

Governance Committee

Wednesday 27 October 2021 at 2.00 pm

Town Hall, Sheffield, S1 2HH

The Press and Public are Welcome to Attend

Membership

Councillor Julie Grocutt
Councillor Penny Baker
Councillor Sue Alston
Councillor Dawn Dale
Councillor Christine Gilligan
Councillor Mark Jones
Councillor Mary Lea
Councillor Mike Levery
Councillor Mohammed Mahroof
Councillor Sioned-Mair
Richards
Councillor Kaltum Rivers

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
27 OCTOBER 2021**

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** (Pages 5 - 8)
Members to declare any interests they have in the business to be considered at the meeting.
- 5. Minutes of Previous Meeting** (Pages 9 - 16)
To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 20 September 2021.
- 6. Public Questions and Petitions**
To receive any questions or petitions from members of the public.
- 7. Approach to Designing a Committee System** (Pages 17 - 30)
Report of Director of Legal and Governance.
- 8. Engaging and Involving Sheffielders in Transforming the City's Governance** (Pages 31 - 42)
Report of Director of Legal and Governance.
- 9. Transitional Committees Update** (Pages 43 - 52)
Report of Director of Legal and Governance.
- 10. Date of Next Meeting**
The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 30 November 2021.

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 executive or any committee of the executive, 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 not:

- 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 Gillian Duckworth, Director of Legal and Governance on 0114 2734018 or email gillian.duckworth@sheffield.gov.uk.

This page is intentionally left blank

Governance Committee

Meeting held 20 September 2021

PRESENT: Councillors Julie Grocutt (Chair), Penny Baker, Sioned-Mair Richards, Mohammed Mahroof, Mary Lea, Christine Gilligan, Dawn Dale, Mark Jones, Sue Alston and Kaltum Rivers.

.....

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 An apology for absence were received from Councillor Mike Levery.

2. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

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 meetings held on 7 July 2021 were approved as a correct record.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

5.1 There were no public questions or petitions received.

6. TERMS OF REFERENCE

6.1 The terms of reference were provided to Members of the Governance Committee in order to understand the remit of the Committee.

6.2 The Assistant Director (Governance), Alexander Polak, mentioned that the Terms of Reference for the Governance Committee were highlighted in the report at paragraph 3.1 and asked the committee if they had any comments.

6.3 Councillor Sioned-Mair Richards requested that paragraph (b) be amended by removing the wording '*as it thinks fit*'.

6.4 RESOLVED:

(1) that the committee notes the terms of reference be added to the constitution; and

(2) that the terms of reference for the Governance Committee be approved as follows;

- (a) To guide the Council's transition to a committee system of governance and to set the parameters for stakeholder engagement.
- (b) To seek input from outside the organisation, ensuring citizens are engaged and are provided with opportunities to help shape this programme of work.
- (c) To have oversight of the work carried out in the Transition to Committees programme.
- (d) To review proposals for a modern committee structure and approve the recommendations to be made to Full Council.
- (e) To keep the Council's constitutional arrangements under review and consider officers' proposals for changes to the Constitution.
- (f) To make such recommendations to Full Council as it considers appropriate for ways in which the Constitution should be amended in order to achieve the purposes of a committee system of governance.

7. PROGRAMME UPDATE

7.1 The Assistant Director (Governance) gave a programme update by presentation. The presentation covered:

- The progress made since 29th July 2021.
- What the next steps were to ensure progress continues whilst carrying out work on the Programmes, Governance and Support Models and Engagement.
- A summary of some potential risks and how to mitigate them.
- What approach will be taken to improve public engagement.

7.2 Members of the Committee raised questions and the main points to note were –

7.3 Councillor Mark Jones asked what the timeline is for finalising the Communication resource recruited and communications strategy as this programme was still in draft. The Assistant Director (Governance) responded, explaining that the meeting of the next committee will focus on this strategy in more detail, as part of a wider piece of work.

7.4 Councillor Mohammed Mahroof asked what staff resource the Council have to ensure this model was in place for May 2022. The Director of Legal and Governance, Gillian Duckworth, explained that an Assistant Director (Governance) has been employed by the Council to specifically lead on this transition. There was also a Programme Team working alongside the Assistant

Director (Governance).

7.5 Councillor Dawn Dale asked if the staff resource for this transition had been taken from other departments within the Council. The Director of Legal and Governance informed the committee that staff resources have been taken from other departments of the Council.

7.6 Councillor Kaltum Rivers asked whether different minority groups would be included in the stakeholder engagement. Councillor Sioned-Mair Richards added that the racial equality commission aspect also mustn't be lost. Laurie Brennan responded by informing the Committee that Sheffield could use a wide range of communication platforms to engage the best they can, one being the Sheffield Equality Partnership, which connects to many minority groups.

7.7 Councillor Mark Jones asked if it would be possible to request that recommendations be changed if the Committee feels that aspects of the transitioning were not meeting a sufficient standard. The Director of Legal and Governance explained that one purpose of this Committee was to shape how the new Committee System will look from May 2022. The Governance Committee can decide whether to make alterations where it sees fit. It was mentioned that this system is unlikely to be final even at May 2022 and further change is to be expected after May 2022. Further change would in fact be advisable if the Council is to continuously improve on public engagement.

7.8 **RESOLVED:** that the Committee notes the update.

DESIGN PRINCIPLES AND ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

8.

8.1 The Assistant Director (Governance) outlined that the purpose of the report was to affirm the Council's ambitions for a range of positive outcomes from the forthcoming change of governance to a committee model. The idea of having this in the form of 'design principles' would help to guide the design and review of the committee governance model at a future date.

8.2 The draft design principles will be subject to ongoing stakeholder engagement and review by the Committee.

8.3 The Assistant Director (Governance) explained in 2019, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee was asked by Full Council to work with the Deputy Leader to look at what should be achieved through changing the Council's decision-making model, and come up with a set of principles that should underpin both of the options that would later be put to the referendum. It was mentioned that those unchanged principles can be found in the report at 'Appendix 1'. The Committee were therefore invited to consider what changes or additions would be needed before the design principles and ways of working can be agreed as a working draft.

8.4 The Assistant Director (Governance) advised that he had suggested two changes to the governance principles recorded in 'Appendix 1'. The proposed changes can be found in the report at paragraph 3.10.1 and 3.10.2. The Committee were

informed that they could also suggest any other changes.

Members of the Committee raised questions and the main points to note were –

8.5 Councillor Dawn Dale asked how would Committees and citizens of Sheffield
8.6 scrutinise, and call-in decisions made by officers? The Assistant Director (Governance) explained that options on how urgent decisions have the appropriate oversight by elected members will be brought to a future meeting for members to agree. There were current Schemes of Delegation that allow officers to make urgent decisions which the Assistant Director (Governance) expects would remain in the new system in an adapted form.

8.7 Councillor Mary Lea stated that Cabinet Members would have been consulted in an officer's decision therefore would that be the same in the new system? The Assistant Director (Governance) mentioned that the system was yet to determine what checks should be in place when officers were dealing with urgent decisions.

8.8 Councillor Mark Jones asked why the Assistant Director (Governance) suggested to remove the word '*Scrutiny*' from 'Governance Principle 4'. The Assistant Director (Governance) explained how it can be seen as misleading, as the term '*Scrutiny*' was often used in a technical sense to refer to '*Overview and Scrutiny*', as well as having a common dictionary meaning. While there was no objection to the common dictionary meaning, it was felt that its inclusion may appear to pre-determine the committee's later choices about how to treat Overview and Scrutiny in the new system.

8.9 Councillor Mark Jones suggested amending principle 15 by adding 'and review' to the paragraph.

8.10 Councillor Sioned-Mair Richards suggested amending principle 16 by adding 'why and' to the paragraph.

8.11 Councillor Sioned-Mair Richards suggesting adding another principle to reflect 'listening, arguing and conflict resolution'.

8.12 Councillor Dawn Dale suggested amending principle 16 by adding wording that reflects how members of the public are engaged in a two-way process and have information relayed back to them.

8.13 Members of the Committee agreed the two suggested changes to the design principles proposed by the Assistant Director (Governance) and agreed that authority be delegated to the Director of Legal and Governance in consultation with the Chair/Vice Chair of the Committee, to make amendments to reflect the wishes of the Committee.

