Councillor Paul Turpin

Sheffield
City Council

PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE MEETING

The Governance Committee is leading on work to transition to a committee system of governance from May 2022. It is a politically proportionate Committee which will be tasked with oversight of the transitional work and will approve the recommendations to be made to Full Council.

The Committee will be outward facing. The Council will not be working in isolation on this project but will seek input from outside the organisation, ensuring citizens are engaged and are provided with opportunities to help shape this programme of work The Council will also be engaging the professional support of agencies such as the Local Government Association, the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny and Monitoring Officers from other local authorities which have recently transitioned or are about to transition to a Committee system. This will ensure the Council is supported through this period and learns from best practice to ensure that the system implemented in Sheffield responds to the needs of our City.

A copy of the agenda and reports is available on the Council's website at www.sheffield.gov.uk . You may not be allowed to see some reports because they contain confidential information. These items are usually marked * on the agenda.

Members of the public have the right to ask questions or submit petitions to Governance Committee meetings and recording is allowed under the direction of the Chair. Please see the website or contact Democratic Services for further information regarding public questions and petitions and details of the Council's protocol on audio/visual recording and photography at council meetings.

PLEASE NOTE: Meetings of the Governance Committee have to be held as physical meetings. If you would like to attend the meeting, you must register to attend by emailing committee@sheffield.gov.uk at least 2 clear days in advance of the date of the meeting. This is necessary to facilitate the management of attendance at the meeting to maintain social distancing. In order to ensure safe access and to protect all attendees, you will be asked to wear a face covering (unless you have an exemption) at all times when moving about within the venue.

It is also recommended that you undertake a Covid-19 Rapid Lateral Flow Test within two days of the meeting. You can order tests online to be delivered to your home address, or you can collect tests from a local pharmacy. Further details of these tests and how to obtain them can be accessed here - Order coronavirus (COVID-19) rapid lateral flow tests - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk). We are unable to guarantee entrance to observers, as priority will be given to registered speakers. Alternatively, you can observe the meeting remotely by clicking on the 'view the webcast' link provided on the meeting page of the website.

If you require any further information please contact Jay Bell email jay.bell@sheffield.gov.uk.

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE AGENDA
28 FEBRUARY 2024

Order of Business

1. **Welcome and Housekeeping Arrangements**

2. **Apologies for Absence**

3. **Exclusion of Public and Press**
To identify items where resolutions may be moved to exclude the press and public.

4. **Declarations of Interest**
Members to declare any interests they have in the business to be considered at the meeting.

5. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**
To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 14 December 2023

6. **Public Questions and Petitions**
To receive any questions or petitions from members of the public.

7. **Public Questions and Petitions Review: latest draft proposals and next steps**
Report of the Director of Policy and Democratic Engagement

8. **Governance to support partnership working with the NHS and other partners across Sheffield**
Report of the Director of Public Health

9. **Member Role Profiles**
Report of the Director of Policy and Democratic Engagement

10. **Work Programme**
Report of the Head of Policy and Partnerships

11. **Date of Next Meeting**
The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 27 March 2024

This page is intentionally left blank

ADVICE TO MEMBERS ON DECLARING INTERESTS AT MEETINGS

If you are present at a meeting of the Council, of its Policy Committees, or of any committee, sub-committee, joint committee, or joint sub-committee of the authority, and you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest** (DPI) relating to any business that will be considered at the meeting, you must <u>not</u>:

- participate in any discussion of the business at the meeting, or if you become aware of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interest during the meeting, participate further in any discussion of the business, or
- participate in any vote or further vote taken on the matter at the meeting.

These prohibitions apply to any form of participation, including speaking as a member of the public.

You **must**:

- leave the room (in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct)
- make a verbal declaration of the existence and nature of any DPI at any meeting at which you are present at which an item of business which affects or relates to the subject matter of that interest is under consideration, at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent.
- declare it to the meeting and notify the Council's Monitoring Officer within 28 days, if the DPI is not already registered.

If you have any of the following pecuniary interests, they are your **disclosable pecuniary interests** under the new national rules. You have a pecuniary interest if you, or your spouse or civil partner, have a pecuniary interest.

- Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain, which you, or your spouse or civil partner undertakes.

- Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from your council or authority) made or provided within the relevant period* in respect of any expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

  *The relevant period is the 12 months ending on the day when you tell the Monitoring Officer about your disclosable pecuniary interests.

- Any contract which is made between you, or your spouse or your civil partner (or a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest) and your council or authority –

  - under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and
  - which has not been fully discharged.

- Any beneficial interest in land which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, have and which is within the area of your council or authority.

- Any licence (alone or jointly with others) which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, holds to occupy land in the area of your council or authority for a month or longer.

- Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) –
  - the landlord is your council or authority; and
  - the tenant is a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest.

- Any beneficial interest which you, or your spouse or your civil partner has in securities of a body where -

  (a) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of your council or authority; and

  (b) either -
      - the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or
      - if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

If you attend a meeting at which any item of business is to be considered and you are aware that you have a **personal interest** in the matter which does not amount to a DPI, you must make verbal declaration of the existence and nature of that interest at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent. You should leave the room if your continued presence is incompatible with the 7 Principles of Public Life (selflessness; integrity; objectivity; accountability; openness; honesty; and leadership).

You have a personal interest where –

- a decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial standing (including interests in land and easements over land) of you or a member of your family or a person or an organisation with whom you have a close association to a greater extent than it would affect the majority of the Council Tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the ward or electoral area for which you have been elected or otherwise of the Authority's administrative area, or

- it relates to or is likely to affect any of the interests that are defined as DPIs but are in respect of a member of your family (other than a partner) or a person with whom you have a close association.

Guidance on declarations of interest, incorporating regulations published by the Government in relation to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, has been circulated to you previously.

You should identify any potential interest you may have relating to business to be considered at the meeting. This will help you and anyone that you ask for advice to fully consider all the circumstances before deciding what action you should take.

In certain circumstances the Council may grant a **dispensation** to permit a Member to take part in the business of the Authority even if the member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest relating to that business.

To obtain a dispensation, you must write to the Monitoring Officer at least 48 hours before the meeting in question, explaining why a dispensation is sought and desirable, and specifying the period of time for which it is sought. The Monitoring Officer may consult with the Independent Person or the Council's Standards Committee in relation to a request for dispensation.

Further advice can be obtained from David Hollis, General Counsel by emailing david.hollis@sheffield.gov.uk.

This page is intentionally left blank

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Governance Committee

Meeting held 14 December 2023

PRESENT: Councillors Sue Alston (Deputy Chair), Mike Chaplin (Substitute Member), Simon Clement-Jones, Mike Levery, Laura Moynahan, Paul Turpin and Dianne Hurst (Substitute Member)

1.   **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

1.1   Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Fran Belbin, Sioned-Mair Richards, Alison Norris and Garry Weatherall. Councillors Mike Chaplin and Dianne Hurst attended as substitutes.

2.   **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

2.1   No items were identified where resolutions may be moved to exclude the press and public.

3.   **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

3.1   There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

4.   **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

4.1   The minutes of the previous meeting held on 22 November 2023, were agreed as an accurate record.

5.   **PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS**

5.1   The Committee received 4 questions from a member of the public, prior to the meeting

5.2   **Ruth Hubbard**

1.   Is the committee able to articulate clearly and succinctly the overall purpose of the review (that is what you are trying to achieve and why), and its key aims (that is, its main or priority goals or targets)? I've asked these kinds of questions before and expressed concern about the lack of clarity of purpose and aims (even if these need to be refined a bit in situ), that helps to focus activity and evidence, and against which you can measure progress and evaluate the work. At the moment it's described as an "holistic" review. And then in describing the scope there's this very wide ranging list of lines of enquiry. Is this what the committee intends? (And

why?) is it practical and realistic to do all this well, and within the resource and capacity available? Are there specific priorities that it might be useful to articulate e.g. to rationalise councillor and officer workloads where possible (and examine the potential for cost-savings)? Or to identify improvements to the quality of policy and decision-making? Or to identify gaps and overlaps and propose specific improvements/rationalisations? Or to examine the role of the finance committee? Or to improve alignments to strategic contexts? Or to assess approaches to cross-cutting issues? Or to improve LAC-policy committee links and revisit decision-making roles and remits of each? At the moment the report gives the impression the committee is intending to do all this and more. Or is the report more of an initial exploratory document laying out all the possibilities rather than the "proposed approach" (as stated) and from which a concise scoping document and workplan will clarify the review goals, requirements and activities? If it's intended to be rather scattergun at this stage then there are at least potentially four things missing. Firstly, alignment with design principles. This is what full council charged the committee with doing for the six-month Governance Review, but this was not done at all. The report does mention the design principles later in the document but only as a point of reflection rather than action or constitutional tweaks to tackle the great gaps between principles and practice, rhetoric and realities. I also suggest for this that it's worth looking back and relooking at stakeholder input and intentions on these because much of this was decimated by the Governance Committee in the name of brevity but threw away the baby with the bath water in the process. As they are now, Design principles 1, 11 and 16 may be particularly relevant anyway. Secondly considering best or innovative approaches, solutions or practices elsewhere is absent (including relevant statutory interventions) which gives the report an insular or parochial feel. Looking up and out a bit certainly might be important if there's any desire to be at the forefront of thinking and practice for policy committees in a committee system. Thirdly, the lack of attention to identifying and embedding clear scrutiny functions and processes in transition to the committee system represents, at least to me, a current and considerable risk. Though the word scrutiny is mentioned it should arguably have greater prominence in a review of policy committee remits. Fourthly mechanisms for the integration or embedding of stakeholder voice or influence is absent (as is consideration of public information and communications about policy committees and their work). I note the GC has consistently rejected this and, as a result, stakeholder involvement in formal committee bodies has actually decreased in the new system - very occasionally, at least, the old scrutiny committees did bring in the odd relevant stakeholder, though this didn't necessarily always appear particularly functional or best-used. A related consideration here might also be the very variable amount of public questions across different committees. So, if the review is to be "holistic" as stated - the equivalent of a 360 degree appraisal - then can I please request these omissions be included? (Alternatively, even if the review remains described as "holistic" I suggest much clearer aims still need to be identified to focus work etc - and there will always be limitations on what can be done (as well as ensuring alignment with resource to see it through).

2. I must mention another longstanding but unaddressed or rejected concern that I've raised several times before. Sheffield has created the most bloated committee system anywhere, currently standing at 9 policy committees. I remind the committee of statutory interventions at Wirral council at the end of 2021 requiring a reduction from 7 committees, backed up by a subsequent LGA review in 2022 - because of challenges of coordination, risks of fragmentation, and Officer workloads. I also consider the Governance Committee to have misrepresented and/or clearly cherry-picked (for whatever reason) from the evidence they collated, and in stating they believed committee sizes of 8-10 were best. Brighton, for example, has 10-14 on its committees and Cheshire East 13, and both function perfectly well. (And personally, our committees regularly simply feel too small to me.). Whilst I can actually see certain advantages for citizen scrutineers in the current bloated system, if there is any suggestion to rationalise workloads for councillors and officers, achieve efficiencies or potential savings, or reduce overlaps/better coordinate, then fewer and slightly bigger committees will also, at least, make us not the extreme outlier we currently are. I can only think that political party (and the holding of roles) considerations have steered towards the relative monster of a system we currently have, and I probably think revisiting this should be an important consideration for the review.

3. It looks like Bristol, however, are about to make the same mistake in creating a bit of a monster. Bristol council papers report that Sheffield has provided advice and support on their transition to a committee system. Can I please ask if this is council officer advice and support, or political advice and support (and/or through core cities)?

4. *In respect to item 8 (Citizen Participation and Community Involvement)*

I note the report is suggesting a rather rigid or fixed, fairly resource-heavy, potentially unwieldy, and unimaginative model for citizen and VCFSE involvement in its proposed working group to "lead the transformation of citizen participation and community involvement". Can I please ask why this model was considered appropriate and what other models were considered?

5.3 The Chair of the meeting (Councillor Sue Alston) confirmed that questions 1, 2 and 4 would be picked up as part of items 7 and 8 on the agenda. She explained that the Chair of the Governance Committee (Councillor Fran Belbin) would be responding to Ms Hubbard regarding question 3.

6. REVIEW OF POLICY COMMITTEE REMITS

6.1 The Committee received a report from the Director of Policy and Democratic Engagement.

6.2 The Head of Policy and Partnerships (Laurie Brennan) introduced the report.

He explained that in line with the recommendations of the Six-Month Review of New Governance Arrangements, it was proposed that the Governance Committee established a new task and finish group which will start meeting in 2024 to lead the review of policy committee remits.

6.3   The Head of Policy and Partnerships confirmed that the report set out some suggested initial lines of enquiry, these could be found on page 4 of the report (page 22 of the agenda).

6.4   The Head of Policy and Partnerships explained that the approach to undertaking the review was for the Members of the task and finish group to discuss and agree, but it was recommended that the following should be considered:

- Analysis of existing evidence (e.g. from the Six-Month Review)

- Reflection on the original design principles for the Committee System and the Constitutional responsibilities of Policy Committee

- Involvement and engagement of citizens, Members and officers in the review, both in assessing the existing and in developing recommendations

- Views of strategic partners and external organisations – including business and city anchor institutions (e.g. NHS) and delivery partners.

6.5   Following the introduction to the report, Members of the Committee asked questions and made comments, and the key points to note were: -

6.6   The Chair of the meeting (Councillor Sue Alston) referred to questions 1 and 2 submitted by Ruth Hubbard, stating that these issues had been addressed as part of this report.

6.7   A Member of the Committee raised the importance of keeping in mind the lessons learnt throughout the transition period to a committee system. They added that it would be good for all Members to be involved in the task and finish group as there was a wide range of expertise within the Governance Committee.

6.8   A Member of the Committee did not believe the culture of Committees and how they engaged with the public appeared as part of the report.

The Head of Policy and Partnerships explained that this was the intention. He mentioned that he did not want to specify a scope at this time as he believed this was for Members to look at as part of the task and finish group work.

6.9   A Member of the Committee asked who could hold Members to account, if the committee system was not being adhered to as it was intended.

The General Counsel (David Hollis) stated that he was responsible for ensuring

the constitution was adhered to.

6.10   RESOLVED: That Governance Committee:

(1)   discussed and agreed the initial scope for the review of Policy Committee remits in line with the recommendations of the Six-Month Review of Governance Arrangements;

(2)   agreed to establish a dedicated Task and Finish Group to lead the review of Policy Committee remits from January 2024; and

(3)   agreed the composition of the proposed Task and Finish Group be the same composition of the Governance Committee.

7.   CITIZEN PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT - IDENTIFYING MEMBER LEADS

7.1   The Committee received a report from the Director of Policy and Democratic Engagement aiming to identify cross-party Members representation for a Working Group to lead the transformation of citizen participation and community involvement at Sheffield City Council.

7.2   The Head of Policy and Partnerships referred to a recommendation agreed at the previous meeting *'That the Governance Committee sends the Involve report to the citizens involved in the workshops and to thank them for their contributions and to encourage them to feed their views back on the report so that it can be fed into this work as it goes forward and with the aim to continuously involve them from this point on'.* He confirmed that this action had been carried out.

