FINAL REPORT OF THE DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION GROUP

ALTERNATIVE GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS: HYBRID MODEL

1.   Purpose

1.1   This report sets out the recommendations of the Design and Implementation Working Group on the design proposals for a hybrid model of governance arrangements suitable for Peterborough. It details their proposals for pre-scrutiny of executive decisions and for a proposed revised scrutiny structure suitable for a hybrid model.

2.   Background

2.1   In July 2015 the Council agreed to adopt an alternative form of governance to take effect from the Annual Council meeting in 2016. The preferred model was a hybrid model of executive decision making with a greater involvement of pre-scrutiny review (a Peterborough model).[1] It set up a cross party working group to design the model, known as the Design and Implementation Working Group. Its terms of reference is attached (Appendix 1(a)).

2.2   The membership of the working group was as follows:

Cllr Thulbourn (Labour) - Chairman
Cllr Hiller (Conservative)
Cllr Lane (Independent/Werrington First)
Cllr North (Conservative)
Cllr Aitken (Conservative)
Cllr Sandford (Liberal Democrats)
Cllr Faustino (Conservative)
Cllr Whitby (UKIP)
Cllr Holdich (Conservative)
Cllr Sharp (Independent/Peterborough Independent Forum)

2.3   Since July, the Working Group has met monthly to consider:

(a)   The principles for designing a hybrid model.

(b)   The key elements of the Wandsworth model and how it could be adapted to provide a personalised set of governance arrangements to suit Peterborough City Council.

(c)   A number of approaches for designing suitable proposals for Peterborough; including deciding which decisions should go through the pre decision scrutiny process, whether there should be a reference up process (in addition to call in) and the form it should take.

(d)   Options for consulting on the budget under a hybrid model, and

(e)   The constitutional, process and timetabling implications of the new arrangements.

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[1] A 'hybrid' model of governance is where the executive (Cabinet and Leader) is retained but the scrutiny function alters its focus to become an advisory body to the executive in addition to providing its post scrutiny functions.

2.4   The Working Group also arranged to hold two workshops for all scrutiny members guided by a representative of the Centre for Public Scrutiny:

(a)   The first workshop in October was to seek scrutiny member's views on key elements of the hybrid model, the current scrutiny arrangements and the improvements they would like to see. The workshop fed back their views on the future role of scrutiny and the design principles for a new scrutiny structure.

(b)   The second workshop was held on 7 December to consult on a proposed structure and to begin to discuss how members might programme their work to focus on pre-scrutiny and adding value.

Recommendations

3.   Principles

3.1   The Working Group's first task was to discuss and agree principles to inform the design of a new system suitable for Peterborough. They agreed the following principles:

(a)   An efficient, effective and timely decision making structure, which is open, transparent, accountable, and inclusive.

(b)   A system where
1) The executive would value constructive and sensible input from Scrutiny Committees to improve decisions taken.
2) Non-executive members feel that they are involved and can influence executive decisions before they are made and there is a mechanism to identify which decisions they wish to influence.
3) Scrutiny acts as a "critical friend".
4) Scrutiny Committee Chairmen and Cabinet Members work in partnership.

(c)   Scrutiny Committees should make recommendations to Cabinet/Cabinet Members having regard to officer recommendations. If the Scrutiny Committee did not agree with the officer recommendations, they provide reasons.

(d)   Cabinet should take decisions on the advice of scrutiny. The executive would be expected to agree with scrutiny's recommendations but they should still be able to take an alternative decision. In such circumstances there would have to be strong reasons for doing so and the relevant Scrutiny Committee would be informed of those reasons.

(e)   There would need to be a process to deal with urgent decisions.

4.   Role of Scrutiny in Peterborough

4.1   The Working Group also consulted all scrutiny members at two scrutiny workshops on the future role of scrutiny and their views on the principles for designing new scrutiny arrangements.

4.2   Feedback from the scrutiny workshops indicated there was too much emphasis on "review and scrutiny". Scrutiny members wanted to be engaged early in the process before

decisions were made so that they could make a positive contribution.   They considered that meaningful scrutiny should emerge from the following principles:

(a)   Councillors should be able to engage early in decision making and provide a strong, objective, and distinct voice.

