

CABINET**Tuesday, 4th April, 2023**

Present:-

Councillor P Gilby (Chair)

| | | | |
|-------------|-----------|-------------|---------------|
| Councillors | Blank | Councillors | Ludlow |
| | D Collins | | Mannion-Brunt |
| | Holmes | | Sarvent |
| | J Innes | | Serjeant |
| | P Innes | | |

*Matters dealt with under the Delegation Scheme

**113 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' AND OFFICERS' INTERESTS
RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

No declarations of interest were received.

114 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

115 MINUTES**RESOLVED –**

That the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 14 March 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

116 FORWARD PLAN

The Forward Plan for the four month period May, 2023 to August, 2023 was reported for information.

***RESOLVED –**

That the Forward Plan be noted.

117 **CABINET, COMMITTEES AND OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2023/24**

The Service Director – Corporate presented a report to Cabinet recommending the implementation of changes to the council’s Cabinet, Committees and Overview and Scrutiny arrangements to reflect the outcome of the Local Government Boundary Review, and the recommended reduction in Council size from 48 members to 40, from May 2023.

A reduction in the number of Cabinet members was not recommended, however it was recommended that the role of Assistant Cabinet Member be deleted to reflect the change in Council size. It was also recommended that Cabinet portfolio responsibilities be reviewed ahead of the council’s Annual Business Meeting to reflect service developments since the last election and to equalise the distribution of duties.

It was also proposed to change the frequency of Cabinet meetings to a monthly cycle to be preceded by meetings of Joint Cabinet and Employment and General Committee, with additional Cabinet meetings to be scheduled as necessary in January and February to reflect the volume of business at that time of the financial year. The ability to convene additional Cabinet meetings due to urgency and business need would remain.

Full details of the council’s other Committees and recommended reductions in the numbers of members serving on the Committees were contained in the Service Director’s report.

It was recommended that the number of Overview and Scrutiny Committees be reduced from three to two. The overall number of overview and scrutiny places would decrease from 32, but there was an opportunity to increase the actual number of members engaged from 16 to 20 which would help to engage more members in the work of the council. A draft division of responsibilities between the two new Scrutiny Select Committees was attached at Appendix 1 of the Service Director’s report.

A review had also been undertaken of member appointments to outside bodies. Some of the bodies were no longer operating whilst questions had

been raised about the relevance of others in relation to the council's Council Plan priorities. An updated list of outside bodies and recommended member appointments to each was attached at Appendix 2 of the Service Director's report.

***RESOLVED –**

1. That following the borough election 2023, the Leader of the Council reviews Cabinet and Cabinet Portfolios. This should include the consideration of ceasing the Assistant Cabinet Member roles.
2. That the Leader of the Council appoints members to the Cabinet and advises Full Council of the appointments.
3. That a change in Cabinet frequency from every three weeks to monthly be recommended to Full Council.
4. That the following changes to Committee sizes be recommended to Full Council;
 - Planning Committee places be reduced from 15 to 12 (20% reduction)
 - Licensing Committee places be reduced from 14 to 12 (15% reduction), split between two groups as opposed to three
 - Appeals and Regulatory Committee places be reduced from 14 to 12 (15% reduction), split between two groups as opposed to three
5. That the adoption of a two Scrutiny Select Committee model and the division of responsibilities between the two Committees be recommended to Full Council.
6. That the revised list and allocation of places to outside bodies be recommended to Full Council.

118 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

The Internal Audit Consortium Manager presented a report to Cabinet reviewing the council's compliance against the Code of Corporate Governance for the financial year 2022/23 and recommending for approval to the council's Standards and Audit Committee the Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23.

It was noted as good practice for local authorities to regularly review their finances, operations and governance arrangements against the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's / Society of Local Authority Chief Executive's Code of Corporate Governance.

The Annual Governance Statement built on the annual review undertaken and should be an open and honest self-assessment of the council's performance across all of its activities concluding in a clear statement of the actions being taken or required to address areas of concern.

The annual review, which was attached at Appendix 1 to the officer's report, showed that there had been substantial compliance with the Code of Corporate Governance during the financial year 2022/23.

The review had however also surfaced areas of concern, which had been reflected upon and used to produce the council's Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23, which was attached at Appendix 2 of the officer's report.

Following final consideration at the council's Standards and Audit Committee the Annual Governance Statement should be signed by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive.

***RESOLVED –**

1. That the following documents be referred to the Standards and Audit Committee;
 - The Annual Review of the Local Code of Corporate Governance for 2022/23 (Appendix 1 of the officer's report)
 - The Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 (Appendix 2 of the officer's report)

2. That the Standards and Audit Committee;
 - Consider the documents in Appendices 1 and 2 of the officer's report
 - Approve the Annual Governance Statement subject to any amendments considered appropriate
 - Recommend that the Annual Governance Statement be signed by the Leader and Chief Executive

3. That a review of the Code of Corporate Governance be undertaken in 12 months' time.
4. That progress on the significant issues and future challenges identified in the Annual Governance Statement be monitored by the Corporate Leadership Team.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS

1. To enable Cabinet and the Standards and Audit Committee to monitor the council's compliance with the Code of Corporate Governance.
2. To comply with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.
3. To support the maintenance of sound risk management, governance, and control arrangements within the Council.