7.3   The Head of Policy and Partnerships explained that the report set out that this piece of work would not just be led by Members, as this was a real opportunity to involve citizens, stakeholders and VCFSE partners from Sheffield.

7.4   The Head of Policy and Partnerships asked that the Committee provided him with names of Members to lead on this piece of work. It was suggested that this should include up to five Members from the Governance Committee, with up to three from Labour and Liberal Democrats and two from the Green Party and Sheffield Community Councillors and a Maximum of two Members from each of the main political Groups, ideally including at least one Member that sits on a Policy Committee. He asked that names be provided to him by the end of the following week (22 December 2023).

7.5   Following the introduction to the report, Members of the Committee asked questions and made comments, and the key points to note were: -

7.6   A Member of the Committee mentioned there were Members representing 4 different political parties on Governance Committee and that the recommendation was to nominate a maximum of 5 Members. Therefore, asked

if the recommendation was too refined and could cause a hindrance in creating a Working Group to lead on this piece of work. The Chair of the meeting (Councillor Sue Alston) mentioned how it was important to be flexible, she suggested that the recommendation not be changed but the Committee could look at the recommendation again if an issue arose. The Head of Policy and Partnerships stated that if the number of Members leading on this needed to exceed 5 then that would be fine.

7.7   A Member of the Committee asked what role and capacity a Member of the Working Group would be expected to provide.

The Head of Policy and Partnerships mentioned that this was still yet to be defined. He stated that the purpose of the report was to establish a Working Group so that this piece of work could begin early next year.

7.8   A Member of the Committee asked if there were any clear gaps in regard to who the Working Group should be engaging with on this piece of work.

The Head of Policy and Partnerships confirmed there was a wide range of community networks in Sheffield that can be approached. He mentioned that following a recent piece of work on the City Goals, the Council were involved in a lot of collaborate conversations with community networks which can also be targeted. He added how the Local Area Committees could play a role in engaging with different people. He raised the importance that people with different characteristics from across the city be involved in this piece of work.

7.9   RESOLVED: That Governance Committee:

(1)   nominate and agree a maximum of five Governance Committee representatives for the community involvement Working Group;

(2)   agree for Governance Committee leads to discuss with respective Groups and identity a maximum of two Member representatives per Group (including at least one that sits on a Policy Committee) by Friday 22nd December; and

(3)   agree to receive a further paper in early 2024 setting out proposed next steps for the community involvement project.

8.   UPDATE ON REVIEW OF COUNCIL'S APPROACH TO PUBLIC QUESTIONS

8.1   The Committee received a report from the Director of Policy and Democratic Engagement.

8.2   The Policy and Improvement Officer (Alice Nicholson) explained that the report was to provide an update on the Committees existing task and finish group who were tasked with reviewing the Council's approach to public questions. The report recommended that the Committee noted the work carried out by the task

and finish group so far, and that they agreed that the task and finish group continued to work on this and bring back recommendation to this Committee early next year.

8.3   Following the introduction to the report, Members of the Committee asked questions and made comments, and the key points to note were: -

8.4   The Chair of the meeting (Councillor Sue Alston) mentioned that 2.1.3 of the report should include Councillor Paul Turpin's name as he was a part of this task and finish group.

8.5   A Member of the Committee stated that the citizens who were currently engaging in this piece of work seemed to be the same demographic. Therefore, a wider demographic needed to be targeted.

        The Policy and Improvement Officer mentioned how the task and finish group was looking at the process around asking public questions although raised how it would be important to look at how the Council engaged with a wider range of citizens and heard from those who do not usually ask public questions.

8.6   A Member of the Committee believed there was a lot of digital exclusion within the city. Therefore, the use of technology around public questions needed to be considered.

8.7   RESOLVED: That the Committee:

        (1)   note the update on the progress of the Review of our Approach to Public Questions at Council Meetings; and

        (2)   agree to the task and finish group continuing with their work on this review, to bring recommendations to the Committee early 2024.

9.   **WORK PROGRAMME**

9.1   The Committee considered a report of the Head of Policy and Partnerships concerning its work programme.

9.2   The Policy and Improvement Officer (Alice Nicholson) gave an update on the programme and highlighted the key areas for Members attention. She referred to upcoming items on the programme and explained when these would likely be presented at Committee.

9.3   Members of the Committee made comments and suggestions relating to the work programme, as follows:

9.4   The Chair of the meeting (Councillor Sue Alston) was mindful that the Committee had just agreed to set up another Working Group and therefore how some Members of the Governance Committee were now involved in many Working Groups.

9.5   A Member of the Committee mentioned that it would be useful to compare the number of urgent decisions taken with previous years, when looking at the use of urgent decisions item scheduled for this meeting at its February 2024 Committee meeting.

The Head of Policy and Partnerships explained that this could be picked up and reported back when the item was scheduled to be presented to the Committee.

9.6   RESOLVED: That:

(1)   the Committee's work programme, as set out in Appendix 1 be agreed, including any additions and amendments identified in Part 1;

(2)   the Committee notes the indications of items which are likely to need more intensive work (e.g. citizen involvement, task and finish groups, policy review and development work) and consider implications for prioritisation of Governance Committee's forward workplan; and

(3)   the Committee considers any further issues to be explored by officers for inclusion on the future iteration of the work programme.

10.   DATE OF NEXT MEETING

10.1   It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee was scheduled to take place on 17 January 2024.

Sheffield City Council

Report to Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report:
Laurie Brennan, Head of Policy and Partnerships

Tel: 0114 2734755

Report of:	Director of Policy and Democratic Engagement
Report to:	Governance Committee
Date of Decision:	28th February 2024
Subject:	**Public Questions and Petitions Review: latest draft proposals and next steps**

Type of Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) undertaken	Initial	x	Full	

Insert EIA reference number and attach EIA: 2608

Has appropriate consultation/engagement taken place?	Yes	X	No	
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes		No	x

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes		No	X

If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-

*"The (**report/appendix**) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (**insert relevant paragraph number**) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)."*

Purpose of Report:
This report provides the Governance Committee with the developing draft proposals and recommendations from the review of public questions and petitions.

The paper in Appendix 1 provides a working draft of the report from the review along with the draft recommendations which have been developed with citizens and Members.

The report proposes that citizens are invited to provide final comments on the proposals by 6th March by both at the Governance Committee meeting on 28th February and via the Have Your Say Sheffield online engagement portal.

The finalised detailed proposals will be presented to Governance Committee for consideration on 27th March 2024.

Recommendations

That Governance Committee:

1. Thank citizens and stakeholders for their contributions to the review of public questions and petitions

2. Consider and comment on the draft proposals to reform public questions and invite contributions from citizens who wish to participate in the discussion at the committee

3. Invite citizens and stakeholders to provide feedback on the current draft proposals by 6th March 2024

4. Agree to receive a final draft set of proposals at the next meeting of the Governance Committee on 27th March 2024.

Background Papers:

Six Month Review of New Governance Arrangements,
https://democracy.sheffield.gov.uk/documents/b27181/Item%207%20-%20Six%20Month%20Review%20of%20Governance%20Arrangements%20-%20report%20Wednesday%2017-May-2023%2011.30%20Council.pdf?T=9

Lead Officer to complete:-		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed.	Finance: N/A
		Legal: David Hollis, General Counsel
		Equalities & Consultation: Ed Sexton, Senior Equalities and Engagement Officer
		Climate: N/A
	Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.	
2	**SLB member who approved submission:**	James Henderson, Director of Policy and Democratic Engagement
3	**Committee Chair consulted:**	Cllr. Fran Belbin, Chair of Governance Committee
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name: Laurie Brennan	**Job Title:** Head of Policy and Partnerships
	Date: 20th February 2024	

Public Questions and Petitions Review
Latest draft proposals and next steps

1.   Proposal

1.1   Working with citizens and stakeholders, Governance Committee have been developing proposals to renew Sheffield City Council's approach to Public Questions and Petitions to make participating in our democratic meetings accessible to all and to ensure that citizens receive timely and accurate responses to the questions raised.

1.2   This paper sets out an initial draft of the proposed recommendations of the review for Governance Committee and citizens to discuss and provide feedback and comments.

1.3   The final draft set of recommendations will be presented to Governance Committee at its meeting on the 27th March 2024 at which point, Governance Committee will be asked to propose the changes to Full Council as part of its Annual General Meeting (AGM) in May 2024.

2.   Developing the final proposals to reform our approach to public questions and petitions

2.1   The paper attached sets out and initial package of proposals with high level recommendations to improve the approach to public questions and petitions at SCC. These are the product of insight from citizens, Members and officers about their experiences of the existing public questions model and also their ideas for how we could improve the model to make it more accessible to more citizens.

2.2   The perspectives of citizens involved in the review identified challenges which impacted on the effectiveness of the current system, including a lack of awareness of the ability to ask public questions; the complexity of the process; and the physical and equality and diversity barriers which prevent or deter people from asking questions. Most fundamentally, many people who have asked questions said that they didn't feel listened to and that the response they received did not meet their expectations.

2.3   In response, Governance Committee have worked with citizens and stakeholders on proposals to create a more coherent package of ways in which citizens can engage in Sheffield's democratic meetings – be that through written questions and responses, verbal supplementary questions, or statements. The proposals also seek to establish better supportive infrastructure with a simpler way to submit questions; a tracker so that the progress and answer to a question can be easily found online; and using hybrid

options to reduce the physical barriers to participating in our public meetings.

2.4 The proposals are currently in a draft form, converting the ideas from citizens, Members and officers into more formalised recommendations which can be presented to Full Council in May as part of the AGM.

3. Seeking further views – developing the final proposals for Full Council

3.1 Ahead of the AGM in May, we have an opportunity to refine the proposals, seeking further perspectives from citizens and Members about whether they feel the draft proposals address the issues raised in the review.

3.2 We also need to develop the technical and, in some cases, constitutional specifics for how the proposals will work in practice. At present, the recommendations are in draft and reflect the ideas that have been developed in response to the issues raised through the engagement activity. For example, we need to consider the interplay between the proposed approaches to written questions and responses, verbal supplementary questions, and statements, particularly in how this would operate within a meeting setting. To be effective any system needs to have the appropriate resource to respond to it. There are implications for officers in terms of the time to manage any revised system and to ensure that responses are tracked and answered in a timely fashion.

3.3 For citizens and stakeholders, we are proposing a number of approaches:

- The Chair of Governance Committee has written to all citizens who have contributed to the Review to date, inviting them to attend the Governance Committee on 28th February to contribute to the discussion on the public questions item.

- For anyone who can't or doesn't want to participate in the Committee on the 28th February or anyone else that wishes to contribute, a short survey has been made available on Have Your Say Sheffield to enable people to offer comments on each set of recommendations. The survey will be available until the Wednesday 6th March.

3.4 A finalised version will then be presented to Governance Committee for consideration and for Members to recommend to Full Council for the AGM in May 2024.

3.5 <u>Timetable for the next steps</u>

20th Feb 2024	• Papers published for Feb Governance Committee
	• Invite sent from Governance Committee Chair inviting participants to attend Feb Committee and/or respond to the Have Your Say Sheffield survey
	• Have Your Say Sheffield feedback form published
28th February	Governance Committee discussion
6th March	Deadline for comments on the proposals
7th – 15th March	Analysis and development of final proposals
19th March	Publication of Governance Committee papers for 27th March
27th March	Governance Committee discuss final proposals
April	Write-up of papers for Full Council
7th May	Publication of papers for AGM
15th May	AGM

3.6   It is proposed that the new proposals will be implemented for 12 months and we will keep the new system under review to continuously improve the system and address any unforeseen issues that may result from the implementation of the new system.

4.   Risk analysis and implications of the decision

4.1   Equality Implications

4.1.1   Our legal duties under the Equality Act 2010 include having due regard to the need to:

  • eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct,
  • advance equality of opportunity, and
  • foster good relations

4.1.2   The developing proposals to reform public questions and petitions are intended to improve inclusivity and accessibility to participating in our democratic meetings. This includes enabling citizens to ask questions via hybrid links, enabling questions to be read out on behalf of citizens, and enabling people to remain anonymous on the public record (while contact details must be supplied upon submission).

4.1.3   An initial Equality Impact Assessment has been started and will be updated and published with the final proposals in March.

4.2   Financial and Commercial Implications

4.2.1   Not applicable at this stage as expected that the changes will be delivered within current resources.

4.2.2   As with the overall impact of the proposals, the resource and capacity implications of the proposed changes to the public questions model will be kept under review.

4.3   Legal Implications

4.3.1   There is no legal requirement to have public questions in any form at the public meetings of the Council. Currently the ability to ask questions is included in the Council's constitution that is maintained under s9P of the Local Government Act 2000.

4.3.2   It is proposed that in future the ability for public questions is retained in the constitution, but that the detail of how questions should be asked are contained in a scheme published on the Council's website. Such scheme should be published by the Monitoring Officer and overseen by the Governance Committee.

4.3.3   The Council publishes both the questions and answers as part of its minutes and is there potentially liable for matters conatined in that publication. The scheme should contain provisions as to the scope of public questions permissible and when and how any questions might not be permitted.

4.4   Climate Implications

4.4.1   N/A

5   Reasons for recommendations

5.1   The paper provides an initial draft of the proposals to reform public questions and petitions. The recommendations set out an opportunity for Members and citizens to provide final views and comments before the proposals are developed in more detail and presented to Governance Committee for consideration in March 2024.

REVIEW OF APPROACH TO PUBLIC QUESTIONS AT COUNCIL MEETINGS

Report of findings and recommendation – Working Draft

February 2024

1 Background and introduction

1.1 This review of our approach to public questions at Council meetings is a response to recommendation of the six-month Governance review.

1.2 As part of the Transition to Committees, we worked with citizens and stakeholders to agree a short set of Design Principles which captured how Members and citizens wanted to see decision making happen in Sheffield through the Committee System. These Principles set out that in making decisions, SCC would aim to be:

…be democratic. Sheffield City Council is committed to local democracy. **…be open and trustworthy**. Make decisions publicly, so people can tell who is responsible for what.
 …include all Councillors. Show what decisions everyone's local councillors are involved in.
…listen to everyone. Have the voice of residents at the heart of our decisions.
…be cutting edge and keep improving. Respond to the fast-changing world by trying new things and checking often whether it's working.

1.3 As part of our commitment to continuously improve our governance, we undertook a Six-month Review of the new Committee System in 2022/23 to look at early learning and development opportunities during which Governance Committee heard a clear message from stakeholders, Members and officers that the current approach to public questions is not meeting expectations and needs to be reviewed if it is to be an effective route for citizen voice and democratic accountability. In particular, the Committee heard:

- **Citizens are dissatisfied with the speed and manner of responses received to public questions** – albeit with relatively small numbers, 44% of citizens who have asked questions and responded to the Review survey said that they were either dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied with speed of their response to a public question; and 56% were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the manner of the response received.

- **Confusion and duplication** – there is a sense that public questions are not always directed to the most appropriate forum, there is duplication of questions at Policy Committees, Full Council and LACs, and sometimes questions are 'bounced' between committees – causing confusion and delays to responses. There is also a potential issue of duplication and inconsistency with answers to questions on the same issue asked at LAC and city-level committee level.

