

## COUNCIL MEETING – 15<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2021

### INTERIM REVIEW OF THE COMMITTEE SYSTEM

#### RECOMMENDATION

**That the Committee Review Report as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, and the additional changes to the constitution reported at the meeting, be recommended to full Council.**

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Extract from the Minutes of the Corporate Policy Committee meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2021

#### 35 INTERIM REVIEW OF THE COMMITTEE SYSTEM

The Committee considered a Committee Review report to full Council.

The report set out the current operational data available from two rounds of the committee system, encapsulated feedback from service areas, set out further recommendations and identified the future project delivery methodology that had been adopted. The report included the current constitutional updates recommended by the Constitution Working Group. A consolidated updated text of the constitution had been provided.

The Director of Governance and Compliance reported a number of additional required changes to the constitution which had been identified since the report was written. Most of these were of a minor or technical nature to correct inaccuracies and provide clarification. However, the Constitution Working Group had also proposed that the following amendment be made to the definition of a Group Lead Member in the Glossary at Chapter 6 of the constitution:

*Page 310 Group Lead Member - A Group Lead Member is a position that is held by members of each of the political groups on the Council in relation to each Committee. ~~Group Lead Members will be expected to work with the Committee Chair to facilitate the efficient and timely conduct of the committee business, and to inform, discuss and where appropriate agree with the Chair an approach to contentious issues which support the principles of openness, timely, efficient decision making which meets the needs of the residents of Cheshire East.~~*

Additional work was to be undertaken by the Constitution Working Group in relation to the following matters:

- Question time at Council
- Rules of debate
- Notice of Motion

- Terms of Reference of the Finance Sub-Committee/ Corporate Policy Committee (ASDVs)
- Provisions on public speaking
- Reporting of sub-committee minutes to parent committees

In response to the report, the following comments were made by various members of the Committee:

- The definition of a Group Lead Member needed more detail to define the role adequately.
- The report to Council should identify clearly any additional costs arising from the implementation of the new committee system.
- The scheme of delegation should be amended to provide that where an officer had delegated authority to take a decision in consultation with the chair and vice-chair of a committee, this should also include consultation with the lead opposition members. The Director of Governance and Compliance undertook to raise the matter with the Constitution Working Group.
- Public questions should relate to any matter within a committee's terms of reference and not just to items on the agenda.
- There was currently little opportunity for members to make political comments and this needed to be debated at full Council.
- A member briefing session was scheduled for 12<sup>th</sup> November and the Chair advised that he, as Leader of the Council, and the Deputy Leader were considering the possibility of a separate question and answer session for members and members of the public.

At the invitation of the Chair, Councillor R Bailey spoke on this matter as a visiting member.

## **RESOLVED**

That the Committee Review Report as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, and the additional changes to the constitution reported at the meeting, be recommended to full Council.