

Review of the Committee Structure Scoping Report

Final Decision-Maker	Democracy Committee
Lead Head of Service	Angela Woodhouse, Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Lead Officer and Report Author	Angela Woodhouse, Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Classification	Public
Wards affected	

Executive Summary

This report sets out the scope for the review of the committee structure as requested by the Democracy Committee at its meeting in March.

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

To adopt the scope and timetable for the review of the committee structure.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Democracy Committee	2 July 2018

Review of the Committee Structure Scoping Report

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 At the meeting held on 14 March 2018 the Democracy Committee resolved:

1. That a review be carried out in the functions and terms of reference of all the Committees, excluding the Regulatory Committee.
2. That a scoping report be brought to the next Committee meeting setting out the terms of reference for the review, including the original principles agreed by the Council.

1.2 The original objective and principles for the governance structure that were agreed at the meeting of Full Council held on 10 December 2014 were:

Objective for the Governance Structure:

- To achieve greater involvement and participation of all Members in decision making whilst avoiding a cumbersome bureaucratic structure that lacks direction and accountability.

Principles:

- To be cost neutral
- To increase Member participation in decision making
- To lead to more effective and efficient decision making

1.3 The Council changed its governance arrangements in May 2015. The Council cannot change to an alternative structure of governance for 5 years except by approval at a referendum. The earliest a new model of governance could therefore realistically be introduced is May 2020.

2. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

2.1 Review terms of Reference

Objective of Review

To assess whether the committee structure has achieved the original objective and principles set:

- To achieve greater involvement and participation of all Members in decision making whilst avoiding a cumbersome bureaucratic structure that lacks direction and accountability.

Principles:

- To be cost neutral
- To increase Member participation in decision making
- To lead to more effective and efficient decision making

Evidence and Research Required

- Review of the terms of reference of all non-regulatory committees to identify if they are effective, any confusion and whether they could be improved.
- Consultation with other Councils who have also changed governance arrangements.
- Desktop analysis of the financial cost of the structure using the information from the original review for comparison.
- Review of the number of meetings and decisions taken by committees applying the objective and principles.
- Detailed look at a sample of decisions from committees.
- Interviews with Chairs and Vice Chairs of Committees since the structure inception and group Leaders.
- Consultation with Officers and Members on whether the current structure meets the objectives and principles set.

Timetable for Review

- Evidence and research to be gathered from July until December
- Updates to Democracy Committee as appropriate
- Report to Democracy Committee Wednesday 9 January 2019
- Any recommendations for change to Council 27 February 2019
- Any changes approved implemented for the new municipal year - May 2019

How will the review be undertaken

Either a Member working Group of 3-5 Councillors or all Committee members through workshops and meeting in addition to formal meetings, with formal reporting back to the Democracy Committee as per the timetable.

- 2.2 The Committee could decide to amend the timetable, approach and structure of the review as they feel appropriate. The objectives and principles have been set out as per the Committee's decision in March 2018. Thought will need to be given about the amount of time required by councillors and officers to undertake the review and any additional work required when considering the scope.

3. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 The preferred option is the approach set out at 2.1 above the committee is asked to agree or amend the approach. A working group has been suggested to carry out the review however the committee may want all committee members to be involved in which case the review can be carried out by all committee members using meetings and workshops to share and progress work.

4. RISK

4.1 This report sets out a scope for review, risk implications will need to be considered in the formulation of any recommendations and committee reports.

5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

5.1 Consultation is outlined in the scope of the review above.

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

6.1 Actions will be taken in line with the scope of the review and as agreed by the Committee.

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	The Council's governance arrangements ensure effective decision making aligned to corporate prioritised	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Risk Management	Already covered in the risk section.	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Financial	There are no direct cost implications from undertaking the review. It was established as a principle when introducing	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team

	the Committee structure that any changes should be cost neutral. It would be advisable to maintain this principle.	
Staffing	We will deliver the review with our current staffing.	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Legal	<p>Under Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 the Council may arrange for the discharge of any of their functions by a committee, a sub-committee or an officer of the authority. Section 102 of the Act allows for the establishment of committees to fulfil functions under Section 101.</p> <p>Section 9B of the Local Government Act 2000 sets out the permitted forms of governance for local authorities in England namely executive arrangements, a committee structure or prescribed arrangements. In May 2015 Full Council resolved pursuant to Section 9K of the Act to change from an executive model of governance to a committee structure. Having resolved to change it's governance arrangements the Council is not permitted to pass another resolution that makes a change before the end of the period of 5 years beginning with the date on which the first resolution was made without holding a referendum.</p>	Interim Team Leader (Corporate Governance), MKLS
Privacy and Data	The review will be conducted in	Head of Policy,

Protection	accordance with DPA principles	Communications and Governance
Equalities	The report does not propose a change in service therefore will not require an equalities impact assessment	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Crime and Disorder	N/A	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Procurement	N/A	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance

8. REPORT APPENDICES

None

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Review of Governance Arrangements Report to Council, 10 December 2014

<http://aluminum:9080/documents/s39605/Review%20of%20Governance%20Arrangements.pdf>