- **Who responds** – some Members feel that the current approach, whereby responses are formulated by officers and the Chair of a committee, is not appropriate in the new system, where the question is addressed to the whole Committee.

- **Time and value** – some citizens felt that 30 minutes is inadequate for dealing with public questions when significant decisions are being made; some felt the process is too formal and rigid with no scope for asking supplementary questions; and some argued that it isn't a meaningful tool for engagement and influencing decision making.

- **Accessibility and visibility** – some citizens would like to be able to submit questions anonymously or attend the meeting virtually to ask a question. Some citizens were concerned that where written responses are provided, they are not published with the minutes, so they are not on the public record.

2   The review process

2.1   Scope

2.1.1   In July 2023 the Governance Committee set out its review of approach to public questions at Council meetings. The proposed purpose of the review was to:

1. Ensure the process for citizens to ask public questions is clear, that public questions are triaged in a way that directs them to the most appropriate forum and that those forums are easy to access.

2. Consider processes for responding to public questions and the interplay between timescales and quality of responses so that we can best achieve a consistent approach that is fit for purpose in the Committee System.

3. To undertake the review creatively with citizens and stakeholders, developing proposals which learn from the experiences of those involved within resource and capacity constraints.

2.1.2   Specific areas of focus were to actively seek feedback from, and test proposals with, citizens and stakeholders; and report into the Governance Committee. Also that the work on public questions clarify the process for members of the public submitting a question to the Full Council that had not been adequately dealt with by a Policy Committee.

2.1.3   A cross-party task and finish group of members from Governance Committee was set up. He membership is Councillors Fran Belbin (task and finish group Chair), Sue Alston, Mike Levery, Sioned-Mair Richards, Paul Turpin. They have been working with citizens and stakeholders, to a scope focused on improving the awareness, process, quality, and experience of public questions.

2.2   Engagement activity

2.2.1   An online survey open to all was available on our Have Your Say Sheffield site September 2023, it was publicised in our citizen newsletter, there were two separate surveys to gather information about people's experience of either asking a public question or presenting a petition at Council meetings, the Governance Committee particularly wanted to hear from people who had never asked a question or presented a petition to find out why they haven't and if we could do anything to encourage in the future.

2.2.2   Members of the Governance Committee held an in person public input workshop on 14th September 2023, which was for the Committee to listen to people's experiences of asking or not asking a public question or presenting a petition in Sheffield. This complemented the approach taken in the online surveys.

2.2.3   The Governance Committee also received a submission of a report[1] a citizen network known as Sheffield Oversight and Scrutiny (S.O.S.) which captures perspectives and recommendations from an independently organised online public event.

2.2.4   In November 2023, we also asked officers from across the City Council to share their views on their experience of managing and responding to public questions. This included officers who manage the receipt of public questions and those who assist with responding.

2.2.5   Also in November 2023, the Committee's task and finish group held a solutions workshop with citizens. Attendees were people who responded to the survey and had asked to be kept involved. The workshop was hybrid (in person and online) and worked through the packages of key issues that had been identified in the initial evidence gathering.

3   The purpose of public questions

3.1.1   Whilst it is recognised that our existing approach to public questions and petitions has some strengths (eg. relatively flexible and compared to some local authorities), there are definitely improvements that can be made to enhance the quality and experience of public questions and petitions for all involved but particularly for citizens.

3.1.2   The Governance Committee has heard what our stakeholders said and seek to create a clearer statement of why public questions matter.

---

[1] The SOS Public Questions and Petitions Report is available to download online here: https://www.sos-sheffield.org.uk/

3.1.3 Already [our Constitution](#) in Part 2c sets out the rights that citizens have to participate in meetings of Sheffield City Council. To enhance this, Governance Committee have suggested the following statement, to set out our view of the purpose of PQs:

> "The citizens of Sheffield have a right to participate in the meetings of Sheffield City Council, our Committees and other Council bodies.
>
> Public Questions are one of the means of holding the Council to account, of getting items on public record, to raise public attention to an opportunity or issue.
>
> We welcome and want to encourage and enable greater citizen involvement in our city's democracy and are committed to ensuring that any citizen can raise a public question (or petition) and should expect an accurate and timely response that answers the question or issue raised.
>
> Public questions are one way in which citizens can engage. They are a mechanism for engaging in the agenda of a meeting, not a mechanism for engaging in detail or individual complaints or issues, they are not intended for engaging in debate or conversation."

4 Findings, solutions development, and test

4.1 Findings

4.1.1 A summary of the findings from the evidence gathering is available here: https://democracy.sheffield.gov.uk/documents/s63615/Approach%20to%20PQ%20interim%20findings%20slidepack%20for%2012.10.2023.pdf

4.1.2 Key findings / issues that Governance Committee heard from citizens:

1. **Quality of response and experience** – most people who have asked a public question feel they have not been listened to and that the quality of response they received did not meet their expectations. Citizens said that they want more political/democratic accountability for responses (ie. Members responding to questions in public meetings even if content is officer-prepared).

2. **Barriers to asking questions** – citizens cited significant barriers which prevent them asking PQs. This includes physical and EDI barriers (physically attending a meeting at a set time during work hours; barriers due to protected

characteristics eg. caring responsibilities, disabilities) and mental barriers (needing confidence to speak in public meetings).

3. **Complex process** – people find our current process for PQs complicated and unclear. There were concerns about the time taken to receive a response, hard to get updates on progress and hard to find evidence of any impact that a PQ has had. People who submitted petitions were more positive about the process.

4. **Awareness** – there is a lack of awareness about the ability to ask PQs and raise petitions beyond a core group of citizens. People feel that the information, guidance, and advice that we currently provide is unclear and inaccessible. It does not give people the tools they need to participate.

4.1.3 The views on petitions were less critical than for Public Questions but clearly, the user experience is different and of a smaller scale for petitions.

4.2   Solutions development, and test

4.2.1 All of the responses to surveys, output from workshops, the submission from S.O.S, and insight from officers informed an initial long list of solutions. These covered five themes:

1. Public awareness;
2. Triage and track;
3. How question is asked;
4. Quality of response;
5. Influence and impact.

The full initial long list of solutions is included in the report at Appendix 1. The Committee's task and finish group tested and explored this initial long list of solutions at a workshop with citizens involving people who had responded to the surveys and had indicated that they would like to stay involved in the review. We also brought insight from officers into the workshop.

4.2.2 Following the develop and test stage, Members of the Committee met in December 2023 to look at all the insight and proposed solutions to consider in detail, what they might mean in practice, their deliverability and priorities for action and implementation.

4.2.3 The changes that have been proposed by citizens, Members and officers fall into three broad categories:

- **those that are quicker to implement** - as they are about improving our process or action within existing ways of operating, including improving information and guidance and boosting awareness and accessibility through communications.

- **actions that require approval (consensus beyond Governance Committee)** - including those that likely require a change in the constitution; and

- **improvements that require a system change or a technical solution** - these are likely to carry a greater resource input (time and priority) and possibly budget and cost pressure, including a publicly accessible system to track the journey of a question through to a response.

4.2.4 The proposals on public questions and petitions form part of the continuous improvement of our governance model in Sheffield City Council and will complement the planned work in 2024, including on the remits of policy committees, reviewing and enhancing the role of LACs and transforming our approach to citizen involvement and participation.

5 Recommendations

5.1 Overarching proposals

5.1.1 There are 5 overarching proposals responding to what we heard, within each there are recommendations which provide more specifics on the steps we could take for Members to consider.

1. Improving the quality and overall experience of public questions
2. Making public questions modern and accessible for all citizens
3. Creating a clear, open, and transparent process so that citizens can track the journey of a question from submission to response and action
4. Improving advice and guidance for citizens to improve
5. Purpose of public questions – a statement of principle, and ongoing review

Proposal 1: Improving the quality and overall experience of public questions

What we've heard	• Of those that had experience of asking public questions, the overwhelming majority were dissatisfied with the response they received.
	• People who have asked questions said that they didn't feel listened to, that responses from Members and officers could be abrupt, and that the visible impact or change from their question was negligible.
	• There should be clear accountability for responses – distinction between officers providing detail and substance in response to questions and politicians answering in public meetings.
	• There are a range of views on timeliness of responses – some are prepared to wait longer for quality answer, and some prefer an on-the-spot answer.
Recommendations	The proposition is to undertake a twelve-month trial in the 2024/25 municipal year of a renewed approach to public questions. The trial will apply to Full Council and all Policy Committees and the changes are set out below in recommendations 1.1 - 1.9. For Local Area Committees, the approach to public questions will remain unchanged (see 1.10).
	We will undertake a full evaluation of the trial after 12 months to inform, give insight to the refinement or continuation of these approaches for future years (see 1.11).
	Recommended specific changes:
	1.1 Any question can be submitted 6 working days before a meeting, the question and response will be published as a written answer before the relevant meeting (i.e. Day before / morning of the meeting).
	1.2 Urgent questions (i.e. those that couldn't reasonably have been anticipated at the time the written question deadline) and those relating to specific agenda items to be submitted 3 working days in advance of meeting and a verbal response will be provided at the meeting.
	1.3 In relation to the content or topic of a question please note for Full Council the question can only be on an issue for which the Council has responsibility, or which directly affects the City; for Policy Committees it must be about a matter for which the Committee has responsibility.

	1.4 After viewing a written response, questioners may still opt to attend the meeting (in person/virtually) and will be able to ask a supplementary question that is related to the initial question, subject to time allowing.
	1.5 Introduce a word limit on all public questions.
	1.6 Introduce the ability to make statements – these must be submitted 2 days in advance (5 days for Policy Committees) with 1 minute time limit to speak with guidance on an approximate word limit.
	a. A citizen may opt to read out their statement in the meeting; or
	b. A citizen may choose to submit a statement in writing.
	c. In either format, statements will not be responded to in the meetings, but all statements will be on the public record.
	d. A written reply will be provided within 10 working days.
	e. For Policy Committees the statement must be about an agenda item.
	1.7 Members to receive draft responses at least 1 day before a meeting to consider responses.
	1.8 Subject to the Chair's discretion, the time for public questions, petitions and statements at meetings will remain at 30 minutes.
	1.9 New advice, guidance, and a consistent response format for officers to improve consistency and quality of responses.
	1.10 The approach to PQs at Local Area Committees (LACs) will remain unchanged and people will continue to be able to ask questions from the floor at LAC meetings.
	1.11 Citizen evaluation and review at end of trial.
Why we are proposing this	The current system is flexible but: • can cause pressure point for those supplying the response, especially for example turnaround on questions for Full Council or a Policy Committee;

	• there is a narrow time between agenda publishing and deadline for acceptance of a public question; • there is often a poorer quality of standard of response and/or lack of detail when there is limited response time. The Committee are considering for example a principle that if you ask a question more days in advance of a meeting you will get a written response and it will be in the meeting record, if less days in advance, you should get an initial verbal response at the meeting with written follow up, if asked on the day you will get written response within 10 working days, not an answer on the day.
Timescale	Start of Municipal year 2024/25 subject to Full Council approval

Proposal 2: Making public questions modern and accessible for all citizens

What we've heard	• People recognise the ability to ask public questions and raise petitions is an important part of our democracy. • Many who have asked questions have had negative experiences • There are equality and diversity barriers to asking questions in a meeting in a physical place at a specific time which impacts on a number of protected characteristics. • People can feel intimated by the context in which Committee meetings take place – large, formal, public spaces in the town hall – and this is an important barrier to engagement. • Some identification of inconsistency in approach between committees – e.g. Whether submitted questions are read out if a citizen cannot attend in person. • People want the opportunity to be anonymous, to not attend but to still have questions read, answered, and publicly logged.

Recommendations	2.1 Enable public questions or petitions to be presented on-screen, such as Teams or equivalent (or recorded videos). If not possible for technical reasons, ask for submission in writing which will then be read out.
	2.2 Enable a questioner to request that a question is read out on their behalf. This would also be an alternative if virtual route is not available.
	2.3 Enable citizens to submit a written question and request a written response without needing to attend a meeting, and the question and response go on the public record.
	2.4 Enable for anonymity in the public forum, but not in submission (i.e. submission must include name and contacts).
Why we are proposing this	Introducing these improvements to how questions are asked responds directly to the issues raised by citizens. The steps should increase flexibility, enable greater participation, and increase accessibility for all, removing the barrier of having to physically attend a meeting to ask. To make this work there will need to be clear expectation of timelines for submission, and when questioner can expect a response, and in what format the response will be on the record – these aspects will be a critical element of how the tacker will operate and the content of the guidance to explain lead in times and what form of response you can expect.
Timescale	Start of Municipal Year 2024/25 with 2.1, subject to availability of tech solution in all meetings

Proposal 3: Creating a clear, open and transparent process so that citizens (and officers and Members) can track the journey of a question from submission to response and action

What we've heard	• People felt strongly that the existing process was complicated, unclear, and hard to access.
	• Respondents felt that all questions and answers should be published for all Committees; that they should be able to be tracked through the process, and that there should be a clear log of the question, the response and action that can be publicly accessed.

11

	• There were clear concerns about the time taken to receive a response, that reasons for delays are unclear, and in some cases, people said responses were not provided at all or the quality of response did not meet citizen expectations. • People want to see the impact of their questions or petitions and whether their voice influenced change in the decision or approach. • Those that have raised petitions were more positive about the system of submission but less so about how they could find out about the impact and response
Recommendations	3.1 Develop a portal, to submit a public question – simple online form to make it easy for anyone to submit a question and indicate where they would like to have their question heard.
	3.2 Introduce an online tracker – simple system to track petitions and questions so that anyone can see the progress and status of a public question, find answer provided, and find what has changed as a result. This will be an open online system, navigable and searchable.
Why we are proposing this	To improve the clarity and consistency of the PQs approach, we need to better manage the 'journey' of questions so that citizens are easily able to find the latest information about their questions and answers. Having a single system and approach will also help officers and Members in the Council ensure that responses are in a consistent form and make it easier to provide citizens with updates on the progress of questions and answers. The approach should not constrain or gatekeep but rather improve accessibility, consistency, and timeliness of response. An open and transparent system will also bring benefits to petitions too. The intention is it will include all Committees.
Timescale	First iteration to be developed for implementation during 2024/25

Proposal 4: Improving advice and guidance for citizens to ask public questions and raise petitions

What we've heard	• Most respondents said that they hadn't asked a public question and didn't know they could. • Citizens want simple and clear information about the process, how it works, what happens, what the impact would be and about the committees themselves. • The information that was available wasn't very clear, accessible, or easy to find. • The timescales involved in submitting and receiving answers to public questions need to be clearer. There is an interconnected association between timescale and the quality of response.
Recommendation	4.1 A 'get involved' information and guidance source, that works as a webpage, and is printable. 4.2 This would include information on how to be involved, to ask a question, submit a petition, what can be expected if you do any of these things. 4.3 Seek advice from our communication professionals and stakeholders for the best way to promote public questions and the new guidance.
Why we are proposing this	Contribute to raising public awareness, capturing interest from our landing page, with communications and campaigns that signpost this. It would be a simplification of our information, to make it easier for citizens to access and participate. It will be clear about options available, including accessing individual Councillors. We explored the option of a triage system that helped citizens navigate to where they should ask their question. Citizens told us that that they were concerned that this would result in gatekeeping or taking away informed choice of where to ask. Providing better information and guidance therefore puts the decision of where and what to ask into the hands of citizens and reduces the organisations input to 'oversee' and manage the detail of participation.