8.14 **RESOLVED:** that approval be given to:-

(1) delegate authority to the Director of Legal and Governance in consultation with the Chair/Vice Chair of the Committee, to make amendments to the Critical Ambitions, Governance Principles and How we do Business sections set out in

Appendix 1 to reflect the wishes of the Committee as expressed in the meeting and to publish the update with the minutes;

(2) the recommendations to change governance principles 4 and 7 as set out at 3.10.1 and 3.10.2 in the report;

(3) that the Critical Ambitions, Governance Principles and How we do Business are adopted as a working draft as follows:

Critical ambitions

- Sheffield City Council is a trusted organisation where decisions are taken in an open and transparent way, and accountability is clear
- Sheffield City Council is a council where all councillors are involved in and able to influence decision making
- Sheffield City Council engages, involves and listens to citizens, communities and partners
- Sheffield City Council has a modern and responsive approach to governance which reflects the increasingly complex policy making environment
- Sheffield City Council is a reflective council that is committed to continuously improving governance

Governance Principles

1. A commitment to openness and transparency must run through our decision-making structure.
2. Comprehensive forward planning of decisions – being clear about what decisions we are planning to take, when they will be taken, who will be taking them.
3. Clear reports from officers that set out the relevant information in an accessible way, and are clear about the reasons for a decision being made.
4. Mechanisms for holding decision-makers and other parts of the wider partnership landscape to account should be strengthened in any future decision-making structure – we must be held accountable for the decisions that we take, and embrace challenge to ensure we're getting the best outcomes for Sheffield.
5. Our governance should be underpinned by a commitment to the highest ethical standards as set out in the Nolan Standards on Public Life.
6. Our decision-making structure should be designed in a way that creates channels for all 84 Councillors to be involved in, and influence decision making.
7. Our decision-making structure should be underpinned by effective ways of working with local communities, including through development of the role and use of Local Area Committees, informed by the Big City Conversation and other, ongoing engagement with Sheffielders.
8. We are a member-led authority, where accountability lies with elected

councillors. Our decision-making structure must reflect this, and not inappropriately increase delegations to officers.

9. Our decision-making structure needs to reflect the practical demands on councillors' time. Need to find a balance between time spent in formal decision-making meetings in the Town Hall against working with and in communities. Time demands shouldn't prohibit people with working/caring commitments from being a Councillor.
10. The issues people care about are often local in nature. Our decision-making structure needs to include channels through which people, communities and partners can work with local councillors about what is important to them. We need to strengthen locality arrangements based on the findings of the Big City Conversation and ensure that these arrangements work effectively alongside, and feed into, citywide decision-making processes.
11. Our decision-making structure must avoid silo working both within and outside of the City Council, and enable a joined up approach to tackling issues which need the involvement of a number of organisations in the city
12. Our decision-making structure needs to have a mechanism for making urgent decisions openly, transparently and effectively engaging elected councillors.
13. Our decision-making structure needs to strengthen our ability to work with our partners in a complex local, sub-regional and national policy environment, and enable us to take a lead on key issues facing the city and the citizens of Sheffield.
14. We need to be clear about what we are trying to achieve through our governance arrangements, and build in measures to assess whether it is working
15. We need to identify a forum that enables us to reflect and review, on an ongoing basis, on whether our governance systems are working as anticipated, and if changes need to be made.

How we do Business (Ways of Working)

16. We need to take a more creative approach to communication between residents and the Council, including about what decisions are being made and why, what they mean to residents and what they mean for the city. This needs to be supported by effective communication and information about how decision-making works.
17. Role of Full Council – should be reviewed in the light of changes following the referendum – consider how we could make it a more meaningful forum.
18. Ensure that the appropriate support, training and skills development is continuously available for councillors so they can take full advantage of the opportunities under the new structure.
19. We need to build a culture in which political disagreement is handled constructively and where members are supported to develop the listening, debating, chairing and committee-membership skills needed for this to happen.

20. We must ensure that a commitment to meaningful engagement, involvement and consultation runs through the organisation. We should renew a commitment to our Consultation Principles, and reflect on how the council's Engagement Standards which are currently in development can improve practice throughout our work.
21. We need to constantly demonstrate how engagement activity is shaping decision making, and be honest about the impact it is having, so communities and partners can understand how their views have been responded to.
22. We need to make it as easy as possible for people to engage with us – the starting point for this should be clear, consistent, accessible communication about what the Council is doing, what decisions we are planning to take and how to get involved.
23. We need to improve the information we provide about how decision making happens across the City as a whole and how partnerships and structures interconnect.
24. We need to establish a process of continuous engagement so that Members, partners and citizens can give a view on how the system is working.

(4) That these design principles be used as the basis for immediate stakeholder engagement as per recommendation 5;

(5) That these design principles are kept under review throughout the planned cycles of stakeholder engagement and design up to and beyond May 2022;

(6) That the immediate commencement of design work for the new committee governance model on the basis of these design principles is endorsed (noting that early design work may need to retrospectively take account of any future revisions to the design principles);

(7) That the immediate commencement of stakeholder engagement activity is endorsed along the following lines:

- a. Topic-by-topic engagement with internal and external stakeholders on technical questions as they arise for the Committee's consideration, including via an open public invitation for participants to contribute via a stakeholder group made up of interested parties;
- b. A city-wide, facilitated, representative, discursive engagement exercise in the new calendar year, by which time more citizens' input could be more impactfully applied to the emerging model, and to shaping future ways of working within it.
- c. Continuous review of this approach, with further detail to return to this Committee in October for consideration.

TRANSITIONAL COMMITTEE BRIEFINGS

9.

- 9.1 The Assistant Director (Governance) outlined that the purpose of the report was to provide a briefing about the intended role of the Transitional Committees and how they fit within the Council's governance arrangements.

- 9.2 Councillor Sue Alton asked what oversight will the Governance Committee have of Transitional Committees? The Director of Legal and Governance mentioned that the Governance Committee's role was to focus on the mechanisms of how the Transitional Committees operate and the lessons that can be learned from this and not to oversee what decisions were being made at those Committees. The Assistant Director (Governance) mentioned there will be a number of ways that Transitional Committees feed back to the Governance Committee, the main way will be through Chairs/Vice Chairs of the Transitional Committees as they're members of the Governance Committee. This will give the Governance Committee the ability to reflect on what mechanisms were and were not working well within the Transitional Committees.
- 9.3 The Committee discussed the advantages of Chair/Vice Chairs holding sessions with members of their respective Committees and then feeding back that information to the appropriate Committee.
- 9.4 **RESOLVED:** that the Committee noted the Transitional Committee briefing.

10. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

- 10.1 The date of the next meeting will be held on the 27th October 2021 at 2.00 p.m. in the Council Chamber.



Governance Committee Report

Report of: Director of Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer)

Date: 27 October 2021

Subject: Approach to Designing a Committee System

Author of Report: Alexander Polak, Assistant Director (Governance)

Summary:

The purpose of this report is:

1. To provide an update on progress since the Committee's last meeting on 20 September 2021
 2. To provide more detail about a recommended approach to the process of designing a committee system of governance for Sheffield City Council, including timescales
 3. To propose a draft framework for use in conversations about the future governance model with members, stakeholders and the public. This framework *is not a proposed governance model for Sheffield*, it is a descriptive list of the main areas which will need discussion in order to design a Sheffield-specific model. It is based on the experiences of other committee-led councils and expert advice from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny.
-

Recommendations:

1. *That progress in the five weeks since the committee's last meeting be noted.*
2. *That the framework at appendix A be agreed for immediate public use to support conversations with stakeholders, the public, councillors and officers about the future model of the Council's governance.*
3. *That a whole-committee inquiry be conducted between now and Christmas 2021, with the goal of recommending a draft committee governance model to Full Council for endorsement in January. The inquiry will include:*

- a. *Open, council-led engagement with stakeholders, the public, members and council officers as per the engagement report elsewhere on today's agenda*
 - b. *Desktop research including review of all relevant material received in the 2019 Scrutiny exercise and since including the Big City Conversation*
 - c. *Research into comparator authorities' experiences and recognised best practice*
 - d. *Lessons learnt from the active experimentation taking place via the Transitional Committees, Local Area Committees and other experiences of decision-making during the 2021/22 transitional year*
 - e. *Whole-committee sessions on 30 November and up to three extraordinary meetings in early December, at which the committee may call expert witnesses as necessary to build on what has already been learned from the above*
4. *That the approach be endorsed of using the draft governance model (after, and subject to, agreement by Full Council in January):*
- a. *As one of the starting points for the city-wide engagement exercise taking place in 'phase three' of the project in the new year, supported by Involve*
 - b. *as the basis for progressing decisions about constitutional detail during January-March, subject to input from the simultaneous engagement exercise referred to at 4a, leading to a final agreement by Full Council in March 2022.*

