

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING – 17TH MAY, 2023

ITEM 7 – SIX-MONTH REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

Motion to be moved by Councillor Sioned-Mair Richards, seconded by Councillor Julie Grocutt

That this Council:-

(a) agrees the final report and recommendations as attached at Appendix 1, comprising recommendations from the Full Council Working Group, as set out in section 4 of the Appendix 1 and from the 6 Month Review of Governance Arrangements, namely:-

- 1 Note that action to improve how we explain and support the Committee System is underway through the Governance Review Implementation Plan, and progress will be monitored by Governance Committee.
- 2 The role of the Strategy & Resources Committee and senior officers in early identification of cross-cutting issues and directing them to the most appropriate Policy Committee needs to be re-emphasised – including the role of Strategy & Resources Committee in maintaining an oversight of Policy Committee work programmes. This should be actioned through the Governance Review Implementation Plan.
- 3 As part of ongoing work to develop the role of LACs, consideration should be given to devolving decisions and budgets on minor local transport and highways issues to Local Area Committees. The Policy Committee should provide overall strategy within which local areas make decisions to meet local need; and remain the decision maker for strategic transport issues and major schemes.
- 4 The lead committee for Children and Young People should have the necessary oversight of the statutory functions of the Director of Children's Services to ensure there is robust political accountability via the Chair of the Education, Children and Families, Policy Committee, as designated Lead Member for Children's Services.
- 5 Where Policy Committees are developing regulatory policies, they shall form a working group with members of the relevant regulatory committee to inform the process.
- 6 The Job Share Chair Protocol should be adhered to by co-chairs, and promoted amongst officers and members to help develop a greater understanding of the role.
- 7 Co-chairing arrangements should not be permitted for sub-committees.

- 8 Where there are co-chairs in place, only the member nominated to attend Strategy and Resources Committee should attend the Strategy and Resources briefing meetings. The other Co-Chair may not attend briefing sessions for Strategy and Resources members unless appointed to that committee in another capacity (including as a substitute member for the specific meeting).
- 9 Substitutes should be permitted at S&R. Where the committee member is Chair of a Policy Committee the substitute must have sufficient knowledge of their committee's work, and political proportionality must be maintained.
- 10 Briefing practises must enable all members of a policy committee to be adequately briefed for formal decision making. This should include arrangements for substitute members. All Members should also have the opportunity to develop their knowledge and engage in policy and work programme development. Committee Members and officers should work together to identify where it is appropriate for these briefings to be all member/whole committee/Chair, deputy, group spokesperson/political group. Guidance on this should be produced as part of the Governance Review Implementation Plan.
- 11 Policy Committees should continue to meet formally 6 times a year, with informal space diarised on the month where no formal meetings take place. This should enable Committees to carry out policy development activities as per their work programmes. This should not add to Member and Officer workloads, but reduce the need for additional, ad hoc briefing sessions and workshops.
- 12 Current guidance states that Policy Committees should only operate one task and finish group at a time. This should be revised to provide a more 'enabling' approach to policy development. Policy Committees should be able to carry out work as required, subject to sufficient officer and Member capacity.
- 13 An action should be added to the Governance Review Implementation Plan, to develop and promote a 'Policy Development Toolkit' for officers and Members that sets out best practice for developing policy in a Committee System, to be used alongside the existing 'Engagement Toolkit'.
- 14 Arrangements should be put in place that enable early conversations post-AGM, between Chairs, their Committees and Senior Officers, to develop work programmes that address corporate, service plan and Member priorities, resulting in a balanced programme of decision making, policy development and scrutiny & evaluation. Guidance for members and officers should be produced as part of the Governance Review Implementation Plan.
- 15 Governance Committee should continue into 2023/24 as a forum for ongoing review and maintenance of the constitution and governance arrangements, as well as Member development. Key priorities for the Governance Committee's work programme in 2023/24 should include:
 - Citizen and Stakeholder Engagement (see recommendation 16).
 - Monitoring progress of the Governance Review Implementation Plan
 - Developing a performance framework and metrics, enabling us to measure progress as the Committee System develops further
 - Take a holistic approach to reviewing Committee remits (see section 3.2.3 of the Governance Review Report).
- 16 Governance Committee sets up task and finish groups to look at:
 - a) **Public Questions** - 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.

- b) **Citizen Engagement and Involvement** – Consider how we can drive progress in realising our ambitions for community involvement and engagement, taking learning from recent reviews including Involve, the LGA Peer Challenge, the Race Equality Commission Report.

These task and finish groups will actively seek feedback from, and test proposals with, citizens and stakeholders; and report into the Governance Committee.

(b) approves the findings and recommendations of the Governance Review;

(c) notes that action is underway to implement recommendations 1, 2, 6, 11, 13 and 16, and elements of 10 and 14, through the Governance Review Implementation Plan;

(d) agrees the necessary changes to the Council's Constitution to implement recommendations 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 14 and 15 and proposed changes to the operation of Full Council Meetings; and

(e) notes that the frequency of the ordinary meetings of the Council in the Municipal Year 2023-24, will be determined at item 15 on the agenda for this annual meeting of the Council, specifically whether to (i) retain the current approach of 6 ordinary meetings, plus the Annual and Budget Meetings or (ii) reduce the number to 4 ordinary meetings, plus the Annual and Budget Meetings.

1. Amendment to be moved by Councillor Ian Auckland, seconded by Councillor Richard Williams

That the motion now submitted be amended by:-

- 1. the addition of the following words at the beginning of paragraph (a):-

“subject to recommendation (4) being removed and referred back to the Governance Committee for further consideration of where specific functions sit between policy committees,”

- 2. the addition of a new paragraph (f) as follows:-

(f) consider that the Charity Trustee Sub-Committee be abolished, and decisions of the Council as charitable trustee, including but not limited to disposals of and other dealings with charitable land, be transferred to the relevant Area Committees that each charitable trust falls within, and request officers prepare the necessary constitutional changes for approval at a future Council meeting.

2. Amendment to be moved by Councillor Angela Argenzio, seconded by Councillor Christine Gilligan Kubo

That the motion now submitted be amended by:-

1. the addition of the following words at the beginning of paragraph (a):-

“with the exception of recommendation (3),”

2. the addition of a new paragraph (f) as follows:-

(f) (i) recognising that the Group Spokesperson role requires the same time and work commitment as that of a Deputy Chair, believes that group spokespeople should receive the equivalent SRA; and

(ii) requests that Governance Committee look at the matter and make a recommendation on a group spokespeople SRA for consideration at the next ordinary meeting of Full Council, such recommendation to include an appropriate start date for any SRA recommended.