	Members are keen that the versed still have the right to go where they want to ask a question, and there are those who want guidance. The guidance will also function to manage expectations for participation, outcomes.
Timescale	Municipal Year 2024/25

Proposal 5: Purpose of public questions – a statement of principle, and ongoing review

What we've heard	• People ask a question to publicise an issue, to put on record a citizen or community view on an issue or consequence of an action of the Council. Often as a last resort or in frustration with response so far. People ask to be involved in developing our democratic systems.
Recommendations	5.1 Adopt statement of principle around our approach to public questions in paragraph 3.1.2 of this report 5.2 To drive improvement carry out regular experience survey of those asking public questions. 5.3 Ensure future opportunities for citizens to feedback and be involved in ongoing review of this trial approach to public questions.
Why we are proposing this	We want to make clear what we see as the purpose of public questions, and we welcome citizen involvement in democratic process. We want to continue to find out why people ask questions, and to drive improvement. To find out if you feel like your question was answered, were you happy with it, was it the answer you wanted, was it understandable if not the answer you wanted, are there further improvements to asking public questions or petitions you would like to suggest, as well as finding out why you asked a question. We want to keep listening, to keep citizens involved in how we improve our approach to public questions.
Timescale	Start of Municipal Year 2024/25

6. Future consideration and exploration

6.1 There are matters that have been given initial consideration, but judgement reserved for time being whilst the above recommendations are implemented,

6.2 Some may come into their own once the priority elements are underway, so they are not discounted, but on the watch list as the new approach to public questions at Council meetings takes shape, these include:

- o Introduce a right of reply.
- o Keep public question to an agenda topic.
- o Public questions be taken at end of a meeting.

7. Monitoring and Citizen Involvement

7.1 The changes are an ongoing constant opportunity for citizen involvement in our democratic process. We see the review and recommendations as you said, we did, expanded to we will test and review, and you will be part of that, we will keep listening, there will be future opportunities to feedback as we trial and use this approach to public questions, we will be keeping you informed, and finding out why people ask questions and what people want to see, to drive improvement in our approach. There is also more work underway in the Council on Citizen Participation and Community Involvement.

7.2 At the outset we set out there will be a review of the trial in recommendation 1 that will involve citizen and stakeholder reflection and experience, at the end of the trial, and during if necessary. During the trial we will keep the new model under constant review and reserve the right to amend and update if any unforeseen issues occur.

7.3 Recommendations include additional monitoring of how the new approach is being received by gathering qualitative data from those asking questions on perception of response received. Over the period of the trial we can further monitor how the new approach is being received by gathering qualitative data from those asking questions on perception of response received. We propose to use our Have Your Say Sheffield platform.[2]

---

[2] You can visit, register and sign in to Have Your Say Sheffield on this link - Have Your Say Sheffield

APPENDIX 1 – The full initial long list of solutions

THEME ONE – PUBLIC AWARENESS

What is this: Information available to all and 'not scary' or reading like set of 'terms & Conditions'; raise awareness of this information and how to ask a question or submit a petition.

Broad solutions:
- **Develop a 'Get Involved' information and guidance source, that works as a web page, a PDF document (see Bristol's How to have your say public forum guide)**
- **Develop a communication and campaign plan to raise awareness.**

Detail suggestions
- **Single button on front web page on how to be involved, to ask a question, submit a petition) – 5 points that make it accessible.**
- **Support and enable more use of petition.**
- **Use multi ways to provide information, for example our bulletin/newsletter; use known groups to feed information to.**
- **Raise awareness with presentation at each LAC; promote on social media, enlist external media (e.g. The Tribune;).**
- **Ticker tape banner on website of upcoming meetings.**

THEME TWO- TRIAGE AND TRACK

What is this: Essentially the system around and journey of asking a public question.

Broad solutions:
- **Develop a 'Get Involved' page with information and guidance.**
- **Develop a portal to submit a public question and a template to guide, what and where – it was emphasised that this should not result in gatekeeping or restrict what can be asked to prejudged topics and content.**
- **Develop a tracker of questions and petitions, that is a public record of Q&A, and influence; and is an internal data and process management tool.**

Detail suggestions

- **Guidance: Information to guide and steer on whether question, petition, or statement (new option), and where to send or present – for example, which Committee**.
- **Triage: A framework that assists us and submitters in determining if it is a question, a petition, a complaint or a constituent query – open and transparent, and be a part of guidance.**
- **Tracker: A single place to see questions, responses, action, influence and impact, a public record of Q&A, and influence**.
- **How: Portal to submit, with a template to help steer and guide content**
- **New for consideration:**
  - a) **Introduce making statement as an option.**
  - b) **Introduce option to ask a supplementary.**
  - c) **Introduce a right of reply.**
  - d) **Keep public question to an agenda topic.**

THEME THREE – HOW QUESTION IS ASKED

What is this: It is about the way we allow or support people to ask a question at our meetings.

Broad solutions:
- **Develop a consistent option for asking, reporting, recording questions without the current perceived requirement to attend the meeting in person – currently ad hoc across all meetings, sometimes Chair discretion.**

Detail suggestions
- **Allow public questions or petitions to be presented hybrid if requested (online, not in person) at all meetings – if not possible for technical reasons, consider options such as submission in writing and read out.**
- **Allow for anonymity in the public forum, but not in submission, can be anonymous in asking question on day if requested, introduce criteria-based rule for anonymity, to stop blanket submit a question anonymously, enable anonymity in public meeting and record.**
- **To be able to request that question is read out on behalf – also a solution if tech prevents hybrid option.**

THEME FOUR – QUALITY OF RESPONSE

What is this: It is about how we can improve quality of response, reflect on some of the criticism of the timing and quality of responses, some of the above solutions and suggestions may help by changing experience and expectations, for example clear guidance, a tracker of questions and responses publicly available, introducing right of reply.

Broad solutions
- **Develop a 'Get Involved' page with information and guidance.**
- **Mange expectations with guidance that includes when can expect a response, how will receive a response, how can chase a follow-up.**

Detail suggestions
- **We can gather qualitative data on perception of response via a survey link sent with response – that asks do you feel like your question was answered, were you happy with it, was it answer you wanted, was it understandable if not answer you wanted?**
- **Introduce a new / reformed submission and response time standard… (see Bristol's How to have your say public forum guide). For example it could be if you ask a question more days in advance of a meeting, you will get a written response and it will be in the meeting record, if less days in advance, you should get an initial verbal response at the meeting with written follow up, if asked on the day you will get written response within 10 working days, not an answer on the day. Some citizens advocate being prepared to wait longer for quality answer. Though some prefer an on-the-spot answer, supposedly more honest. Suggest parity with public and member questions timeline for questions.**

THEME FIVE – INFLUENCE AND IMPACT OF ASKING

What is this: Citizens want to know how what they have asked has influenced or changed what we did.

Broad solutions:
- **Online open tracking system to include how it influenced/changed what we did**
- **Publish a "you said, we did" annually, ideally every 6 months**

Detail suggestion:
- **A future option to consider is uncouple public questions from Council or Committees, for example a regular, probably online, meeting that hears public questions, and is a public record? This was met with mixed response**

from citizens – they want to be able to ask question to the right Committee and expertise – solution detail to consider how to make this work, and/or a new form of involvement for citizen participation.

This page is intentionally left blank

Report to Governance Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report: Joe Horobin, Director of Integrated Commissioning

Tel: 0114 273 5891

Report of:	Director of Public Health
Report to:	Governance Committee
Date of Decision:	28th February 2024
Subject:	Governance to support partnership working with the NHS and other partners across Sheffield

Type of Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) undertaken		Initial	X	Full	
Insert EIA reference number and attach EIA		2253			
Has appropriate consultation/engagement taken place?		Yes		No	X
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?		Yes		No	X
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?		Yes		No	X

If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-

*"The (**report/appendix**) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (**insert relevant paragraph number**) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)."*

Purpose of Report:

This report summarises the outcome of the Task & Finish Group established by the Governance Committee at their meeting of 12th October 2023 to consider appropriate Sheffield City Council membership of the Health and Care Partnership Board, the forum that supports joint SCC and NHS commissioning and planning through a pooled budget under Section 75 of the NHS Act 2006, as well as broader joint working that does not require pooled budgeting.

It asks the Committee to consider and endorse a proposal for appointing Elected Members to this Board, and for establishing working arrangements to support constructive engagement and maintain appropriate links with Policy Committees.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Governance Committee:

1. endorses the proposal that places for Elected Members on the Health and Care Partnership should be added to the list of appointments to be made by Full Council (usually at the Annual General Meeting), guided in the first instance by the discussion set out in this paper.
2. agrees to receive a further report setting out revised Terms of Reference for the Health and Care Partnership, following work to review these later in 2024, with a view to these guiding appointments to the HCP Board in the future.
3. endorses the development of a Role Description for Elected Members taking up places on the HCP Board, based on the points set out in this paper.
4. endorses the proposal that Council Officers should work with NHS colleagues to develop an appropriate induction process for Elected Members who are appointed to the HCP Board, and develop a broader development package for Elected Members targeted at building understanding of the NHS and the Council's relationship with it.
5. endorses the proposal that Officers should consider the best supporting arrangements for Elected Members based on the comments of the Task & Finish Group, building in capacity to develop these to reflect future learning.

Background Papers:
Report to Governance Committee, 12th October 2023, Governance to support partnership working with NHS Sheffield

Lead Officer to complete:-		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed.	Finance: Anna Beeby, Assistant Finance Manager
		Legal: Sarah Bennett, Assistant Director Legal Services
		Equalities & Consultation: Ed Sexton, Senior Equalities and Engagement Officer
		Climate: Victoria Penman, Sustainability Programme Officer
	Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.	
2	**SLB member who approved submission:**	Greg Fell, Director of Public Health

3	**Committee Chair consulted:**	Cllr. Fran Belbin, Chair of Governance Committee
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name: Joe Horobin	**Job Title:** Director of Integrated Commissioning
	Date: 28th February 2024	

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The Sheffield Health and Care Partnership (HCP) was founded in 2017. It is an alliance that brings together seven partners in the city to focus on issues that can only be addressed together, to bring about changes in the way services are planned and delivered. The seven partners are: Sheffield City Council, NHS South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (ICB), Sheffield Childrens NHS Foundation Trust, Sheffield Health and Social Care NHS Foundation Trust, Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Primary Care Sheffield and Voluntary Action Sheffield.

1.2 The Council has been active member of the HCP since its inception, with political and senior officer input, and already had a strong approach to collaboration with the NHS, since the Government launched the Better Care Fund in 2013. This required Local Authorities and NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) to create pooled budgets under Section 75 of NHS Act 2006, with a mandated minimum set by government, and a focus on services for adults.

1.3 In Sheffield we have responded to that prompt to develop joined up ways of working with our NHS partners by establishing one of the largest pooled budgets in the country, with the most recent iteration covering £754m of activity across services for adults and children and young people. This represents a sustained and ongoing commitment to partnership working in service delivery, and to getting the most out of the Sheffield public service pound.

1.4 Governance arrangements to support joint planning and commissioning evolved over time, culminating with the formal establishment of the Joint Commissioning Committee in 2019. This provided a publicly accountable space for Cabinet Members and CCG Governing Body members to do joint planning, with potential for delegated decision making should that become desirable.

1.5 With changes to the Council's governance following the referendum in 2021, and to that of the NHS following the Health and Care Act 2022, the Joint Commissioning Committee is no longer an appropriate structure for this work and has been removed from the Council's Constitution.

1.6 The NHS in Sheffield has worked to develop new governance arrangements to meet the requirements of the local context and the Health and Care Act 2022, with the involvement and support of Sheffield City Council officers. Work undertaken to ensure joint commissioning is still possible continues and is now reported into the HCP Board. Progress on establishing the right way to re-engage Elected Members in this space has not kept pace with the NHS governance changes and this proposal seeks to address that gap.

1.7   Partnership working with the NHS remains important, with joint commissioning, planning and delivery of services critical to delivering the most for Sheffielders from resources available. As a result in October 2023 the Council's Governance Committee established a Task and Finish Group to consider how Elected Members should be involved in the HCP and be involved in conversations around joint commissioning and the wider context of integration and partnership working.

2.   TASK AND FINISH GROUP PROCESS

2.1   As proposed at the Committee's October meeting, the Task & Finish Group was conducted over four sessions. Membership of the group was as follows:

- Cllr Fran Belbin
- Cllr Ruth Milsom
- Cllr Sue Alston
- Cllr Penny Baker
- Cllr Paul Turpin
- Cllr Angela Argenzio

Members were supported and facilitated by officers from Sheffield City Council, with input from senior NHS officers including the NHS SY ICB Executive Place Director for Sheffield.

2.2   The first session focused on how the Council's partnership relationship with the NHS has developed over the last decade, and how local NHS governance has developed in response to the Health & Care Act 2022 while seeking to build on established arrangements.

2.3   The second session allowed time for Members to reflect on what they had heard to ensure a shared understanding of the problem. It then focused on identifying Members' views on **who** should be involved in joint governance arrangements, starting by discussing the potential **constraints and freedoms** around this question, and the **issues and trade-offs** that might need to be considered. The Group then worked through each of the issues and trade-offs in turn, discussing each to work towards a consensus.

2.4   The third session again recapped the discussion from the previous meeting, and then focused on **ways of working** that would support constructive engagement and robust links to decision making. This covered the process of appointing members to the Board and the principles that should guide this, ensuring Members understand the role they are being asked to undertake, the proper role for officers in supporting them, and the key link back to committees, their policy development and decision making.

2.5 The final session synthesised all the output from the previous sessions into a draft consensus approach for the way forward, identifying areas where agreement still needed to be finalised. This was broken down into five areas:

- The process for appointing members
- What principles should guide who is a member
- Key points for a draft role description
- Member development priorities
- Principles for ways of working

The Group discussed each of these in turn, agreeing a consensus on the way forward as they went. The rest of this paper will set out some key overarching comments from the Group, before going through the detail of the discussion of the above list, taking each in turn and identifying key recommendations.

3. OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES

3.1 As well as discussing the criteria for and mechanics of Elected Members becoming members of the Health & Care Partnership Board, the Group also reflected on the purpose of the relationship and the potential benefits of Elected Member involvement.

3.2 This discussion focused on the desire for the partnership to be focused on supporting the right things to happen for Sheffield and setting local priorities around health and wellbeing, while being aware of national policy and priorities. With this in mind, there was consensus across those representing the Council and local NHS that this represents a positive opportunity to develop closer working and emphasises the importance of making a success of the relationship. It was also recognised 'community voice' is hugely important, and that Elected Members often have unique insight into communities and individuals' lives, which in turn can help people's voices be heard and amplified.