(b)   There should be open and transparent decision-making between scrutiny and the executive, together with improved communication between them.

(c)   Scrutiny should focus on adding value: it ought to decide key areas to consider rather than being a means to review all matters.

(d)   The hybrid model should provide a mechanism to identify key issues for pre-decision scrutiny both at the policy development stage and prior to executive decision making and include a process for resolving differences.

(e)   Any Scrutiny arrangements should enable members to build sufficient knowledge and expertise in related functions and involve multiple members in the scrutiny process.

4.3   The above principles were used to design the proposed hybrid model and scrutiny arrangements. Therefore, in addition to its review and scrutiny function, the Working Group proposed the following definition be added to the role of scrutiny.

DIG 1 Recommendation

The following definition be added to the role of scrutiny:

In addition to its role in holding the executive and partners to account, the role of scrutiny is to provide a positive input into decision-making at an early stage; both at the policy development stage and prior to decision making. It has a strong, objective and distinct voice and is a mechanism for bringing a wide range of voices, views, ideas and expertise. As members of an elected body, it will ensure it adds value and transparency at all times.

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5.   Executive Decisions subject to Pre-decision Scrutiny

5.1   The Working Group considered whether all executive decisions should be scrutinised before executive decisions were made as in Wandsworth. The Working Group agreed that this model would not work for Peterborough; if all executive decisions were pre-scrutinised, Scrutiny Committees would be overloaded, would involve them in unnecessary detail and result in delays in executive decision making. Unlike Wandsworth, they would prefer not to see further delegation of executive decisions or increased use of urgency powers by officers. Instead, Members would like to be more selective about the decisions that come to scrutiny before the decision is made. They recommend that the relevant Chairman of a scrutiny committee in consultation with the Cabinet Member should decide which decisions should be subject to pre-scrutiny.

5.2   At the time of publication of the forward plan (twice a month), the Chairman and Cabinet Member would review the plan to identify which decisions should come under scrutiny before the executive decision is made, those that do not require pre-scrutiny or to identify

particularly contentious or difficult decisions which need early scrutiny. It would be for the Chairman to decide how they involved other members of the committee.

5.3 Members also favoured the use of informal networks such as the Group Leaders' meetings to resolve issues. There was no proposed changes to the Group Representative meetings under the Member/Officer Protocols in Part 5, Section 3 of the Constitution. They recommended that the Group Representative meetings should still continue to meet at various points in the year to enable the Scrutiny Chairman to consult with the Committee or Group Representatives as set out in the Member/Officer Protocol.

DIG 2 Recommendation

(a) The relevant Chairman of a Scrutiny Committee in consultation with a Cabinet Member should decide which decisions should be subject to pre-scrutiny at a meeting at which Officers can provide advice and guidance.

(b) All planned executive decisions should be included in the forward plan for 28 days, where possible.

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6. Implications for Scrutiny Work Programme

6.1 The Working Group noted the scrutiny workshop's views that Members wanted to manage their work programme differently. They wanted to provide a positive input into decision-making at an early stage; both at the policy development stage and prior to decision making. In order to undertake pre decision scrutiny and to develop ideas and generate policy, this work would need to take priority over post decision scrutiny which they saw as lacking influence and negative. The workshop agreed they would use prioritisation to manage their workload:

(a) Any matters relating to pre-decision scrutiny would need to take priority.

(b) Being selective in choosing items for scrutiny for example, choosing two or three themes a year to inform their work programming rather than considering a wide range of issues.

(c) The agenda and programme should be member led.

(d) Once the work programme is set, they should avoid adding other items throughout the year unless absolutely necessary.

(e) Rather than monitoring a myriad of performance indicators for every function, scrutiny should receive performance indicators on key areas of importance and follow a dashboard/ traffic light system; green for on target; red for target not achieved etc.

(f) Eliminating from the agenda "items for information" which should be circulated outside of the committee.

6.2   The Working Group noted that the Scrutiny Workshop had requested more assistance in deciding their work programme, in identifying priorities and their information needs and resources so that they were equipped to add value in a much more focused way. This would be progressed as part of the member induction programme after the elections and as part of the scrutiny work planning at their first meetings after the Annual Meeting. It would be a key role of the Chairman to lead this work.