Background Papers: N/A

Category of Report: OPEN

Statutory and Council Policy Checklist

Financial Implications
YES - Cleared by: Kayleigh Inman
Legal Implications
YES - Cleared by: Andrea Simpson
Equality of Opportunity Implications
YES - Cleared by: James Henderson
Tackling Health Inequalities Implications
NO
Human rights Implications
NO:
Environmental and Sustainability implications
NO
Economic impact
NO
Community safety implications
NO
Human resources implications
NO
Property implications
NO
Area(s) affected
None
Relevant Cabinet Portfolio Member
Councillor Julie Grocutt, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Community Engagement and Governance
Is the item a matter which is reserved for approval by the City Council?
NO
Press release
NO

APPROACH TO DESIGNING A COMMITTEE SYSTEM

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Governance Committee has been appointed by Sheffield City Council to lead the work which will take the Council from a 'Leader and Cabinet' model of Governance to a 'Committee' model. This report provides more detailed recommendations about how this should be done.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 On [20th September 2021](#) the Governance Committee met and considered [a paper which set out the background for this work](#). In summary the Committee agreed:

- some draft design principles for use when weighing up options before May 2022 and when measuring the degree of success after May 2022
- Commencement of stakeholder engagement about these principles
- a high-level plan for a two-stage process
- Commencement of design of the new committee governance model
- Commencement of wider stakeholder engagement activity in a two-stage process:
 - Proportionate, topic-by-topic engagement with internal and external stakeholders on technical questions as they arise, starting immediately, including an open public invitation for participants to contribute via a stakeholder group made up of interested parties;
 - A city-wide, facilitated, representative, discursive engagement exercise in the new year, by which time more citizens' input could be more impactfully applied to the emerging model, and to shaping future ways of working within it.
- That more detail on this approach should come back to the October meeting of the Governance Committee

2.2 Progress has been made in the weeks between the 20 September Committee meeting and the time of writing this report, including:

1. Conceiving and setting up a fortnightly series of workshops and briefings ('drop-ins') for stakeholders and the public, and another series for councillors following initial member briefings over the fortnight immediately preceding this meeting;
2. Holding the first of these public sessions on 22 October in order to begin conversations about the principles as requested by the Committee;
3. Setting up an initial round of briefings with senior officers in order to lay the groundwork for the necessary change in

processes, culture and ways of working amongst the Council's officers;

4. The Local Area Committees and Transitional Committees have now all held their first meetings and are in the process of reflecting and ensuring that best practice and lessons are shared amongst them in order to continuously improve. An item elsewhere on today's agenda provides for initial feedback from Transitional Committees.
5. The programme and project management architecture which is delivering the transition to committees has been merged with the programme which was in place to implement the Local Area Committees. This is intended to support the important links between these pieces of work as well as to provide opportunities for efficient management of the programmes;
6. Continuing to work with key outside bodies which will support the Council with aspects of this process, including the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny, the Local Government Association, and Involve on various aspects of the programme including current and future public engagement, early research and design, member briefings and development of a member development programme;
7. Continuation of a research, analysis and planning exercise to:
 - a. catalogue the full range of issues on which the Members or officers of the Council will need to reach decisions in order to define and implement a new governance model, and to express this initially in the form of a 'framework' as below (section 3);
 - b. design a schedule of when the council should aim to take each of these decisions, as below (section 4);
 - c. gathering the technical information and tools necessary to inform these decisions including eg mathematical models showing the hypothetical impact on members' time of various different scales of governance model, and establishing contact with other relevant local authorities in order to learn from their experiences and develop case studies; and
 - d. beginning work with member support teams in order to understand their 'as-is' position, from which a 'to-be' model of member support can be developed in time for May 2022.

3.0 GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

- 3.1 The Governance Committee has previously endorsed an iterative approach to developing Sheffield City Council's new governance model, whereby design takes place alongside engagement. To support the first stages of this process it is considered helpful to produce a framework, representing a reasonably generic committee system, for use in conversations over the coming weeks. Appendix A is a framework which has been developed for this purpose.

3.2 This framework *is not a proposed governance model for Sheffield*, it is a descriptive list of the main areas which will need discussion in order to design a Sheffield-specific model. It is based on the experiences of other committee-led councils and expert advice from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny. Most of the words included reflect either the necessities of the legal position or a reasonably standard approach to dealing with the problems which councils need to solve to run an effective committee system. Inevitably a level of judgement has been applied in order to produce this model but the Council is keen that this not be seen as representing a proposal except in the loosest sense in which it is helpful to have a ‘starter for ten’ in order to have useful conversations about governance design.

3.3 The primary question which should be asked about this model is:

‘what changes, if any, would make this framework into a model that is right for Sheffield?’

3.3 It is recommended that the framework at appendix A be agreed for immediate public use to support conversations with stakeholders, the public, councillors and officers about the future model of the Council’s governance. This would form the first step in the process set out below.

3.4 It should be noted that the framework will quickly begin to change as the council learns more about how it should design its future model. Later versions of this document, including those used before the Committee’s next opportunity to consider it, may look different to the one agreed today as it begins the process of developing into a draft model for Sheffield.

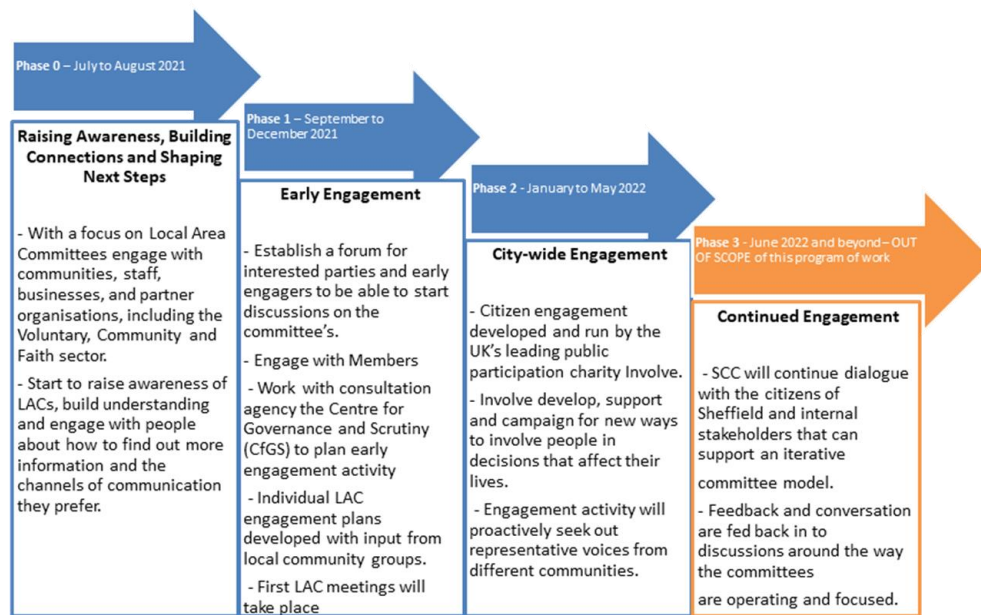
4.0 TIMESCALES AND APPROACH

4.1 The Governance Committee has previously endorsed two key parts to our proposed engagement approach:

- a. Proportionate, topic-by-topic engagement with internal and external stakeholders on technical questions as they arise, starting immediately, including an open public invitation for participants to contribute via a stakeholder group made up of interested parties.
- b. A city-wide, facilitated, representative, discursive engagement exercise in the new year, by which time more citizens’ input could be more impactfully applied to the emerging model, and to shaping future ways of working within it.