3.3 In addition, the Group agreed that this should be recognised as new territory for both the Council and NHS. As such a commitment to learning and adjusting as the work progresses would be appropriate, with flexibility to respond as what works and what doesn't is identified. This is in line with the continuous improvement approach set out in the Governance Committee's 6-month review of the Council's governance.

4. THE PROCESS FOR APPOINTING MEMBERS

4.1 The Health and Care Partnership Board is a non-statutory body (it is also not a committee or joint committee of the Council): this means that the question of which Elected Members should be involved in its work cannot be addressed through amendments to the Constitution. As a

result the Group has agreed that the Elected Member positions on the Health & Care Partnership Board should be added to the list of appointments to external bodies made by Full Council, usually at the AGM.

4.2   However, the Group also reflected that the importance and potential of the relationship means that there should be guardrails in place that guide how these appointments are made, to ensure that those attending are best placed to contribute. As above, this cannot be done constitutionally: instead the Task & Finish Group is proposing that this be done by the Council formally adopting the Terms of Reference of the Health & Care Partnership Board, as a committed member of that partnership.

4.3   In order for this to have any effect, the Terms of Reference of the HCP Board will need to be updated to incorporate principles to guide the appointment of Elected Members to the Board. A review of the Terms of Reference is scheduled for this year through which this can be done. A further report to the Governance Committee would then set out the updated Terms of Reference and the process for adopting them.

4.4   It is unlikely that this process will be complete by the time of the AGM in May. As a result the first set of appointments to the HCP Board will have to be undertaken based on informal agreement to adhere to the principles set out below.

4.5   **Recommendation:** Places for Elected Members on the Health and Care Partnership should be added to the list of appointments to be made by Full Council (usually at the Council's Annual General Meeting), guided in the first instance by the discussion set out in this paper.

4.6   **Recommendation:** The Governance Committee should agree to receive a further report setting out revised Terms of Reference for the Health and Care Partnership, following work to review these later in 2024, with a view to these guiding appointments to the HCP Board in the future.

5.   PRINCIPLES FOR AGREEING WHO SHOULD BE APPOINTED

5.1   The Task & Finish Group agreed that care must be taken over who is appointed to the positions on the HCP Board. In considering how to shape this, they factored in the need to negotiate:

- Members' capacity to commit time, energy and knowledge to the Board;
- The need to maintain links to policy committee decision-making;
- The need to respect the shift to a committee governance model;
- The need to maintain flexibility to allow for future changes to the Section 75 agreement (the legal agreement that supports the pooled budget arrangements);

- A desire to as far as possible reflect the political and geographic make up of the Council, and support diversity of voices.

5.2   The Group also agreed that to reflect the desire for the relationship to develop over time there is a need to build in the possibility for learning, reflection and change.

5.3   The Group agreed that the current position of four places on the HCP Board being reserved for Elected Members should be maintained, and that the arrangement by which it is assumed one of these places is filled by the Elected Member co-Chair of the Health & Wellbeing Board should continue, unless they choose not to for reasons of capacity.

5.4   Given the need to balance the factors detailed above, the Group agreed that rather than setting out fixed criteria, appointments to the remaining three places should be guided by balancing the following:

- The most important factor is that those appointed to the Board should be interested, motivated, and have capacity to commit fully to the role;
- They should have knowledge of the policy areas in the Section 75 agreement;
- They should be drawn from policy committees who are responsible for resources implicated by the Section 75 agreement if possible, but this should not be a barrier in itself for the right individual;
- If not drawn from one of the relevant policy committees, they should be able to make links with those committees;
- There should be no assumption that those appointed must be committee chairs or vice-chairs;
- To maintain flexibility to get the right voices into discussions there should be options to co-opt members in addition to those appointed as necessary

5.5   These principles should guide the appointment of Elected Members at this year's AGM, and provide the starting point for amending the HCP Board Terms of Reference to include Elected Members.

6.   **KEY POINTS FOR A DRAFT ROLE DESCRIPTION**

6.1   The Group agreed that it would be helpful to develop a role description to provide clarity and guidance to members on:

- The likely demands of the role;
- How Elected Members are expected to approach the role; and
- Their role in ensuring governance arrangements function

The following paragraphs set out the key points identified against each of these. It was also agreed it would be important for this document to provide a clear description of the Board, its purpose and its role, and to

set out the value of the opportunity to have a positive impact on Sheffield and its health and social care system.

6.2   **Likely Demands**

- Initial expectation of eight hours every month to cover meetings, reading papers and associated briefings
- Likely initial time commitment beyond this for induction and to build relationships across the partnership
- Members will be expected to attend HCP Board meetings whenever possible, but there will be understanding that sometimes meetings will be incompatible with other demands
- It will be possible to have a deputy attend instead
- Board meetings take place every two months, and the annual timetable for meetings will be circulated before appointments are made to enable the schedule to be factored in to decisions

6.3   **Approach to contributions**

Members will be expected to:

- represent agreed policy positions, where these are in place, not solely personal views
- seek to influence, and be open to being influenced, where policy positions are not established or are flexible
- represent the Administration not their Political Group
- represent the City not their Ward
- advocate for Sheffield communities
- show commitment to the vision and journey agreed in partnership
- bring a collegiate approach

6.4   **Members' role in making arrangements work**

Members will be expected to:

- take joint responsibility for connecting with policy committees through feedback, briefings, and discussing issues in advance
- maintain links with other HCP members
- support the NHS South Yorkshire ICB Place Director for Sheffield in doing the right things for Sheffield
- foster a healthy relationship between SCC and NHS Sheffield
- champion and support consultation and engagement with communities, including bringing community voices into discussions and using appropriate tools

6.5   **Recommendation:** The Committee should endorse the development of a Role Description for Elected Members taking up places on the HCP Board, based on the points set out in this paper.

7. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

7.1 The Group agreed that there would be a need for training and development. Most obviously this will be for those Elected Members who are appointed to the HCP Board, but the Group agreed that it would be important for Elected Members in general to better understand the NHS and the Council's relationship with it.

7.2 For those who are appointed to be HCP Board Members, they will need an induction that:

- supports their participation in partnership boards
- builds their understanding of healthcare system relationships, demands and dynamics
- supports ongoing relationship development with key partners in the health and care system

7.3 With regard to other Elected Members, there will be a need for Whips and Leaders to understand the aims of the partnership and requirements of HCP Board members to support them in agreeing appropriate appointments.

7.4 Over the longer term, there is a need for all Members to properly understand the NHS and the importance of the Council's relationship with it: this should be considered for inclusion in standard Member Training.

7.5 **Recommendation:** Council Officers should work with NHS colleagues to develop an appropriate induction process for Elected Members who are appointed to the HCP Board, and develop a broader development package for Elected Members targeted at building understanding of the NHS and the Council's relationship with it.

8. SUPPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

8.1 The Group agreed that a major factor in ensuring the relationship develops as desired is getting the right supporting working arrangements in place, to build collective understanding, maintain and develop relationships, and ensure a robust link back to relevant policy committees and their work.

8.2 Through their discussions, the Task and Finish Group developed a menu of options for consideration as part of the working arrangements to be developed, with the following as key foundations:

- Recognition that there is a key role for relevant senior officers in supporting this work, building on the roles they already undertake on the HCP Board and underpinning delivery arrangements;
- Formal induction for new members on to the HCP Board as an essential step;

- Taking a learning by doing approach, understanding that this is new territory for the Council.

With these in place, the menu of options proposed to establish the right ways of working covers:

- Elected Members appointed to the HCP Board should join other policy committee briefings when issues that relate to the Section 75 agreement are discussed, to broaden their understanding of the policy area in question;
- This would be especially important ahead of HCP Board meetings where items relevant to a given policy committee are on the agenda;
- It may be helpful to have specific pre-meeting briefing or discussion sessions for Elected Members appointed to the HCP Board ahead of Board meetings;
- Relevant Policy Committees should build work within the Section 75 agreement into their work programmes as policy development work to develop clear policy positions to feed into partnership discussions;
- The Health & Care Partnership Board should consider how to involve policy committees in its priority setting, and ensure this is visible to them;
- Establish a process for rapid feedback from HCP Board meetings, supported by circulation of the meeting outcome summary produced by the NHS South Yorkshire ICB Place Director for Sheffield

8.3   **Recommendation:** Officers should consider the best supporting arrangements for Elected Members based on the comments of the Task & Finish Group, building in capacity to develop these to reflect future learning.

9.   HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE ?

9.1   Strong partnership working is vital to the delivery of effective, joined up public services in Sheffield. The HCP Board is not a formal decision-making body, so proposals developed through this joint forum will be subject to formal decision making through committees so it is vital to ensure we have properly considered the proper structures to support both.

10.   HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

10.1   There is no duty to consult on membership of and support for partnership forums. Consultation on future proposals for new or revised services resulting from these arrangements will be carried out on a case by case basis as appropriate.

11. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

11.1 Equality Implications

11.1.1 The Equality Impact Assessment indicates that this proposal will be neutral in its impact, in seeking to maintain the current positive working relationship with NHS Sheffield.

11.1.2 Any proposals that emerge from discussions in the Health & Care Partnership Board will be subject to approval through the relevant Policy Committee(s) according to normal processes.

11.1.2 Through this process, individual EIAs will be completed for any decisions arising from the work of the new joint forum once established.

11.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

11.2.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

11.2.2 The Council and NHS partners work together as a whole system to ensure that funding can serve Sheffield's population effectively. This incorporates achieving the strategic shift to prevention that all partners see as the key change required to improve health and wellbeing as well as making the best use of available resources.

11.2.3 Joint planning arrangements have been a critical component of our approach to the funding challenge around health and social care services over recent years. Maintenance of effective partnership working and the mechanisms to support these, and ensuring the right connection to decision making, will be critical to ensuring this continues.

11.3 Legal Implications

11.3.1 Partnership working with the NHS remains important, with joint commissioning, planning and delivery of services critical to delivering the most from resources available. Participation in the HCP Board will consequently support the Council in meeting its legal responsibilities relating to health, care and wellbeing e.g. under the National Health Service Act 2006 and the Care Act 2014.

11.4 Climate Implications

11.4.1 There are no climate implications of this proposal.

12. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

12.1 The proposals in this paper have been developed by the Task & Finish Group through a thorough consideration of the issues. No alternative

option has been considered.

13. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

13.1 As set out, enabling Elected Member participation in partnership discussions around the health and social care system will support positive conversations focused on addressing local needs.

This page is intentionally left blank

Report to Governance Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report: Jason Dietsch, Head of Democratic Services

Tel: 0114 2734114

Report of:	*Director of Policy & Democratic Engagement*
Report to:	*Governance Committee*
Date of Decision:	*28 February 2024*
Subject:	***Member Role Profiles***

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	x	No	
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? 2241 (Initial EIA)				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	x	No	
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes		No	x
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes		No	x

Purpose of Report:

Action 1.3 in the Governance Review Implementation Plan sets out practical actions to achieve the aim of "Improving how we explain the system" which includes producing clearer guidance on the roles and responsibilities for Chairs, Co-Chairs, Deputy Chairs and Group Spokespeople and how officers are expected to brief and interact with these roles.

In July 2023, the Governance Committee established the Member Development Working Group (MDWG) and tasked the group with working with officers to produce new role profiles for elected Members. The aim was to develop role profiles for the key roles for elected Members in the Committee System to provide a true representation of the roles and responsibilities and to consider what learning and development opportunities would best support a councillor in the role, either as a new Member or an experienced one. The role profiles will also serve as a useful tool for the Independent Remuneration Panel's (IRP) review of Members' Allowances and increase transparency with members of the public on the requirements of the roles.

The MDWG met several times during 2023 and the beginning of 2024 to develop a suite of role profiles, primarily focussing on the roles of City Councillor and Policy Committee Chair, Deputy Chair and Group Spokesperson. Officers have provided support through research into role profiles produced by other local authorities and

information and publications from organisations such as the Local Government Association and Institute of Local Government Studies.

This report presents the role profiles for the roles of City Councillor and Policy Committee Chair, Deputy Chair and Group Spokesperson for Member's consideration and adoption.

Recommendations:

The Governance Committee is asked to:

1. Review and provide any final comments on the 4 role profiles of City Councillor, Policy Committee Chair, Policy Committee Deputy Chair and Group Spokesperson.

2. Adopt the 4 role profiles and recommend to Full Council that Article 7 in the Constitution be updated as set out in Appendix B, Role of the Policy Committee Chair.

3. Request the Director of Policy & Democratic Engagement, in conjunction with the MDWG, identify the priority areas for member development activity arising from the content of the role profiles and to ensure that these are incorporated in the member development programme.

4. Identify and further roles which city councillors perform for which role profiles might be developed in the future and to ask the Director of Policy & Democratic Engagement, in conjunction with the MDWG, to produce those role profiles for future consideration by the Governance Committee.

5. Note that the Independent Remuneration Panel will undertake a review of Members' Allowances and to request that the Panel:
   a. has regard to the new role profiles when reviewing the allowances;
   b. considers whether the role of Group Spokesperson should be awarded a Special Responsibility Allowance.

Background Papers:
The role of a councillor | Local Government Association

The Political Skills Framework – a councillor's toolkit

The 21st Century Councillor Summary Report

Appendices:
Appendix A: City Councillor Role Profile
Appendix B: Policy Committee Chair Role Profile
Appendix C: Policy Committee Deputy Chair Role Profile
Appendix D: Group Spokesperson Role Profile
Appendix E: Equalities Impact Assessment

Lead Officer to complete:-		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: Matthew Ardern
		Legal: David Hollis
		Equalities & Consultation: Richard Bartlett
		Climate: *N/A*
	Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.	
2	**SLB member who approved submission:**	*James Henderson*
3	**Committee Chair consulted:**	*Councillor Fran Belbin*
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name: *Jason Dietsch*	**Job Title:** *Head of Democratic Services*
	Date: 20/02/2024	

1.   PROPOSAL

1.1   This report asks the Governance Committee to review and endorse new Member Role Profiles for various leading roles held by Councillors.

1.2   **How does this fit with the work of the Governance Committee?**
Improving how we explain the committee system was a critical part of the 6 Month Review of Governance arrangements. There was particular focus on how we better enable elected Members, citizens and officers in the Council to navigate the system and support committees to be effective in their role.

1.3   This is now an action in the Governance Review Implementation Plan (GRIP), which is to develop clearer guidance on the roles and responsibilities for Chairs, Co-Chairs, Deputy Chairs and Group Spokespersons and how officers are expected to brief and interact with these roles. This has been included in the Governance Committee's work programme to consider the roles of Chairs, Deputy Chairs and Group Spokespersons, and whether current arrangements, including remuneration are appropriate.

1.4   The development of new role profiles also links with the wider work of the Committee and the MDWG on Member development, and links to the 21st Century Councillor, which is a piece of work undertaken by the Institute of Local Government Studies at the University of Birmingham looking at the roles, skills and support needed for elected Members.