7.   Scrutiny Structure and Size

Structure

7.1   Having consulted Scrutiny Members, the Working Group agreed the current scrutiny structure was not fit for purpose.

7.2   It recognised the current scrutiny structure would not work under a hybrid model for a number of reasons; any future structures needed to be aligned with Cabinet and Director portfolios to ensure the correct matters were referred to scrutiny committees. Decision making needed to be timely and avoid Cabinet Members and Directors attending numerous scrutiny meetings prior to Cabinet. It specifically needed to be designed to fit with a hybrid model.

7.3   The Design and Implementation Group proposed the establishment of the following three committees:

(a)   Children and Education Scrutiny Committee
(b)   Adults, Communities and Health Scrutiny Committee
(c)   Growth, Environment & Resources Scrutiny Committee

7.4   The proposed structure addressed the following:

1) The terms of reference of each committee was evenly balanced in terms of its size and area of responsibilities.

2) The structure is aligned to Cabinet Member roles, to Directors' portfolios to build the officer support role for scrutiny and to the Council's work which falls into two main categories: the family, and the wider environment (including economic development and resources). In other words people and place. This would assist with ensuring the correct matters were added to the scrutiny agendas.

3) As now, there needed to be one committee with overall responsibility for the budget. This would be the Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee. There are separate arrangements for the budget process set out in a flowchart at Appendix 1(b) to the report.

4) Specific statutory responsibilities of scrutiny have been taken into account:

(a) The Adults, Health & Community Scrutiny would undertake scrutiny:

1)   the Council's statutory functions under section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 relating to the scrutiny of crime and disorder matters;

2) the Council's statutory functions under section 244 of the National Health Service Act 2006 to review and scrutinise matters relating to the Health Service within the Council's area and to make reports and recommendations to local NHS bodies or providers.

These committees should continue to undertake their statutory responsibilities as they do at present.

(b) The Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee would undertake the Council's statutory duty to review and scrutinise flood risk management functions which may affect the local authority's area under section 21F of the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended by the Flood and Water Management Act 2010).

(c) The Children & Education Scrutiny Committee would include the statutory requirement to have church and parent governor representatives on the Scrutiny Committee considering matters related to education.

5) There is no separate rural committee. Councillors from rural areas were represented on all committees so rural as well as urban matters were represented. If the interests of rural areas were particularly important this could be dealt with by other means, such as having a heading in the report template entitled "Rural Implications", or using Parish Council Liaison Committees to consult on rural issues etc. Scrutiny Members on committees could be designated specialist roles, such as rural spokesperson.

6) The overriding priority was to enhance the ability to add value at the appropriate stage in decision making. Cabinet meets 10 times a year and under the current structure, four of the five Scrutiny Committees would need to meet the week before Cabinet. This would substantially increase the number of meetings and levels of bureaucracy which does not align with the principles for the new model. Under a hybrid model, the Design and Implementation Group decided Cabinet Members and Directors should not be shadowing more than one committee, although, some overlap could not be avoided. It should also avoid having to attend numerous scrutiny meetings leading up to Cabinet meetings. This suggested that a maximum of three committees was the optimum number.

7) Fewer committees did not mean less involvement of a wider range of councillors as the committees could be quite large; where necessary committees could make use of task and finish groups to consider matters in more detail when feeding into policy development, as now. Where it was proposed that informal discussions take place, it would be important that the nature and products of those discussions were fed back through a formal, public forum in the interests of transparency.

8) Cross cutting issues should be dealt with by making provision in reports to highlight these, or where necessary the committees might set up cross cutting task and finish groups, or meet jointly to provide a single set of recommendations.

7.5 The second scrutiny workshop was concerned that three committees might be insufficient in view of the workload of the current committees and discussed splitting the Adults and Health, or Growth and Resources Committees. It was emphasised that workload could be managed through work programming and prioritisation. In accepting the proposal for three

Scrutiny Committees, the workshop requested that the structure be reviewed a year after implementation.

Size of Scrutiny Committees

7.6   The Working Group also considered the future size of Scrutiny Committees. The existing committees were between 7 and 10 members (total 38 members). CfPS research demonstrated that committee size, in itself, had no direct bearing on the effectiveness of scrutiny work.