A report elsewhere on today’s agenda puts significantly more detail to this approach, summarised in the following diagram. Parts (a) and (b)

above are represented as phases 2 and 3:



- 4.2 The purpose of this report is to provide some detail about the character and timing of the development of the governance model within each of these phases, alongside and informed by this engagement.
- 4.3 **Phase 1 (July-Aug 2021)** is largely complete or underway, as per the activity set out at section 2.2, which will overlap into phase 2.
- 4.4 **Phase 2 (Sept-Dec 2021)** is proposed to take the form of a whole-committee inquiry, also known as a 'select committee' approach.
- 4.5 This should follow on from, and somewhat mirror in form, the exercise undertaken by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee in 2019 when it looked at what should be achieved through changing the Council's decision-making model. The committee used a 'select committee' approach to this work, holding a series of evidence gathering sessions to hear from a range of witnesses. This included experts in local governance and decision making, local organisations with an interest in local democracy, partners from business and the Voluntary Community and Faith sector, Youth Cabinet and Youth Advisers. They also invited contributions from citizens through an online call for evidence and attendance at meetings, and undertook site visits and conversations with other local authorities to learn from their experiences of operating different governance models. A full list of witnesses, links to the evidence they considered and webcasts of their meetings can be found in that committee's final report, '[Principles for Governance at Sheffield City Council](#)'.
- 4.6 The Governance Committee should conduct its inquiry between now and Christmas 2021, with the goal of recommending a draft committee

governance model to Full Council for endorsement at its January meeting. It is custom and practice for January Council to be a 'scrutiny' meeting and it is felt that this topic would be suitable for inclusion. The recommendation is expected to take the form of a report describing a governance system in words and diagrams, rather than the specific constitutional drafting changes which will ultimately need to be agreed by full council. Council would be asked to endorse this model as a draft in January 2022, subject to stage 3 of the process and further agreement by Council before May 2022.

4.7 The detail of the inquiry process will be worked up in consultation with the Chair and Vice chair, including via engagement with the whole committee in advance of its next meeting. It is anticipated to include:

- a. Open, council-led engagement with stakeholders, the public, members and council officers as per the engagement report elsewhere on today's agenda under 'phase 2'
- b. Desktop research including review of all relevant material received in the 2019 Scrutiny exercise and since, including the Big City Conversation and more
- c. Research into comparator authorities' experiences and recognised best practice
- d. Lessons learnt from the active experimentation taking place via the Transitional Committees, Local Area Committees and other experiences of decision-making during the 2021/22 transitional year
- e. Whole-committee sessions on 30 November and up to three extraordinary meetings in early December, at which the committee may call expert witnesses as necessary to build on what has already been learned from the above.
- f. A recommendation to council based on a final report received at the Committee's last extraordinary meeting in December.

4.7 An important principle of this work is that it should not repeat or duplicate things which have already been done or learnt, including by the 2019 Scrutiny exercise. Evidence from this activity is readily available and should still be largely relevant.

4.8 Alongside input from the ongoing engagement work, Members will be supported to identify where there are gaps in our body of evidence which need to be filled in order to answer the design questions (aligned to the draft framework), and then take a view on who should be called to provide written or verbal evidence to fill these gaps. Analysis is underway to inform members' deliberation on this matter.

- 4.8 It is hoped that this process and generation of a final report can be completed in time to avoid needing to use the Governance Committee meeting currently scheduled for 22 December.
- 4.10 **Phase 3 (Jan-May 2022)** would therefore take place in the context of a Council-endorsed draft model for the future governance of Sheffield City Council, but there will still be a lot of work to complete in a short space of time in order to get to a final agreed model. The draft model will enable:
- a. An informed starting point for the city-wide engagement exercise taking place in 'phase three' of the project in the new year, supported by Involve. This should provide further feedback into the ongoing design of the model, expected to focus particularly on the aspects of that model which are about ensuring that the voice of the public is central to decision-making.
 - b. A basis for progressing work on the constitutional detail behind the model, as well as potential additional protocols and other commitments to ways of working. These will come to Governance Committee meetings during this phase alongside ongoing public engagement.
- 4.11 The main output of this phase should be a recommendation to Council in March 2022 (and/or before) of revisions to the Council's constitution which comprise the necessary changes to the Council's governance in order that it can effectively operate and make decisions beyond May 2022. This is likely to require an extraordinary (extra) meeting of Council in March 2022
- 4.12 In addition, other matters will need to be recommended to Council by the Governance Committee around this time including the likely output from an Independent Remuneration Panel to consider members' allowances in the new system, and potentially a range of other protocols and descriptions of ways of working designed to ensure that the new system fulfils the ambitions of members, stakeholders and the public. All of these will need to be developed in light of the emerging feedback from the engagement exercises carried out in both phases 2 and 3 of this programme.
- 4.13 **Phase 4 (May 2022 and beyond)** is expected to consist of an ongoing process of review and revision of both the formal proposals for the governance model and the ways of working within that system. The experience of other councils which have transitioned to a committee system tells us that the bedding in period will last for multiple years during which time the degree of change is likely to depend on the outcome of elections as well as the changing needs of

the City. While the 'transition to committees programme' is not expected to continue on beyond the summer of 2022, this process of ongoing review and revision will need to become part of 'business as usual' for the council.

5.0 LEGAL, FINANCIAL AND EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no immediate legal implications to this report. The legal implications of the outcome of the inquiry will be set out in a future report to the Governance Committee describing the proposed governance model.

5.2 There are no immediate financial implications to this report.

5.3 There are no immediate equalities implications to this report. Equalities will be a key consideration in the design and implementation of the engagement programme, the detail of which is covered in a report elsewhere on today's agenda.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. *That progress in the five weeks since the committee's last meeting be noted.*
2. *That the framework at appendix A be agreed for immediate public use to support conversations with stakeholders, the public, councillors and officers about the future model of the Council's governance.*
3. *That a whole-committee enquiry be conducted between now and Christmas 2021, with the goal of recommending a draft committee governance model to Full Council for endorsement in January. The inquiry will include:*
 - a. *Open, council-led engagement with stakeholders, the public, members and council officers as per the engagement report elsewhere on today's agenda*
 - b. *Desktop research including review of all relevant material received in the 2019 Scrutiny exercise and since including the Big City Conversation.*
 - c. *Research into comparator authorities' experiences and recognised best practice*
 - d. *Lessons learnt from the active experimentation taking place via the Transitional Committees, Local Area Committees and other experiences of decision-making during the 2021/22 transitional year*
 - e. *Whole-committee sessions on 30 November and up to three extraordinary meetings in early December, at which the committee may call expert witnesses as*

necessary to build on what has already been learned from the above

4. *That the approach be endorsed of using the draft governance model (after, and subject to, agreement by Full Council):*
 - a. *As one of the starting points for the city-wide engagement exercise taking place in 'phase three' of the project in the new year, supported by Involve*
 - b. *as the basis for progressing decisions about constitutional detail during January-March, subject to input from the simultaneous engagement exercise referred to at 4a, leading to a final agreement by Full Council in March 2022.*

7.0 APPENDICES

Appendix A – Draft governance framework

Gillian Duckworth

Director of Legal & Governance (and Monitoring Officer)

This page is intentionally left blank

Committee System Discussion Framework

Leadership

1. Full Council

Statements-

- Is made up of all the City Councillors elected by the people of Sheffield to listen to and represent their wards and the people who live within them
- Agrees the Constitution (i.e. how the Council operates)
- Sets the Scheme of Delegations (i.e. who can make which decisions)
- Is the forum where all Members steer the overall direction of the Council, set the boundaries within which all the themed committees have to operate (known as the 'budget and policy framework'), and keep oversight of decisions made across the whole system. In exceptional circumstances, can overturn decisions made by Committees.
- Appoints councillors to individual committees and elects the Leader of the Council and the ceremonial Lord Mayor.

2. Leader's Role

Statements

- Advocate for the city and represents the Council in regional and national networks and with Government
- Acts as the Council's nominee at South Yorkshire City Region (SYCR) and has voting rights when taking SYCR decisions
- Lead Spokesperson for the Council as a whole
- Chair of Overarching Committee (see elsewhere on page)

3. Lord Mayor's Role

Statements

- Ceremonial 'First Citizen' representing the Council as a civic body in formal and informal public settings and promoting local causes
- Chairs Full Council (has a casting vote if votes are tied)

Engagement & Communication

9. Public Engagement

Statements-

- A critical ambition for the new governance system is for citizens, communities and partners to be more effectively engaged, involved and listened to within the decision-making process.
- Decisions, and the processes used to reach decisions, should be easy for anybody to find and understand so that decision-makers are publicly accountable to everyone.
- This objective should be read as running through every single part of this framework.

10. Communications

Statements-

- A protocol will define who can make official statements on behalf of the Council under the new Committee System. Typically each political Group will have a nominated public spokesperson for each committee, but official Council statements are likely to be in the names of the Chairs of the relevant Committee.