1.5   **Current position**
Information on the roles of elected Members is provided in the Constitution: the Articles set out a summary of responsibilities for the role of the City Councillor and the Policy Committee Chair, part 5h sets out the Committee Job-Share Protocol, and the rules for urgent and officer decisions explain the role of the Chair, Deputy Chair and Group Spokespersons in urgent decision making. However, there is not a set of role profiles which bring together the requirements set out in the Constitution and the reality of what each role entails to give a true representation of the responsibilities and duties of each elected Member role. As the Committee system has been operating for nearly two years, there is now a clearer understanding of what is involved in the Policy Committee roles which has enabled accurate role profiles to be developed.

1.6   **Purpose of Role Profiles**
The role profiles provide clarity on the purpose, responsibilities and skills for committee related roles:

- to provide clarity for councillors, officers and citizens about what is expected of each role;
- to provide guidance to the Independent Review Panel for the

Members' Allowances Scheme and reviews of the scheme;

- to support elected Members in their development by providing a checklist to identify their learning and development needs. This includes the roles they are currently undertaking and progression to future roles, to support succession planning;
- to provide information for prospective candidates about councillors' responsibilities; and
- to inform Member Development priorities and programme.

1.7 **New Member Role Profiles**

The first stage of the process was to create an initial draft of each role profile, combining the existing information in the Constitution, feedback provided during recent IRP reviews, examples from other local authorities and guidance from documents such as the "21st Century Councillor" produced by INLOGOV and "The role of a councillor" produced by the LGA.

1.8 The MDWG then met to discuss and refine the role profiles, taking into account experiences of Members who were currently in the roles or who had undertaken them previously. The MDWG were keen that the role profiles reflect the changing role of councillors in the committee system and the future needs of the council and local government. In addition, skills and knowledge for each role have been identified to meet the requirements of a future Members' Allowances scheme and support the Member Development Programme of learning and development.

1.9 The role profiles were also shared with the political groups and comments were fed back and discussed in working group meetings. The gathering of feedback highlighted some important areas for inclusion in the role profiles including:

- ensuring that, where responsibilities and skills are the same, there was consistency across the role profiles;
- future proofing the role profiles so they remain relevant for different political scenarios;
- emphasising the role of each Policy Committee Member in scrutiny and the responsibility of the Chair, Deputy Chair and Spokesperson in encouraging the scrutiny role; and
- recognising that the role profiles are guidance documents to aid understanding of the roles and that they are separate from the Councillor Code of Conduct and do not form part of the Constitution.

1.10 Two further issues for consideration were raised by members of the MDWG following their last meeting:

1. Include "responsibility for setting a balanced budget" to the draft City Councillor role profile. It was acknowledged that this falls within point 5 of the role profile, "Make major decisions as part of the Council and provide political / strategic leadership, setting out

the policy and budget framework within which the Council operates."

2. Include in the Group Spokesperson role profile "In the absence of the Chair and Deputy Chair, to deputise for the Chair at formal and informal meetings of the Committee." At present, all Policy Committees have two Group Spokespersons, so this poses a further question on how to choose who Chairs in this situation. The Constitution currently states that "In the absence of the Chair and Deputy Chair at a meeting, the Body shall elect a Chair for that meeting."

1.11 Subject to their adoption, the role profiles would be made available on the Library area of the Council Meetings webpage, which is accessible by Members, officers and the public. This would enable existing and prospective councillors to gain an understanding of the demands of the roles and to provide transparency for the public.

1.12 The other role profiles currently under development by the MDWG are:
1. Local Area Committee Chair
2. Sub-Committee Chair
3. Audit and Standards Committee Chair
4. Licensing Committee Chair
5. Planning and Highways Committee Chair
6. Scrutiny Committee Chair

1.13 It is proposed that these role profiles, once complete, will be submitted to a future meeting of the Governance Committee for consideration and adoption.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

2.1 Members must have the opportunities to develop the knowledge, tools and skills they need to deliver a challenging agenda in a fast-changing environment. The Member Role Profiles help to identify the knowledge and skills needed to help shape the Member Development Programme so that it can provide Members with the tools and ongoing skills they need to mobilise local communities, grow community capacity, support local innovation and to be able to take important decisions and represent their constituents.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

3.1 The membership of the MDWG is cross-party and feedback from each political group has been sought throughout the process. The MDWG has worked collaboratively to develop the draft role profiles and all comments and feedback from Members has been shared with the working group and discussed.

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality Implications

4.1.1 As a Public Authority, we have legal requirements under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. These are often collectively referred to as the 'general duties to promote equality'. In addition, Council policy is also to consider the wider context, indicators and risks of inequality when assessing the implications of our proposals. We have considered our legal obligations and policy commitments in an initial impact assessment.

4.1.2 In creating the new Councillor role profiles, the MDWG have identified the development, training and skills required to fulfil the roles which includes the need for all Members to have an awareness of equalities. Training and development in equalities is incorporated into the Member Development Programme and the MDWG are supporting HR with the roll out of a level 2 equivalent certificate in equality, diversity and inclusion for elected members. The MDWG have oversight of the Member Development and Induction Programmes, this enables Members to provide feedback on any gaps in skills that are required to effectively challenge EDI issues when decision making.

4.1.3 The Government has recently published the Disability Action Plan and the first area of action is to "Support disabled people who want to be elected to public office." Support is available for elected Members through Member Services and reasonable adjustments can be arranged to remove barriers for Members with a disability.

4.1.4 The role profiles set out a detailed overview of the responsibilities associated with each role which:
- improves openness and transparency;
- enables Members to identify where they have support and development needs so that these can be addressed through the Member Development Programme; and
- provides the Independent Remuneration Panel with a comprehensive overview of the roles to support the ongoing review of Member Allowances, ensuring that these are appropriate for the roles to attract diverse councillors.

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

4.2.1 There are no specific financial implications from this report. The role profiles provide a comprehensive overview of the responsibilities of the different elected Member roles, and it is intended that the role profiles will assist the IRP as part of their review of Member's Allowances. The IRP may recommend changes to the level of allowances however any financial implications are dependent upon the action which the Council takes in response to the issues raised in any reports of the IRP. Financial implications associated with any changes would be set out in the IRP's

report to Council.

4.2.2   Learning and development for Members are provided by a mix of internal officers and external providers for more specialist topics, funded from existing budgets. In the event that new specific initiatives were proposed, the funding would be approved through the appropriate decision-making route. There is a £7k annual budget for member development. Additionally, the LGA has provided one-off funding to support member development activity this year.

4.3   Legal Implications

4.3.1   Roles and functions of City Councillors and particular roles in the Council are set out in the Articles of the Constitution. The new role profiles appended to this report include specific proposals for changes and additions to the role of the Chair of Policy Committee, in Article 7 of the Council's Constitution. Any changes to the Articles in the Constitution would require approval by full Council.

4.3.2   In addition, if the Governance Committee agree to introduce provision for the Group Spokesperson to deputise for the Chair and Deputy Chair, this would also require a change to Council Procedure Rule 31: Appointment of Chair.

4.3.3   There is no legal requirement to provide training for Members. However, doing so ensures that they have a knowledge and awareness of the Council's and their own statutory obligations and enables the efficient running of Council business.

4.4   Climate Implications

4.4.1   There are no specific climate implications arising from this report. A Member development programme for general and specific Member related roles provides potential opportunities for learning and development activity to improve knowledge and understanding of issues relating to climate.

Role Profile – City Councillor

Each individual will approach the role of City Councillor differently; therefore, this profile is intended to provide an overview of the purpose, role and responsibilities of a City Councillor rather than a definitive guide.

Purpose/role:

1. Be a representative of your ward and an advocate for the communities within it.
2. Communicate effectively and build strong relationships with local residents, businesses, organisations and interest groups, keeping them informed about the issues that affect them and representing their views at council meetings.
3. Provide community leadership and support the Council to work in partnership with local communities and organisations to deliver better services and have a positive impact in the area.
4. Empower and enable the communities in your ward to develop solutions and work in partnership with you to deliver improvements to the local area.
5. Make major decisions as part of the Council and provide political / strategic leadership, setting out the policy and budget framework within which the Council operates.
6. Undertake other roles to which you are appointed by the Council such as being a Member of a Policy Committee, regulatory, quasi-judicial and statutory roles, or as a representative on other bodies.

Responsibilities:

1. Adhere to the Council's Code of Conduct for Elected Members, equality policies and Council Values; uphold the Seven Principles of Public Life and challenge behaviour which falls below expectations.
2. Adhere to the Council's Protocols as set out in the Council's Constitution.
3. Develop links with local residents, organisations and businesses (including local healthcare and education providers and the emergency services), attending local forums and other community meetings or events and leading local campaigns on behalf of your residents.
4. Enable your constituents to contact you in a variety of ways that are accessible to them and communicate with residents to hear their concerns and keep them updated about the work of the Council and issues that affect them.
5. Investigate and respond to resident's queries (casework), with support from Member Services.
6. Develop and maintain a working knowledge of the authority's services, management arrangements, powers/duties, and constraints, and develop good working relationships with relevant officers of the authority.
7. Attend Full Council meetings and the meetings of other Committees to which you are appointed, and undertake the required preparation for those meetings including reading the agenda and reports in advance and carrying out your own research to understand issues and participate in discussions and decision making.

8. Attend and participate in meetings of other bodies to which you are appointed by the Council, representing the views of the Council at the body and maintaining effective communication between the body and the Council.
9. Attend political group meetings and any other events that your political group requires you to attend.
10. Attend training, development sessions and briefings as necessary for your role including Committee specific training.

Skills:

The following skills will support a City Councillor to fulfil the above responsibilities:

Core skills description	Skills required
Provide community leadership for the members of the community you represent and build trust within the community.	Leadership, Listening, Empathy, Emotional, Innovative, Diplomacy and Tact, Adaptability
Build relationships and communicate effectively with local residents, businesses and community and voluntary organisations.	Communication, Interpersonal, Partnership Working, Leadership, Active Listening, Diplomacy and Tact, Presentation, Digital Media, Proactive
Work independently and in partnership with others to respond to issues within the ward, lead and support local campaigns and resolve problems.	Problem Solving, Negotiation, Persuasion, Research, Time Management, Team Working, Delegation, Mediation, Managing Expectations, Leadership
Encourage public engagement with democracy and demonstrate political awareness when needing to work across political group boundaries.	Diplomacy and Tact, Political Awareness, Persuasion, Communication, Negotiation, Influence
Review and analyse information to present arguments that are concise, meaningful and easily understood.	Analytical, Research, Presentation, Evaluation, Questioning, Problem Solving, Persuasion
Supporting skills description	
Awareness of the types of harassment, abuse and intimidation you may face and an understanding of how to handle this.	Managing Conflict, Negotiation, Listening, Staying Calm, Communication, Managing Expectations, Councillors' guide to handling harassment, abuse and intimidation | Local Government Association
Ability to balance your role as City Councillor around other commitments such as family life, other employment or caring responsibilities.	Time Management, Organisational, Managing Expectations, Delegation, Self Awareness, Adaptability

Background documents:

[The role of a councillor | Local Government Association](#)

[The Political Skills Framework – a councillor's toolkit](#)

[The 21st Century Councillor Summary Report](#)

This page is intentionally left blank

Constitution definition in Article 7 – Policy Committees

7.02 Role of the Policy Committee Chair

The Chair of a Policy Committee will carry out the following functions:

a) Be the primary point of contact for officers with regard to the Committee's ongoing business, formulation of the draft work programme for the Committee's consideration, and for advice about engagement with the Committee.

b) Attend regular informal meetings with officers to inform decision making.

c) Be the primary spokesperson within and outside the Council in relation to the remit of the Committee. For further information and rules on communicating with the media, see the Council's media protocol.

d) In the case of the Chair of the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee, be the Statutory Lead Member for Children's Services; and, in the case of the Chair of the Adult Health and Social Care Policy Committee, be the Co-Chair of the Statutory Sheffield Health and Wellbeing Board.

e) Attend and represent the Council at any other Committees or Boards as required.

f) Be a member of the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee, subject to the rules for Co-Chairing.

g) Convene and chair regular pre-agenda and pre-meeting briefings with all the Group Spokespersons from the Committee.

h) Take a lead, in collaboration with officers, on ensuring that learning and development opportunities, relevant to the remit of the Committee, are available for all Members of the Committee.

i) Ensure that the Committee considers, as part of its annual work programme, the development of policy for matters within its remit

j) Ensure that the Committee, as part of its annual work programme, has a focus on improvement of the areas within its remit, undertaking pre- or post-decision reviews of policy, strategy, budgets or service performance as necessary, including engaging with the public and making evidence-based findings.

k) Where applicable, to be the political group's lead on activities within the Committee's remit and be the main point of liaison between the Committee and the group.

Role Profile – Chair of a Policy Committee

Each individual will approach the role of Policy Committee Chair differently; therefore, this profile is intended to provide an overview of the purpose, role and responsibilities of a Policy Committee Chair rather than act as a definitive guide.

Purpose/role:

1. To Chair formal and informal meetings of the Committee.
2. To be the primary point of contact for officers with regard to the Committee.
3. To provide leadership on the Committee work programme and the Committee's policy development responsibilities.
4. To make learning and development opportunities available for all Members of the Committee.
5. To be the primary spokesperson for the Committee and respond to public questions and petitions on behalf of the Committee.
6. To be consulted on the arrangements for Urgent Decision Making.
7. To encourage the Committee's scrutiny role.
8. To be a member of the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee, subject to the rules for Co-Chairing.
9. To attend other Committees or Boards as required.
10. Where applicable, to be the political group's lead with regard to the Committee's remit.

Responsibilities:

1. Convene and Chair formal and informal meetings of the Committee (except where the Chair is delegated to another Committee Member) ensuring that all participants have an opportunity to contribute, that Committee agendas are managed effectively and that meetings are conducted fairly and efficiently, following the meeting procedures set out in the Council's Constitution.
2. In collaboration with officers and Committee Members, formulate the Committee's work programme and support the efficient scheduling of all decisions and policy development opportunities within the Committee's remit.
3. Facilitate appropriate communications to Committee Members, in conjunction with the Deputy Chair and Group Spokespersons.
4. In accordance with the media protocol, be the primary spokesperson within and outside the Council in relation to the remit of the Committee.
5. Inform the Deputy Chair on matters within the Committee's remit to enable them to effectively deputise for the Chair when required.
6. Ensure that appropriate public involvement and consultation has taken place on decisions being brought before the Committee.
7. Oversee the preparations ahead of meetings, in collaboration with officers, including identifying and inviting additional attendees, ensuring that documents are published and circulated promptly, and discussing and agreeing changes to the meeting format, location or room set up.
8. Facilitate the receipt of, and responses to, public petitions and questions and Member questions.
9. Promote the four principles of good scrutiny ([CfGS – The Good Scrutiny Guide](#)) and encourage Committee Members to be involved in the pre- and post-scrutiny of all policies, budgets, performance and decisions relevant to the Committee, making

evidence-based improvement recommendations as required and engaging with the public as appropriate.

10. In collaboration with officers and Committee Members, oversee the terms of reference of the Committee and make references to other decision-making bodies where appropriate.

11. Attend and represent the Council at other Committees or Boards as required.

12. In the case of the Chair of the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee, be the Statutory Lead Member for Children's Services; and, in the case of the Chair of the Adult Health and Social Care Policy Committee, be the Co-Chair of the Statutory Sheffield Health and Wellbeing Board.

13. Undertake such training as may be appropriate for the role of Chair and, with support from officers, make learning and development opportunities available for all Members of the Committee.

14. Establish effective working relationships with the Deputy Chair, Group Spokespersons and key officers.

15. Where applicable, act as liaison between the Committee and the political group and lead on the development of approaches to policy and operational issues on behalf of the group.

16. Lead by example by promoting the standards in the Councillor Code of Conduct, the Council's equality policies and the Council's values.

Co-Chairs/Job-Share Chairs:

1. The arrangements for Co-Chairing are set out in Part 5h of the Council's Constitution. The Co-Chairs would, between them, fulfil the roles and responsibilities outlined above; however, it is down to the Co-Chairs to decide between themselves how these duties are divided up and communicate this to the members of the Committee and key officers.

Skills:

The following skills will support a Policy Committee Chair to fulfil the above responsibilities:

Core skills description	Skills required
Actively encourage the involvement of others and work collaboratively to achieve consensus.	Active Listening, Diplomacy and Tact, Negotiation, Emotional Intelligence, Conflict Resolution, Objectivity, Questioning
Be open to new ideas and ways of doing things.	Team Working, Active Listening, Empathy, Adaptability
Work closely with others to develop, promote and achieve objectives.	Facilitation, Leadership, Team Working, Active Listening, Negotiation, Diplomacy and Tact, Empathy, Adaptability
Effective leadership and chairing skills.	Leadership, Assertiveness, Communication, Diplomacy and Tact, Facilitation, Adaptability, Empathy
Supporting skills description	

Effective communication.	Communication, Media, Presentation, Interpersonal
Ability to influence and work constructively with Members, officers, the public and outside organisations.	Leadership, Assertiveness, Empathy, Negotiation, Diplomacy and Tact
Effective time management around meetings.	Time Management, Organisational, Preparation, Project Management, Resource Management

Role Profile – Deputy Chair of a Policy Committee

Each individual will approach the role of Policy Committee Deputy Chair differently; therefore, this profile is intended to provide an overview of the purpose, role and responsibilities of a Policy Committee Deputy Chair rather than act as a definitive guide.

Purpose/role:

1. To deputise for the Chair at formal and informal meetings of the Committee when the Chair is unable to be present.
2. To support the Chair in managing the ongoing business of the Committee.
3. To assist the Chair in making learning and development opportunities available for all Members of the Committee.
4. In the absence of the Chair, to act as spokesperson for the Committee.
5. To be consulted on Urgent Decisions where it is not possible to convene an Urgency Sub-Committee and, in the absence of the Chair, to be consulted on the arrangements for Urgent Decision Making.
6. To encourage the Committee's scrutiny role.
7. To be an effective critical friend.
8. Where applicable, to be the political group's lead with regard to the Committee's remit.

Responsibilities:

1. In the absence of the Chair, to Chair formal and informal meetings of the Committee (except where the Chair is delegated to another Committee Member) ensuring that all participants have an opportunity to contribute, that Committee agendas are managed effectively and that meetings are conducted fairly and efficiently, following the meeting procedures set out in the Council's Constitution.
2. Attend regular pre-agenda and pre-meetings to:
    a. provide input on the scheduling of agenda items and the Committee work programme;
    b. contribute questions and opinions on agenda items;
    c. encourage the Committee Chair and Group Spokespersons to consider different approaches; and
    d. raise considerations and potential difficulties on proposals ahead of the formal Committee Meeting.
3. Provide support to the Chair including:
    a. developing the work programme;
    b. attending informal meetings with officers;
    c. keeping Committee Members informed of the work programme;
    d. feeding in contributions from Committee Members; and
    e. managing the Committee's agendas and work effectively.
4. Undertake such training as may be appropriate for the role of Deputy Chair and support the Chair and Group Spokespersons in ensuring that learning and

development opportunities, relevant to the remit of the Committee, are available for all Members of the Committee.

5. Establish effective working relationships with the Chair, Group Spokespersons and key officers.

6. Where applicable, act as liaison between the Committee and the political group and lead on the development of approaches to policy and operational issues on behalf of the group.

7. Promote the standards in the Council Code of Conduct, the Council's equality policies and the Council's values.

Deputy Co-Chairs/Job-Share Deputy Chairs:

1. Where there is a single Chair, the role of Deputy Chair may be job shared. The arrangements for Deputy Co-Chairing are set out in Part 5h of the Council's Constitution. The Deputy Co-Chairs would, between them, fulfil the roles and responsibilities outlined above; however, it is down to the Deputy Co-Chairs to decide between themselves how these duties are divided up and communicate this to the members of the Committee and key officers.

Skills:

The following skills will support a Policy Committee Deputy Chair to fulfil the above responsibilities:

Core skills description	Skills required
Actively encourage the involvement of others and work collaboratively to achieve consensus	Active Listening, Diplomacy and Tact, Negotiation, Emotional Intelligence, Conflict Resolution, Objectivity, Questioning
Be open to new ideas and ways of doing things.	Team Working, Active Listening, Empathy, Adaptability
Work closely with others to develop, promote and achieve objectives.	Team Working, Active Listening, Negotiation, Diplomacy and Tact, Empathy, Adaptability
Effective leadership and chairing skills.	Leadership, Assertiveness, Communication, Diplomacy and Tact, Facilitation, Adaptability, Empathy
Supporting skills description	
Effective communication.	Communication, Media, Presentation, Interpersonal
Ability to influence and work constructively with Members, officers, the public and outside organisations.	Leadership, Assertiveness, Empathy, Negotiation, Diplomacy and Tact
Effective time management around meetings.	Time Management, Organisational, Preparation, Project Management, Resource Management

Role Profile – Group Spokesperson for a Policy Committee

Each individual will approach the role of Group Spokesperson differently; therefore, this profile is intended to provide an overview of the purpose, role and responsibilities of a Group Spokesperson rather than act as a definitive guide.

Purpose/role:

1. To support the Chair and Deputy Chair in managing the ongoing business of the Committee.
2. To assist the Chair and Deputy Chair in ensuring that learning and development opportunities are available for all Members of the Committee.
3. To be consulted on Urgent Decisions where it is not possible to convene an Urgency Sub-Committee.
4. To encourage the Committee's scrutiny role.
5. To be an effective critical friend.
6. To be the political group's lead on activities within the Committee's remit.

Responsibilities:

1. Attend regular pre-agenda and pre-meetings to:
   a. provide input on the scheduling of agenda items and the Committee work programme;
   b. contribute questions and opinions on agenda items;
   c. encourage the Committee Chair and Deputy Chair to consider different approaches; and
   d. raise considerations and potential difficulties on proposals ahead of the formal Committee Meeting.
2. Provide support to the Chair including:
   a. developing the work programme;
   b. attending informal meetings with officers;
   c. keeping Committee Members informed of the work programme;
   d. feeding in contributions from Committee Members; and
   e. managing the Committee's agendas and work effectively.
3. Undertake such training as may be appropriate for the role of Group Spokesperson and support the Chair and Deputy Chair in ensuring that learning and development opportunities, relevant to the remit of the Committee, are available for all Members of the Committee.
4. Establish effective working relationships with the Chair, Deputy Chair, Group Spokespersons and key officers.
5. Act as liaison between the Committee and the political group and lead on the development of approaches to policy and operational issues on behalf of the group.
6. Promote and uphold the standards in the Councillor Code of Conduct, the Council's equality policies and the Council's values.

Skills:

The following skills will support a Group Spokesperson to fulfil the above responsibilities:

Core skills description	Skills required
Actively encourage the involvement of others and work collaboratively to achieve consensus	Active Listening, Diplomacy and Tact, Negotiation, Emotional Intelligence, Conflict Resolution, Objectivity, Questioning
Be open to new ideas and ways of doing things.	Team Working, Active Listening, Empathy, Adaptability
Work closely with others to develop, promote and achieve objectives.	Team Working, Active Listening, Negotiation, Diplomacy and Tact, Empathy, Adaptability
Demonstrate effective leadership for the group with regard to the Committee.	Leadership, Assertiveness Communication, Interpersonal, Team Working
Supporting skills description	
Effective communication.	Communication, Media, Presentation, Interpersonal
Ability to influence and work constructively with Members, officers, the public and outside organisations.	Leadership, Assertiveness, Empathy, Negotiation, Diplomacy and Tact
Effective time management around meetings.	Time Management, Organisational, Preparation, Project Management, Resource Management

PART A - Initial Impact Assessment

Proposal Name: Member Development

EIA ID: 2241

EIA Author: Jason Dietsch (CEX)

Proposal Outline: To re-establish the Member Development Working Group (MDWG) to oversee future development of Elected Members, taking into account: - the existing strategy (2021-25) - the 6-month policy committee review of governance - recent relevant reviews/findings, including the Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Review, the Racial Equality Commission and the Street Tree inquiry - Future Sheffield and other overarching priorities and/or dependencies Subject to approval of the proposal, this EIA will be developed to inform and reflect the work of the group as it identifies Members' support needs. While the direction of Member development is to be confirmed, it is expected that it would include support both to enhance Members' community knowledge and in response to Members' own diversity. The membership of the group will be cross-party, consisting of two representatives from each group: the membership is currently a 50/50 split between male and female members. Any change to the future composition of the group will take into consideration the need to be proportionate and representative of all the members. Update November 2023: As part of the MDWG's work, new role profiles have been developed for the different Councillor roles (e.g. City Councillor, Committee Chairs etc.). The proposed role profiles set out the detailed purpose and responsibilities of each role as well as the skills and knowledge required to fulfil them.

Proposal Type: Non-Budget

Year Of Proposal: 23/24

Lead Director for proposal: James Henderson (CEX)

Service Area:	Democratic Services

EIA Start Date:	7/10/2023

Lead Equality Objective:	Understanding Communities

Equality Lead Officer:	Ed Sexton

Decision Type

Committees:	Other Committees
	• Governance

Portfolio

Primary Portfolio:	Strategic Support Services

EIA is cross portfolio:	No

EIA is joint with another organisation:	No

Overview of Impact

Overview Summery:	The Member Development Working Group (MDWG) would be expected to identify and respond to a range of development needs relating directly or indirectly to equality. For example, support/training that takes account of: - reasonable adjustment requirements - educational needs, learning preferences and learning difficulties (e.g. dyslexia) - caring or parental responsibilities - work commitments - travel requirements or restrictions - communication

requirements - digital inclusion There is the potential for impacts across several protected characteristics / equality interests. This will be explored further in the future development of this EIA. Update November 2023: In creating the new Councillor role profiles, the MDWG have identified the development, training and skills required to fulfil the roles which includes the need for all Members to have an awareness of equalities. Training and development in equalities is incorporated into the Member Development Programme and the MDWG are supporting HR with the roll out of a level 2 equivalent certificate in equality, diversity and inclusion for elected members. The role profiles set out a detailed overview of the responsibilities associated with each role which: - improves openness and transparency; - enables Members to identify where they have support and development needs so that these can be addressed through the Member Development Programme; and - provides the Independent Remuneration Panel with a comprehensive overview of the roles to support the ongoing review of Member Allowances, ensuring that these are appropriate for the roles to attract diverse councillors.

Impacted characteristics:

- Age
  Armed Forces
  Carers
  Cohesion
  Disability
  Gender Reassignment
  Health
  Partners
  Poverty & Financial Inclusion
  Pregnancy/Maternity
  Race
  Religion/Belief
  Sex
  Voluntary/Community & Faith Sectors
  Sexual Orientation

Consultation and other engagement

Cumulative Impact

Does the proposal have a cumulative impact: No

Impact areas:

Initial Sign-Off

Full impact assessment required: No

Review Date: 7/10/2023

Action Plan & Supporting Evidence

Outline of action plan:

Action plan evidence:

Changes made as a result of action plan:

Mitigation

Significant risk after mitigation measures:

Outline of impact and risks:

Review Date

Review Date: 7/10/2023

Report to Governance Committee

28th February 2024

Report of: Head of Policy and Partnerships

_____

Subject: Committee Work Programme

_____

Author of Report: Alice Nicholson, Policy & Improvement Officer

_____

Summary:

The Committee's Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1 for the Committee's consideration and discussion. This aims to show all known, substantive agenda items for forthcoming meetings of the Committee, to enable this committee, other committees, officers, partners and the public to plan their work with and for the Committee.

Any changes since the Committee's last meeting, including any new items, have been made in consultation with the Chair, and the document is always considered at the regular pre-meetings of the Committee.

Where applicable the following potential sources of new items are included in this report, on this occasion there aren't any from these sources:
 • Questions and petitions from the public, including those referred from Council
 • References from Council or other committees (statements formally sent for this committee's attention)
 • A list of issues, each with a short summary, which have been identified by the Committee or officers as potential items but which have not yet been scheduled (See Appendix 1)

The Work Programme will remain a live document and will be brought to each Committee meeting.

_____

Recommendations:

1. That the Committee's work programme, as set out in Appendix 1 be agreed, including any additions and amendments or items to be confirmed identified in Part 1.

2. Note the progress and indications of items which need more intensive work (eg. citizen involvement, task and finish groups, policy review and development work) and consider implications for prioritisation of Governance Committee's forward workplan.

3. Consider any further issues to be explored by officers for inclusion on the future iteration of the work programme.

Background Papers: None

Category of Report: Open

COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Update on the Committee workplan for Governance Committee

1. At the previous Governance Committee in December, Members discussed the Committee's draft workplan. As part of the discussion, Members agreed there are items which will need and benefit from longer-term activity, these included public questions, community involvement, and review of Committee remits, further to discussion these appear as a revision in this version of the work programme. One item timeline has been revised. There are four items subject to confirmation as to when they can be considered for timetabling, including one that has to be rescheduled.

2. The Governance Committee's work is an essential part of the Council's commitment to continuously improve our committee system and how we work within it as Members, officers and with citizens and partners. However, there are significant constraints on Member and officer capacity and therefore, prioritising the items on the workplan to focus on the things Members most want to achieve in the municipal year is essential.

3. However, the Governance Committee's workplan contains a mix of items. Some are relatively self-contained (eg. with a paper outlining options and officer recommendations for the Committee to discuss and agree in one meeting) while others need much deeper development work with Member, citizen and officer time.

4. To make this clearer, the workplan has been updated to:
   - Reflect the live workplan for the committee as of 19th February
   - Include an officer steer on where items are likely to need more intensive development work

5. It is recommended that Members consider the current workplan and discuss items to prioritise over the coming months, particularly where there is policy development and involvement activity needed.

References from Council or other Committees

2.1 Any references sent to this Committee by Council, including any public questions, petitions and motions, or other committees since the last meeting are listed here, with commentary and a proposed course of action, as appropriate:

Issue	N/A
Referred from	
Details	
Commentary/ Action Proposed	

Member engagement, learning and policy development outside of Committee

3.1 Subject to the capacity and availability of councillors and officers, there are a range of ways in which Members can explore subjects, monitor information and develop their ideas about forthcoming decisions outside of formal meetings.