Committees

5. Overarching Committee

Statements

- Overarching Committee with strategic responsibilities (NB this idea was endorsed by Full Council pre-referendum)
- Develops a Corporate Plan, budget and other aspects of the Budget & Policy Framework, with input of the other Themed Committees, for agreement/endorsement by Full Council- and then can only work within those limits agreed by Council
- Takes strategic decisions and sets the overall work programme for the Themed Committees which are each responsible for delivering specific parts of a Corporate Plan
- Membership typically is Chairs of all the Themed Committees plus others to maintain political proportionality. Chaired by Leader of the Council

7. Statutory Scrutiny

Statements

- No legal requirement for separate Scrutiny Committee(s) now that cross-party check and challenge (and cross-party policy development) is built into every decision-making Committee and Full Council.
- Some statutory responsibilities remain & must be effective, including Health and Crime & Disorder. This can be made part of the remit of other existing (non-scrutiny) Committees or we could maintain a standalone Committee.

8. Other Committees

Statements

- A range of existing Committees continue to serve their current functions e.g. Planning, Licensing, Audit and Standards
- Some Committees may need to be reshaped or rethought in order to fit within the new Committee System, such as Health & Wellbeing Board, Joint Commissioning Committee.

4. Themed Committees

Statements

- Between 3 and 10 decision-making Committees organised by theme (Full Council sets exact number, titles and remits – which may be reviewed and changed at each year's Annual Meeting)
- Work within the Budget, Policy and Strategy Frameworks set by the Full Council & any Overarching Committee
- Make up of all Themed Committees is proportionate to the size of each party group on Full Council
- In certain conditions Committees may establish a limited number of temporary, time-limited Sub-Committees for specific purposes, such as to develop policy on a specific issue.

6. Local Area Committees

Statements

- There are 7 LACs across the city
- Made up of all of the members from the local area (not subject to political proportionality)
- Formal Committees with some decision-making authority, but many of their important roles do not require any particular authority (e.g. facilitating, brokering, listening, amplifying)
- Take certain operational decisions with local impacts, within the scope agreed by Full Council

Roles & Responsibilities

11. Schemes of Delegation

Statements-

- All decisions previously made by the Co-operative Executive will be made at the new Themed Committees. Decisions previously made by Individual Executive Members could either be made at a Thematic Committee or by Officers. Where decisions are made by Officers, the thresholds for this, and mechanisms for transparency and holding decision-makers to account, will be clear in the Constitution.

12. Statutory Responsibilities for Members

Statements-

- It will still be a legal requirement that we have a Lead Member for Children's Services. This role is usually combined with Chairmanship of the relevant Committee(s).
- Individual Member decision making is not permitted under the Committee System.

13. Staffing, Relationships and Casework

Statements-

- The Member Support offer will need to be reviewed in line with the new model.
- Various new relationships and ways of working between Members and Officers must be forged
- Member Casework support mechanisms may need to be reviewed

This page is intentionally left blank



Governance Committee Report

Report of: Director of Legal and Governance

Date: 27th October 2021

Subject: Engaging and involving Sheffieldsers in transforming the city's governance

Author of Report: Laurie Brennan, Head of Policy and Partnerships
Laurie.brennan@sheffield.gov.uk

Summary:

This report:

- Recognises the involvement and engagement activity undertaken thus far to inform the early stages of thinking on the new committee system proposals (eg. Draft Design Principles)
 - Summarises the proposed approach to listening to and involving communities in the transition to the committee system
 - Sets out how we intend to create opportunities for citizens to engage in the development of the committee system between now and the end of December 2021
 - Proposes to work with Involve to deliver a deliberative and innovative engagement programme from January 2022 on how make decisions in a way that empowers people and is inclusive, accessible, representative and connected with all of the people and communities in Sheffield.
-

Recommendations:

That the Governance Committee:

1. Endorses the proposed approach to engaging communities over the coming months, including the proposed underpinning principles which will become part of our draft Design Principles.
2. Endorses the proposed innovative activity with Involve to engage citizens in how we make decisions that are inclusive, accessible and representative in Sheffield.

Background Papers:

Big City Conversation summary

<https://democracy.sheffield.gov.uk/documents/s43905/Appendix%20%20-%20Big%20City%20Conversation%20-%20summary.pdf>

Empowering communities: shifting power from the Town Hall to communities in every part of Sheffield

<https://democracy.sheffield.gov.uk/documents/s43901/Empowering%20Communities%20Cabinet%20Report.pdf>

The Vision for a Modern Committee Governance System: Draft Design Principles and Engagement Approach

<https://democracy.sheffield.gov.uk/documents/s46351/9.%20Draft%20Design%20Principles%20and%20Engagement%20Approach%2020.09.2021%20CR.pdf>

Category of Report: OPEN

Statutory and Council Policy Checklist

Financial Implications
YES Cleared by: Kayleigh Inman, Senior Finance Manager
Legal Implications
YES Cleared by: Andrea Simpson, Corporate Governance Lawyer
Equality of Opportunity Implications
YES Cleared by: Adele Robinson, Equalities and Engagement Manager
Tackling Health Inequalities Implications
NO
Human rights Implications
NO:
Environmental and Sustainability implications
NO
Economic impact
NO
Community safety implications
NO
Human resources implications
NO
Property implications
NO
Area(s) affected
NONE
Is the item a matter which is reserved for approval by the City Council?
NO
Press release
NO

Engaging and involving Sheffields in transforming the city's governance

Purpose

This paper provides an overview of the proposed approach to ensuring that the Sheffields have a strong and active role in the development of the city's new Modern Committee System.

Background

1. Sheffield is going to be the first Core City in England to introduce a new, Modern Committee System of governance from May 2022.
2. This is a major change for how democratic decisions are made in the city and we have an opportunity to pioneer a modern approach to the Council's formal decision making but also in how we get to those decisions – how open and transparent our approach is; how citizens and city partners are involved in decisions, and how we reflect and review the decisions we make to get the best outcomes for Sheffield.
3. Sheffields told us in the Big City Conversation in 2019/20 that they don't feel like they can influence decisions (only 1-in-3 felt they could) but many more people said they would like to, particularly on issues that matter to them. Further, Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee's (OSMC) work on SCC's governance in winter 2019 suggested that:

“The issues people care about are often local in nature. Our decision-making structure needs to include channels through which people, communities and partners can work with local councillors about what is important to them. We need to strengthen locality arrangements based on the findings of the Big City Conversation and ensure that these arrangements work effectively alongside, and feed into, citywide decision-making processes.”
4. In the One Year Plan, we committed to being a City Council that is genuinely in and of its communities, with a deeper interconnection to the people that live and work in the city. A new governance model alone won't achieve this but alongside Local Area Committees and a focus on creating a new culture and ways of working, we have an opportunity to better connect the city council's ways of working with citizens. Our approach to involving Sheffields and listening to their perspectives, expectations and aspirations as part of the new Committee System and Local Area Committee (LAC) arrangements should encapsulate the behaviours of the Council that we want to be – as set out in the One Year Plan.

We want to be a Council that this city can be proud of

To be confident that Sheffield City Council can deliver this ambitious one year recovery plan, we need to reflect on our strengths and areas for development as an organisation; as well as be willing to invest in the corporate health and capacity of the council. As an employer and leader in the city, we need to aspire to be an outstanding organisation; a council that all Elected Members, staff and citizens can be proud of.



Clear direction & collective leadership

Clear direction and collective leadership – focused on a clear and ambitious set of priorities which provide a sense of purpose for every employee and are collectively owned by the organisation's leadership at political and officer level



Confident and outward looking

Confident and outward looking – sharing success, learning from others and being a strong partner in the City Region and across the north



Collaborative

Collaborative – working with all partners and citizens; providing leadership and support where it's needed and getting out of the way where we need to. Within SCC we will strive to work as 'One Council' with common purpose



Committed to excellence

Committed to excellence – with a strong performance culture; an organisation that empowers staff to try and to learn, and which values focus, follow through and getting things done. We invest in the talent and development of our staff so that those who work for SCC are the best they can be.