Appendix 2 is an example 'menu' of some of the ways this could be done. It is entirely appropriate that member development, exploration and policy development should in many cases take place in a private setting, to allow members to learn and formulate a position in a neutral space before bringing the issue into the public domain at a formal meeting.

2.2 Training & Skills Development - Induction programme for this committee.

Title	Description & Format	Date
N/A		

Appendix 1 – Work Programme

Part 1: Proposed additions and amendments to the work programme since the last meeting:

Item	Proposed Date	Note	Suggested approach
Governance Review Implementation Plan	**Standing Item**	To update the Committee on progress against actions in the Governance Review Implementation Plan and identify further actions for inclusion. (LB)	Regular update to Committee – update appended to this report (Document A)
Member Development Programme	20th July 23 **Ongoing**	Member Development Working Group to oversee member development activity and the Member Development Strategy 2021-2025, including skills and priorities for learning and development and the inclusion of learning from recent reviews, such as the LGA Peer Challenge and the Race Equality Commission Report. (JD)	Member Development Working Group established July 2023. Committee updated 12th Oct 2023. Further updates and involvement of the Governance Committee, as appropriate.
Public Questions Task and Finish Group	20th July 23 **Ongoing**	Agreed a task and finish group of Governance Committee to work on public questions, as per the Governance Review recommendation: • ensuring the process for citizens to ask public questions is clear, that public questions are triaged in a way that directs them to the most appropriate forum and that those forums are easy to access. • Considering processes for responding to public questions, ensuring a consistent approach that is fit for purpose in the Committee System.	Review ongoing, an Update Report 14th December 2023. Working draft report 28th February 2024 – public input. Report of task and finish final recommendations 27th March 2024
NHS governance and alignment with our committee system	12th October 2023 **Reporting stage**	Governance Committee sponsored a task and finish group, reporting of recommendations from task and finish group to this meeting – 28.02.2024	Report of recommendations 28th February 2024

Citizen Participation and Community Involvement (Public Involvement Working Group)	December 2023 **Ongoing**	Governance Committee lead, connecting to other Policy Committees: • Focused on the findings and recommendations in the Involve report: – Developing an ambitious vision for public involvement at SCC – Driving quality and practice improvement • A Member/community working group: – Elected Members from across political groups and Policy Committees – Involvement from stakeholders and partners in the city – identification of who underway – Commission activity and external expertise	A long-term project. Will need dedicated Member and officer time outside of Gov Committee meetings. Working group update - elected Membership agreed, scoping of stakeholders and partners for involvement underway
Review of Policy Committee Remits	December 2023 **Ongoing**	Governance Committee agreed to establish a new task and finish group which will start meeting in January 2024 lead the review over the course of 2024. Suggested key lines of enquiry for the review include the balance of decision making between LACs and policy committees and the relationships between LACs and policy committees	Initial scoping meet with members of Committee taken place, desktop data gathering underway to that Committee will use to inform priorities and way of working for the task group, and officer resource required.
Urgent Decisions	March 2024 **Revised**	To review the use of urgent decisions to date, understand whether the process is working as intended, and whether changes are required	Policy review work – officer research to be presented to Committee
Charity Sub Committee and SCC role as a charitable trustee.	TBC	To consider, and recommend to Full Council, the most appropriate way for the Council to discharge its role as Charitable Trustee	Part of larger piece of work to be reported late 2024.

Measuring the health of the Committee System	TBC	To develop and agree a performance framework and set of metrics to enable us to measure progress as the Committee System develops.	Should be developed and designed with citizens, officers and Members. Small number of workshops.
Changes to delegations	TBC	To consider, and recommend to Full Council, changes to delegations (including grants – initially discussed by the Committee in December 2022).	
Officer support and engagement in Policy Committees	TBC	To be defined – need to work with Governance Committee Members and officers to agree scope and focus	

Part 2: List of other potential items not yet included in the work programme

Issues that have recently been identified by the Committee, its Chair or officers as potential items but have not yet been added to the proposed work programme. If a Councillor raises an idea in a meeting and the committee agrees under recommendation 3 that this should be explored, it will appear either in the work programme or in this section of the report at the committee's next meeting, at the discretion of the Chair.

Topic	
Description	
Lead Officer/s	
Item suggested by	*Officer, Member, Committee, partners, public question, petition etc*
Type of item	*Referral to decision-maker/Pre-decision (policy development/Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)*
Prior member engagement/ development required *(with reference to options in Appendix 2)*	
Public Participation/ Engagement approach*(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 3)*	

Lead Officer Commentary/Proposed Action(s)	

Part 3: Agenda Items for Forthcoming Meetings

Meeting 4	**14th December 2023**	Time				
Topic	**Description**	**Lead Officer/s**	**Type of item** *Decision/Referral to decision-maker/Pre-decision (policy development)/Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)*	**Prior member engagement/ development required** *(with reference to options in Appendix 1)*	**Public Participation/ Engagement approach** *(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 2)*	**Final decision-maker (& date)** *This Cttee/Another Cttee (eg S&R)/Full Council/Officer*
Approach to Public Questions at Council Meetings	Update Report	Alice Nicholson				
Review of Policy Committee Remits	Setting up task and finish group – scope and approach	Laurie Brennan				
Citizen participation and Community Involvement – identifying Member leads (Community Involvement Working Group)	Setting up Community Involvement Working Group - seeks up to three members from Governance Committee and proposes a further paper in early 2024 setting out proposed next steps for the community involvement project.	Laurie Brennan				
Standing items	• *Public Questions/ Petitions* • *Work Programme*					

CANCELLED						
Meeting 5	**17th January 2024**	Time				
Topic	**Description**	**Lead Officer/s**	**Type of item** *Decision/Referral to decision-maker/Pre-decision (policy development)/Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)*	**Prior member engagement/ development required** *(with reference to options in Appendix 1)*	**Public Participation/ Engagement approach** *(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 2)*	**Final decision-maker (& date)** This Cttee/Another Cttee (eg S&R)/Full Council/Officer
Standing items	• *Public Questions/ Petitions* • *Work Programme*					

Meeting 6	**28th February 2024**	Time				
Topic	**Description**	**Lead Officer/s**	**Type of item** *Decision/Referral to decision-maker/Pre-decision (policy development)/Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)*	**Prior member engagement/ development required** *(with reference to options in Appendix 1)*	**Public Participation/ Engagement approach** *(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 2)*	**Final decision-maker (& date)** This Cttee/Another Cttee (eg S&R)/Full Council/Officer
Public Questions	Working draft report of Task and Finish Group	Laurie Brennan / Alice Nicholson	Draft recommendations of Task and Finish		Public invited to engage at the meeting and/or	

			Group to Committee		through survey to March 6th	
NHS governance and alignment with our committee system	Report of recommendations of task and finish group	Dan Spicer	Recommendations of Task and Finish Group			
Role Profiles	This report presents the role profiles for the roles of City Councillor and Policy Committee Chair, Deputy Chair and Group Spokesperson for Member's consideration and adoption.	Jason Dietsch / Rachel Appleyard	Decision	Consultation with all groups carried out through the Member Development Working Group		This Cttee, Full Council required to consider the changes which impact the Constitution
Standing items	• *Public Questions/ Petitions* • *Work Programme*					

Meeting 8	**27th March 2024**	Time				
Topic	**Description**	**Lead Officer/s**	**Type of item** *Decision/Referral to decision-maker/Pre-decision (policy development)/Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)*	**Prior member engagement/ development required** *(with reference to options in Appendix 1)*	**Public Participation/ Engagement approach** *(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 2)*	**Final decision-maker (& date)** This Cttee/Another Cttee (eg S&R)/Full Council/Officer
Urgent Decisions	To review the use of urgent decisions to date, understand whether the process is working as	David Hollis / Jason Dietsch				

	intended, and whether changes are required				
Standing items	• *Public Questions/ Petitions* • *Work Programme*				

Appendix 2 – Menu of options for member engagement, learning and development prior to formal Committee consideration

Members should give early consideration to the degree of pre-work needed before an item appears on a formal agenda.

All agenda items will anyway be supported by the following:

- Discussion well in advance as part of the work programme item at Pre-agenda meetings. These take place in advance of each formal meeting, before the agenda is published and they consider the full work programme, not just the immediate forthcoming meeting. They include the Chair, Vice Chair and all Group Spokespersons from the committee, with officers
- Discussion and, where required, briefing by officers at pre-committee meetings in advance of each formal meeting, after the agenda is published. These include the Chair, Vice Chair and all Group Spokespersons from the committee, with officers.
- Work Programming items on each formal agenda, as part of an annual and ongoing work programming exercise
- Full officer report on a public agenda, with time for a public discussion in committee
- Officer meetings with Chair & VC as representatives of the committee, to consider addition to the draft work programme, and later to inform the overall development of the issue and report, for the committee's consideration.

The following are examples of some of the optional ways in which the committee may wish to ensure that they are sufficiently engaged and informed prior to taking a public decision on a matter. In all cases the presumption is that these will take place in private, however some meetings could happen in public or eg be reported to the public committee at a later date.

These options are presented in approximately ascending order of the amount of resources needed to deliver them. Members must prioritise carefully, in consultation with officers, which items require what degree of involvement and information in advance of committee meetings, in order that this can be delivered within the officer capacity available.

The majority of items cannot be subject to the more involved options on this list, for reasons of officer capacity.

- Written briefing for the committee or all members (email)
- All-member newsletter (email)
- Requests for information from specific outside bodies etc.
- All-committee briefings (private or, in exceptional cases, in-committee)
- All-member briefing (virtual meeting)
- Facilitated policy development workshop (potential to invite external experts / public, see appendix 3)
- Site visits (including to services of the council)
- Task and Finish group (one at a time, one per cttee)

Furthermore, a range of public participation and engagement options are available to inform Councillors, see appendix 3.

Appendix 3 – Public engagement and participation toolkit

<u>Public Engagement Toolkit</u>

On 23 March 2022 Full Council agreed the following:

A toolkit to be developed for each committee to use when considering its 'menu of options' for ensuring the voice of the public has been central to their policy development work. Building on the developing advice from communities and Involve, committees should make sure they have a clear purpose for engagement; actively support diverse communities to engage; match methods to the audience and use a range of methods; build on what's worked and existing intelligence (SCC and elsewhere); and be very clear to participants on the impact that engagement will have.

The list below builds on the experiences of Scrutiny Committees and latterly the Transitional Committees and will continue to develop. The toolkit includes (but is not be limited to):

a. Public calls for evidence
b. Issue-focused workshops with attendees from multiple backgrounds (sometimes known as 'hackathons') led by committees
c. Creative use of online engagement channels
d. Working with VCF networks (eg including the Sheffield Equality Partnership) to seek views of communities
e. Co-design events on specific challenges or to support policy development
f. Citizens assembly style activities
g. Stakeholder reference groups (standing or one-off)
h. Committee / small group visits to services
i. Formal and informal discussion groups
j. Facilitated communities of interest around each committee (eg a mailing list of self-identified stakeholders and interested parties with regular information about forthcoming decisions and requests for contributions or volunteers for temporary co-option)
k. Facility for medium-term or issue-by-issue co-option from outside the Council onto Committees or Task and Finish Groups. Co-optees of this sort at Policy Committees would be non-voting.

This public engagement toolkit is intended to be a quick 'how-to' guide for Members and officers to use when undertaking participatory activity through committees.

It will provide an overview of the options available, including the above list, and cover:

- How to focus on purpose and who we are trying to reach
- When to use and when not to use different methods
- How to plan well and be clear to citizens what impact their voice will have
- How to manage costs, timescales, scale.

There is an expectation that Members and Officers will be giving strong consideration to the public participation and engagement options for each item on a committee's work programme, with reference to the above list a-k.

Governance Review Implementation Plan update (November 2023)

1. In the Six Month Review of Governance, Full Council approved the Governance Review Implementation Plan (GRIP) which predominantly comprises of practical, officer-led actions to improve the function of our committee system. Along with practical actions, there are a number of items which are work in progress as they are part of the Governance Committee's workplan for this year (eg. democratic participation).

2. Governance Committee agreed to receive regular updates on the delivery of the actions in the GRIP and where appropriate, to receive and consider draft content (eg. draft guidance to support the committee system).

3. To help bring to life the material in the GRIP itself, the below summarises the key achievements from the GRIP to date along with actions we still need to complete.

Improving how we explain the system

This was a critical part of the Governance Review and focused on how we better enable Members, citizens and officers in SCC to navigate the system and support committees to be effective in their role.

What we've done

- Rebranded and reformatted the democracy area of the SCC website to make it cleaner and easier to navigate for anyone trying to find dates or content for Committee meetings.
  See: https://democracy.sheffield.gov.uk/mgListCommittees.aspx?bcr=1

- Carrying on work to improve citizen involvement in our committees through a deep dive into public questions and petitions with citizens and stakeholders; and the proposal at Governance Committee December 2023 for a cross-party community involvement Working Group.

- Re-instated the Member Development Working Group to support Member learning and development. This has included work to improve the role profiles of Members within the Committee System.

What we still need to do

- Develop solutions and implement improvement to our approach to Public Questions with citizens and officers, an update report is on agenda for Governance Committee December 2023, with a report of recommendations to Governance Committee anticipated early 2024.

- Continue to improve the accessibility of our Committee meetings both in terms of physical and online access, working with the Sheffield Equality Partnership network. This includes further testing hybrid technology for meetings and using less formal places in the Town Hall for committee meetings.

Improving the support we provide to those working in the system

What we've done

- Provided support and signposting to wellbeing advice and support for Members through the internal Member Newsletters

- Updated internal approaches to Policy Committee workplans so that the overall set of workplans are regularly discussed by Committee Chairs and the Senior Leadership Team to ensure we better manage cross-cutting issues and support cross-committee working.

- Improved briefing guidance available to officers, particularly to support clearer work planning and support better committee system oversight by the S&R Committee

- Created a SharePoint portal to support officers to better navigate the Committee System. This includes access to guidance on work planning, briefings, decision and policy report templates, and guidance on key impact assessments (EIAs, CIAs).

- Achieved a consistent increase in the number of EIAs being completed and published with reports, ensuring we are evidencing any implications for people in Sheffield and appropriate mitigations.

<u>What we still need to do</u>

- We need to develop the skills of our officers to improve the quality and consistency of reports being presented to committees. We are working with our HR Team to develop the learning and development needed.

- Make it easier for officers to develop and get reports completed and published on time using the Mod.Gov app.

- Finalise a new policy toolkit to support officers engaging Committees in policy development.

Supporting development of our governance beyond the Six Month Review

<u>What we've done</u>

- Implemented Member Questions at Policy Committees, building on the established approach used at Full Council

- Introduced a proactive work planning approach for Full Council meetings, working cross-party with Whips

- Introduced new word limits on Notices of Motion at ordinary meetings of Full Council

<u>What we still need to do</u>

- Review the remits of Policy Committees and the associated relationship with Local Area Committees (part of the Governance Committee's work plan for this year)

- Support the improvement of democratic participation in the Committee System, complementing the work in the Future Sheffield programme to transform our approach to citizen engagement at SCC.