Connected to our communities and citizens

Connected to our communities and citizens – a Council in and of our communities – working in the open, with and alongside people - a visible, accessible organisation

5. *How* we develop the new Committee System will reflect these ambitions so that throughout and at each and every stage we will work in the open, involve and listen to citizens and be honest about the challenges we face. We recognise that we are learning and want to learn through this process. We won't always get things right but want to be open and honest in our approach

Involving citizens in the design of Sheffield's Committee System

6. As agreed by the Governance Committee on 20th September 2021¹, we have set up a programme to manage the work that needs to happen between now and May 2022 so that we are ready to move to a Committee System. The Committee also agreed that citizens and stakeholders will have a vital role throughout the programme and we will undertake:
 - a. Topic-by-topic engagement with internal and external stakeholders on technical questions as they arise for the Committee's consideration, including via an open public invitation for participants to contribute via a stakeholder group made up of interested parties;
 - b. A city-wide, facilitated, representative, discursive engagement exercise in the new calendar year, by which time more citizens' input could be more impactfully applied to the emerging model, and to shaping future ways of working within it; and
 - c. Continuous review of this approach, with further detail to return to this Committee in October for consideration
7. The timescales for the implementation of Sheffield's committee system are tight and over the coming months, the Governance Committee will have to consider and

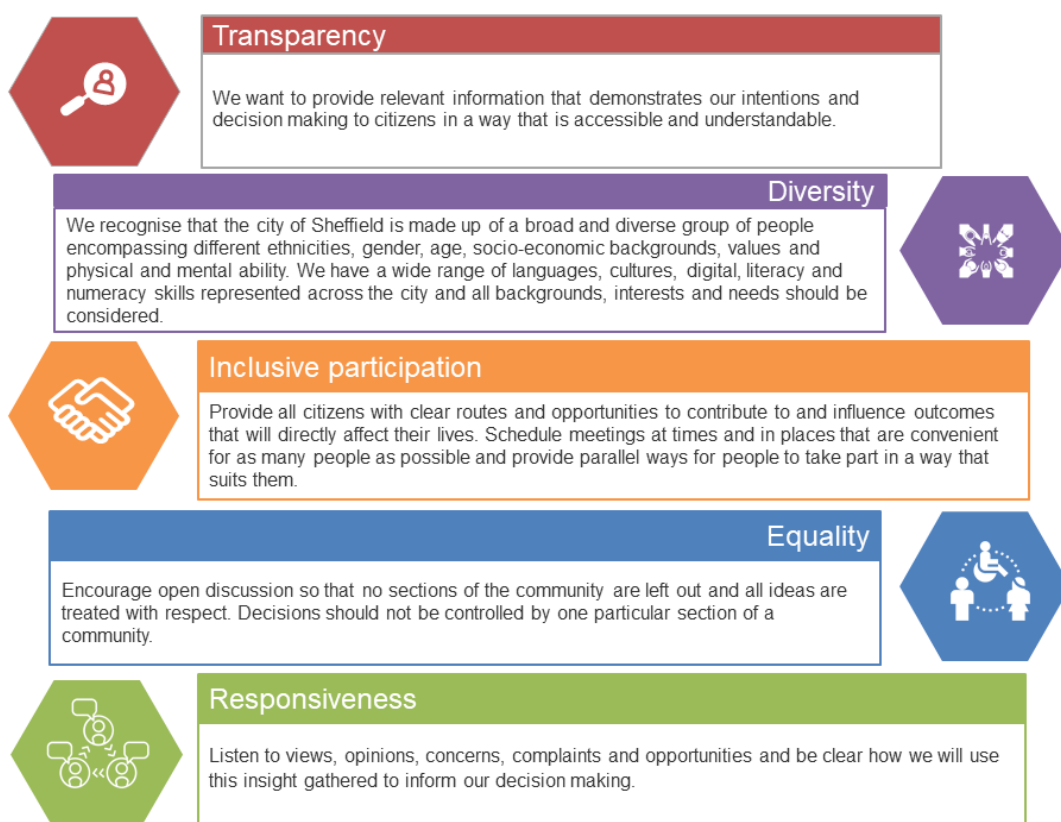
¹ The Vision for a Modern Committee Governance System: Draft Design Principles and Engagement Approach <https://democracy.sheffield.gov.uk/documents/s46351/9.%20Draft%20Design%20Principles%20and%20Engagement%20Approach%2020.09.2021%20CR.pdf>

develop proposals on different elements of the new system in order to make overall recommendations to Full Council for endorsement in January 2022, and then final, detailed recommendations for changes to the Council's constitution in March 2022. This process is set out in a paper elsewhere on today's agenda.

8. Our intention is to work in the open, listening, learning and ensuring that everyone that lives and works in the city - citizens, partners, community organisations, elected politicians and SCC staff - have genuine and meaningful opportunities to have a say and shape the development of the new governance arrangements. At times it will undoubtedly feel messy and possibly feel too fast-paced but we will endeavour to ensure that we use the city's networks and frequent communications to keep everyone up to speed on how we're doing and any opportunities to get involved.
9. We will be comfortable in sharing draft proposals, developing thoughts and ideas which enable citizens, community organisations, Members, partners and officers opportunities to inform and shape the steps we take as a city.

The below sets out a set of draft principles to ensure that all citizens have a strong role in shaping the city's new governance. These principles underpin the approach that we intend to take throughout the Transition to Committees programme, recognising the diversity of Sheffield's population and that we will seek to work openly at every stage of the work, will go to our communities enabling everyone to get involved in ways that best work for them and be responsive to citizen perspectives throughout the development of the new committee system.

10. We would welcome the Committee's views on the draft principles and we propose that, pending comments, we integrate the below with our draft Design Principles, informing our future ways of working.



| What we've done so far

11. Whilst there is a lot to do to develop Sheffield's Committee System proposal itself, we have existing useful evidence and perspectives which remain important in shaping the approach to decision making that citizens want in Sheffield.
12. This includes:
 - a. **The Big City Conversation** – online survey, public events and conversations with citizens across the city on their priorities on what they love about their neighbourhood, what needs improving and how they want to get involved in local issues and decision. There's a summary of the key messages [here](#).
 - b. **Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee** – OSMC undertook a review a Select Committee-style review of governance at SCC, hearing from expert witnesses, citizens and interest groups about how to improve governance and decision making at SCC. This included a call for evidence which all informed OSMC's '[Principles for Governance at Sheffield City Council](#)' report which was endorsed by Full Council in January 2020 and has formed the basis of our draft design principles for the new Committee System at SCC. All the material and evidence received can be found in the 'special' OSMC meetings from 26th November to 18th December 2019 [here](#).
 - c. **Initial conversations with stakeholders** – over the summer in 2021, we held initial conversations with key interested stakeholders (convened by Centre for Governance and Scrutiny) to hear from key voices in Sheffield and challenge us on the Committee System programme and help shape the ways of working for the coming months. The stakeholders challenged us to be clearer about our ambitions and what we wanted to achieve in the development of the Committee System and this has resulted in the draft Design Principles which the Governance Committee agreed in September.
 - d. **Launch of Local Area Committees (LACs)** – LACs are a vital part of the city's new approach to engaging, empowering and enabling communities by shifting decision making to local people and local areas. LACs built upon the evidence from the Big City Conversation and the OSMC's recommendations to Full Council. From September 2021, LACs have been having their first meetings and to start to develop local area plans for each LAC, [a citywide survey](#) and local community conversations have been launched to identify key local issues and priorities and also how people want to get involved. The views of citizens in the LAC engagement work will help inform the Committee System proposals, particularly in shaping how people want to get involved in decision making.

| September to December 2021 – building the foundations

13. Over the coming months, the Governance Committee will start to look at the different aspects of Sheffield's new Committee System – such as the design principles that underpin it, how decisions will be made, options for the number of committees, and how we review and scrutinise decisions.
14. Between now and the end of the year, we intend to take a open and flexible approach to getting people involved and enabling citizens, Elected Members and

partners to shape the different parts of new system's development as part of a whole-Committee enquiry. This will include:

- **Sheffield Committee System network** – we will enable people to sign-up to receive regular updates on the activities and work that we're undertaking, informing people about engagement events and seeking views on the issues we're wrestling with. We will use SCC's communications channels and connect through existing VCF sector networks, the Sheffield Equality Partnership and Race Equality Commissioners to ensure that we reach out to all communities in Sheffield.
- **Public events** – in and around the city, we will hold a number of public events for anyone to come and get involved in conversations about different aspects of the new Committee System, supported by CFGS. The first of these is on the 22nd October (see below).
- **Fortnightly public drop-ins** – from 26th October, we will hold fortnightly drop-in events (alternating between physical events and virtual events) for anyone in Sheffield to come and talk to us about the development of the new committee system. The physical events will be held in different locations across the city and we'll let you know in advance of the times, venues and key topics that we could discuss. We'll communicate using the Council's e-newsletters and share through the city's community networks. Some of these drop-ins are likely to be used as workshop sessions with more involved facilitation, while others will be updates and an opportunity for questions – it will depend on the timing of each.
- **Come to you** – where community networks already have scheduled meetings or want officers to come along and talk about the transition to a committee system, we will do everything we can to come, listen and talk with citizens. We will also look to set up dedicated sessions for different communities of interest in the city to ensure that we the diverse perspectives of our citizens are heard.
- **Fortnightly Elected Member drop-ins** – similarly, we will hold fortnightly drop-ins for Councillors to discuss the developing proposals, raise ideas and challenges and ask questions. This is to create regular and dedicated time for Members to talk to the programme team about the new governance proposals. Some of these drop-ins are likely to be used as workshop sessions with more involved facilitation, while others will be updates and an opportunity for questions – it will depend on the timing of each. We will also discuss with the Governance Committee and Members what further opportunities need to be created to ensure there is opportunities for Members to inform the final proposals.
- **Transitional Committees** – from October 2021, new Transitional Committees will meet monthly to support and advise the Co-operative Executive on key areas of policy development. The Transitional Committees will be important cross-party policy development fora in the year ahead but also will be able to test and model some of the behaviours and ways of working for Sheffield's Committee System. This will be vital engagement and learning for Members and citizens, helping to test how we can best make thematic committees work from May 2022. Each

Transitional Committee will provide regular feedback to the Governance Committee throughout the coming months.

- **Business** – as part of our engagement programme over the coming months, we will work with the city’s business leaders and representative organisations (eg. Sheffield Chamber of Commerce) to listen to business perspectives on our developing governance proposals.
 - **Whole Governance Committee hearings** – a number of whole Committee hearings towards the end of November / early December which bring together the learning from all engagement activity and desk research along with expert witnesses.
15. Following endorsement by the Governance Committee, we are holding an in-person conversation facilitated by CfGS on the 22nd October 2021 to listen to people’s thoughts about our draft Design Principles for SCC’s new governance and new ways of working under the Committee System. This event is scheduled to take place *after* the publication of this paper but we will provide the Governance Committee with a verbal update on the outcomes from the event at the meeting on the 27th October 2021. We will also be running an online version of the event on the 26th October at 5:30pm.
 16. As well as ensuring there is a full programme of opportunities for members to feed into the design process and to learn about the change as it takes place, the council is developing a member Development Strategy and Member Development Plan for the coming year. In addition to the usual considerations of induction and ongoing member development this aims to address the unique member development needs arising from the transition to committee system. The Local Government Association, Centre for Governance and Scrutiny and other external training providers are supporting this process as well as delivery by Sheffield City Council officers. A report about the progress and ambitions around Member development was received by the Audit and Standards Committee on 21st October 2021².
 17. We also know that we don’t and can never claim to have all the answers or can connect to all the voices in our communities. Through our voluntary, community and faith sector (VCF), independent organisations and our two universities, we are also keen to connect to and support all channels to bring greater community voice into the development of the city’s new governance. We are happy to attend and have discussions with local VCF networks and organisations to listen to views on the developing committee system – going to people rather than expecting people to come to us.
- December 2021 to May 2022 – deeper engagement to shape the city’s future
18. As set out in the paper to the Governance Committee on the 20th September 2021, we have sought to bring in independent involvement and engagement expertise to provide dedicated capacity and innovation in connecting to and involving citizens in Sheffield’s transition to the committee system.
 19. The governance change creates an opportunity for us to start to build stronger and deeper connections to our communities, reconciling and learning from challenges from recent years to ensure that citizens and particularly those Sheffielders that are

² Sheffield City Council Audit and Standards Committee (21st Oct 2021) *Member Development Progress Report*, <https://democracy.sheffield.gov.uk/documents/s48016/9.%20Audit%20and%20Standards%20Report%20-%20Final%20-%20Oct%202021.pdf>

seldom heard, can play a strong role in the future of the city's local and city level decision making.

20. This naturally and must go beyond the formal and constitutional elements of how a committee system is structured into the ways of working, behaviours and cultures that underpin the city's decision making. This work should bring longer-term development for the city's democratic participation and wider involvement, establish new and re-connections with communities and potentially capacity building for SCC officers and Members to ensure we have the skills and expertise we need to genuinely design-in involvement and empowerment in our ways of working.
21. To summarise, the draft question we are trying to address through this work is '*how do we make decisions in a way that empowers people in Sheffield and is inclusive, accessible, representative and connected with all of the people and communities in Sheffield?*'. This could include:
 - Engagement in and through new committee structures
 - How we ensure that decision making is driven by people and communities from the start
 - How SCC better connects to and communicates with communities
 - How we improve openness, transparency, improve council meetings and direct engagement to Members
 - How we improve our engagement skills and approaches to better connect to Sheffieldsers in ways that work for them.
22. To support this work, we have commissioned Involve who are a leading UK public participation charity who will bring a wealth of knowledge, creativity, and expertise to support our ambitions to become a genuinely connected and empowering council. Involve have worked on a wide range on local and national engagement projects, most recently including the Climate Assembly UK which was commissioned by six House of Commons Select Committees and are supporting a citizens assembly on democracy in the UK. <https://www.involve.org.uk/>
23. The majority of this activity will take place from December 2021 and in the early part of next year. We are continuing to work with Involve on establishing the programme of work but at present, this is likely to focus on three main elements:
 - a. **Looking inwards** – working with Members and officers to ensure that there is a strong alignment of engagement and the new decision-making model and developing knowledge and understanding.
 - b. **Looking outwards** - working with us to develop and deliver public engagement activity, including engaging stakeholders pre-Christmas to help shape what that activity looks like post-Christmas. This will likely be deliberative and particularly focus on the perspectives of people and communities in the city, particularly focusing on engaging diverse and seldom heard communities in Sheffield.
 - c. **Training and mentoring** – training and development for Members and officers to ensure that we have the capabilities to become the empowering and engaging organisation that we want to be.
24. The estimated cost of this work is around £100k with the majority of the budget (~£75k-£80k) being invested in the deliberative and extensive public engagement activity from January 2022.

25. To provide the Committee with further detail on the proposals, colleagues from Involve will attend the Governance Committee meeting on the 27th October 2021.

May 2022 onwards

26. We are conscious that the coming months will be intensive and whilst we have a specific timescale to establish Sheffield's new Committee System by May 2022, the transition and transformation here is longer term.
27. Alongside the development of Local Area Committees, the transition to the committee system and particularly the engagement activity is a major opportunity to listen, learn and involve communities from all of Sheffield and establish foundations for a new way of making decisions in a major city.
28. May 2022 is a significant milestone but should not be seen as an end; we will continue to reflect, review and learn as the committee system iterates over time, particularly in how thematic committees involve citizens in their work and decision making.

Recommendations

29. That the Governance Committee:
 - a. Endorses the proposed approach to engaging communities over the coming months, including the proposed underpinning principles which will become part of our draft Design Principles.
 - b. Endorses the proposed innovative activity with Involve to engage citizens in how we make decisions that are inclusive, accessible and representative in Sheffield.

Implications

Legal implications

30. While there is no specific consultation duty in respect of the design of a new committee system of governance, the Local Government Act 1999 imposes a Best Value duty on a local authority "to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness" which includes a general duty to consult for the purpose of deciding how to fulfil that duty. The proposals in this report are compliant with these requirements.

Equalities implications

31. The engagement of all communities in Sheffield will be a fundamental part of the engagement programme to ensure that citizens from all backgrounds and parts of the city have can shape the development of our new governance arrangements. We will work with VCF sector organisations and the Sheffield Equality Partnership network to ensure we enable Sheffielders with protected characteristics to have a meaningful role in the development of the new governance arrangements. Further, we will ensure that there are dedicated for key communities to engage, maximising accessibility to events and engagement sessions.

32. Governance Committee Members gave a clear steer that we need to ensure that we engage people and communities that are seldom heard in the development of our new decision making. Working with Involve, we will ensure that there is a significant focus on connecting to those communities, creating conversations and spaces where people feel safe to participate in a way that works for them.
33. In line with the approach set about in the above report, we will listen and learn as the work develops over the coming months. If at any point, people and communities feel they haven't had the opportunity to get involved, we will proactively seek to involve them in whatever ways work best for them to ensure that their ideas, views and aspirations are heard in the transition to committees work.

| Financial implications

34. The engagement and communications budget allocation approved by Co-Operative Executive on 21st July was £300k. The estimated spend to engage Involve is up to £100k and so is within the funding envelop approved for the Transition to Committee Programme.



Governance Committee Report

Report of: Director of Legal and Governance

Date: 27th October 2021

Subject: Transitional Committees Update

Author of Report: Deborah Glen, Alice Nicholson and Emily Standbrook-Shaw, Policy and Improvement Officers

Summary:

This report:

- Provides the opportunity to share information on the Transitional Committees which will be shared verbally at the meeting.
 - Also shares the Transitional Committees' composite work plans in their early stages, for reference.
-

Recommendations:

That the Governance Committee:

1. That the transitional committee work programmes and verbal feed-back be noted
 2. Request a written update from the Transitional Committee chairs be brought to the November meeting of the Governance Committee, on cross-party engagement so that a broad view and range of ideas can be considered; in accordance with their terms of reference, and any proposals they have for pilot ways of working that can inform the work of the governance committee in its consideration of a future committee model.
-

Background Papers:

Category of Report: OPEN

Statutory and Council Policy Checklist

Financial Implications
YES Cleared by: Kayleigh Inman
Legal Implications
YES Cleared by: Andrea Simpson
Equality of Opportunity Implications
YES Cleared by: James Henderson
Tackling Health Inequalities Implications
NO
Human rights Implications
NO:
Environmental and Sustainability implications
NO
Economic impact
NO
Community safety implications
NO
Human resources implications
NO
Property implications
NO
Area(s) affected
NONE
Is the item a matter which is reserved for approval by the City Council?
NO
Press release
NO

Transitional Committees Update

Purpose

This paper provides an opportunity to share information on the Transitional Committees early composite work plans, verbal feed back will also be shared at the meeting.

Background

At its Full Council meeting in May 2021, Sheffield City Council established four Transitional Committees on a politically proportionate basis, with a remit to advise the Co-operative Executive during the transitional year and to help the Council experiment with ways of working within cross-party committees, as we move towards implementing a Committee System in May 2022.

The Chairs of the Transitional Committees are members of the Governance Committee. As Transitional Committees are now completing their first round of formal meetings, it is a good moment to share information on their progress, experiences and any issues that are emerging which may be of relevance

Recommendations

That the Governance Committee:

1. Note the Transitional Committee work programmes and invite verbal feedback from the Transitional Committees about their experiences to date
2. Request a written update from the Transitional Committee Chairs to the November meeting of the Governance Committee, including reflections on the key lessons learnt from their experiences and how this could inform the Governance Committee's work on the future governance model

Implications

No Legal, Financial or Equalities consultation required at this stage – report is just for information.

This page is intentionally left blank

Transitional Committees 2021/22 – Work Programmes

Last updated: October 12th 2021

Transitional Committee 1 – Our Council

Meeting Dates 2021: 14th October @ 4:00pm; 11th November @ 4:00pm; 9th December @10:00am

Chair: Zahira Naz, Dawn Dale. Deputy: Christine Gilligan-Kubo

Exec Members: Terry Fox, Julie Grocutt, Cate McDonald

Senior Lead Officer: Eugene Walker, Executive Director of Resources

Draft Work Programme

Corporate Priorities	To consider and advise on longer term priorities that will form the basis of the 3-5 year Corporate Plan, and priority based budget which will provide the strategic structure within which committees will make decisions in the coming years.	Laurie Brennan/Cllr Cate McDonald	14th October 2021 To follow up with a one off workgroup and report back to Committee, and to advise Co-operative Executive
Customer Experience	To advise on how we can deliver the One Year Plan commitment to improve customer experience. Initial briefing session on aims, objectives, progress and priorities re Customer Experience Programme – leading to development of Committee’s focus and approach.	Mark Bennett	14th October 2021 To follow up with workgroup(s) and an evidence gathering session, to report back to Committee and Co-operative Executive
Performance Management	To advise on how we can deliver the One Year Plan commitment to establish a robust performance approach and culture in the organisation to drive improvement, accountability and deliver better services for Sheffielders.	James Henderson	11th November 2021

	Initial briefing to be arranged for Chairs and lead officers to determine best focus and approach for TC involvement.		
Transitional Committee 2 – Communities and Neighbourhoods			
Meeting Dates 2021: 12th October @ 3:30pm; 16th November @ 3:30pm; 14th December @3:30pm			
Chair: Kaltum Rivers Deputy: Sioned-Mair Richards			
Exec Member: Alison Teal, Paul Wood			
Senior Lead Officer: John Macilwraith, Executive Director			
Draft Work Programme:			
Corporate Priorities	To consider and advise on longer term priorities that will form the basis of the 3-5 year Corporate Plan, and priority based budget which will provide the strategic structure within which committees will make decisions in the coming years.	Each TC to consider priorities for relevant thematic areas. Aiming to bring to first meeting of each TC.	12th October 2021 To follow up with a one off workgroup and report back to Committee, and to advise Co-operative Executive
Sustainable Neighbourhoods / Communities	To advise on the development of Sustainable Neighbourhoods / Communities in Sheffield – what do we mean by the term (what makes a sustainable community?), what should they look like (what does it mean in Sheffield?), how will we measure success.	Cross cutting issue – need to consider links with other TCs.	Work plan discussion 12th October 2021 Agreed to focus on Community Safety issues. To come to Committee in 2022
Future of Social Housing	Piece of policy work that connects to the city's Housing Strategy – the role and purpose of social housing in the city and who can access it? (Allocations Policy Review)		Work Plan discussion 12th October 2021 Agreed to look at repairs and maintenance, private sector housing and RPs (Registered Private Providers of Social Housing). To be considered at 14th Dec 2021 and also in 2022

Place Systems Review – Housing project	To advise on the implementation of this project, funding and timescales, prior to consideration by the Co-operative Executive		November 16th 2021 meeting.
Cladding	Requested to be included at the first meeting		December 14th 2021 meeting
Repairs and Maintenance	Agreed to have a working group to consider the outcomes from Scrutiny and also to complement Peer Review		To be scoped
Transitional Committee 3 – Climate Change, Economy & Development			
Meeting dates 2021: 7th October, 10th November, 8th December			
Chair: Mark Jones			
Executive Members: Terry Fox, Douglas Johnson, Paul Turpin			
Work Programme			
Corporate Priorities	To consider and advise on longer term priorities that will form the basis of the 3-5 year Corporate Plan, and priority based budget which will provide the strategic structure within which committees will make decisions in the coming years.	Each TC to consider priorities for relevant thematic areas. Aiming to bring to first meeting of each TC.	7th October 2021
Pathway to Net Zero	To advise on the 10 point plan for net zero, the wider implications of the Arup report and to grip and monitor progress on the council's work on climate change	Mark/Barbara to liaise with Douglas on best way for added value from TC (Members) not the 10 points but the way of delivering under each – maybe not all this TC	7th October 2021 - Return to Committee 10 th November 2021

Central Area Strategy	To support the Co-operative Executive in shaping the future plan for the city centre in line with the One Year Plan commitment on this.		7th October 2021 – return to Committee with a draft November?)
Ethical Procurement Workshop	Advising on strengthening the environmental content of our Ethical Procurement Strategy		21st October – online session: strengthening the environmental content (Co-operative Executive Member lead)
Local Plan	To advise the Co-operative Executive on the development of the Local Plan, in support of the One Year Plan commitment to take decisive steps on this during 2021 and 2022		Series of workshops and special Committee meeting in public on 18 th November
Pandemic Economic Recovery	Consider how the Committee can support, add value, connecting the Business Recovery Plan, Net Zero, Central Area Strategy, Local Plan, and Environment Act, advising co-operative executive	Possible first in depth task and advising co-operative executive	To be scoped - scheduled early 2022?
Transitional Committee 4 – Education, Health and Care			
Meetings 2021: 7th October, 4th November, 2nd December			
Chair: Mohammed Mahroof			
Executive Members: Jayne Dunn, George Lindars Hammond			
Draft Work Programme:			
Corporate Priorities	To consider and advise on longer term priorities that will form the basis of the 3-5 year Corporate Plan, and priority based budget which will provide the strategic structure within which committees will make decisions in the coming years.	Discussion with Executive Member for Finance & Resources and Head of Policy & Partnerships.	November 4th Meeting

SEND transitions to adulthood	To advise on how we can improve the transition to adulthood for more learners, to help deliver our One Year Plan commitment to provide effective, person-centred SEND services.	Initial paper and discussion at November 4th meeting. Committee to determine focus and approach of further work.
Home Care Transformation	To advise on how we can improve home care services to ensure that people receive the right support to enable them to live independently at home as part of our One Year Plan commitment to enable adults to live the life that they want to live.	Initial paper and discussion at October 7th meeting. Committee to determine focus and approach of further work. (to be rearranged following the postponement of the October 7 th meeting)

This page is intentionally left blank