7.7   The Group recognised that a balance needed to be struck between having sufficient Members for a broad range of views but not too large for effective debate and efficient decision making. The Design and Implementation Group recommended that each committee had 10 members. They considered that a committee of larger than 10 would be too large, taking into account co-opted members.

7.8   As now, there would be statutory education co-opted members on the Children and Education Scrutiny Committee with voting and call-in rights on education matters only. In addition, committees may co-opt up to four non-voting members or partners on to their committees.

7.9   The Working Group also noted that the current constitution provided for a non-voting representative of other faiths without voting rights to sit on any scrutiny committee considering educational issues. This position had never been filled despite attempts to do so. It also provided for any committee acting as the Crime and Disorder Committee to include a representative of Cambridgeshire and a Peterborough Fire Authority with full voting rights. However, the Fire Authority had never taken up the position. As these positions had not been filled and there was provision to appoint four non-voting co-opted members under the new arrangements, they recommended these positions be removed.

DIG 3 Recommendation

(a) That three Scrutiny Committees be stablished.

  (i)   Children and Education Scrutiny Committee
  (ii)   Adults, Communities and Health Scrutiny Committee
  (iii) Growth, Environment & Resources Scrutiny Committee

(b) Each committee consists of 10 members together with any co-opted members.

(c) That a review be undertaken prior to May 2017 to ensure that the proposed structure is effective.

(d) For the reasons set out in 7.9, and as all scrutiny committees may co-op up to four voting members, the following co-opted member positions be removed from the constitution:

  (i)   A representative of Cambridgeshire and a Peterborough Fire Authority on any Scrutiny Committee acting as the Crime and Disorder Committee with full voting rights on these matters only.
  (ii)   A representative of other faiths without voting rights on any committee considering educational issues.

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8. Chairman of Scrutiny Committees

Charter on Role of Chairman:

8.1 The Working Group recognised that the Chairman would have a much stronger role in managing the agenda, particularly in working with the relevant Cabinet Member on agreeing items for pre-decision scrutiny and ensuring that the Committee had a manageable work programme. They recommended that there should be a Chairman's charter outlining their rights and responsibilities under the new hybrid model.   From previous discussions, Members saw the role as:

(a) Providing leadership to the Committee and managing the business through setting its agenda and work programmes

(b) Managing the agenda in consultation with committee members to ensure the work of the Committee is member led, and is in accordance with member priorities

(c) Ensuring that its work primarily focused on pre-decision scrutiny, and adding value

(d) Leading on the development of the work programme to ensure it is focused

(e) Working with the relevant Cabinet Members to review the forward plan to identify key issues for pre-decision scrutiny both at the policy development stage or prior to decision making liaising with members of the committee and taking the views of Group Representatives as necessary

(f) When making recommendations to the executive, ensure there is consensus that members take account of officer advice and where the Committee do not agree with the officer or Cabinet Member recommendations, clear reasons are given

(g) Ensuring the Committees' input to executive decision making is efficient and effective

(h) To represent the Committee at Cabinet meetings

(i) To foster relationships founded on mutual respect and open communications between Directors, the Executive and Scrutiny members.

Appointment of Chairman of a Scrutiny Committee

8.2. There had been discussion at the Scrutiny Workshop about whether the Chairman should come from an opposition group. The Design and Implementation Working Group also discussed whether the Council should appoint the Chairman of a scrutiny committee, whether it should be the Committee itself following the Annual meeting and whether the constitution should state that the Chairman should come from an opposition group.

Members were split and no firm decision was agreed. The various views were:

(a) Some Members felt that a further separation between the majority group and scrutiny was necessary to ensure scrutiny was seen as strong. They noted that perception

was important, and having a chairman who was a member of the majority group might lead to questions about the strength of scrutiny.

(b)   Others argued that there should not be a presumption that the Chairman should come from any particular group, but rather the best person should be chosen for the job and this could be undertaken by the Committee, rather than by nominations from political groups at the Council meeting. A committee would not want to be put in the position of appointing a member with no experience of chairing or who had just been appointed to the Council just because that person was from a minority group. The Chairman might be a member of the Administration but that did not mean opposition groups would not have their view heard.

DIG 4 Recommendation

i.   That the Chairman of Scrutiny Committees should have a charter to set out the rights and responsibilities of the Chairman

ii.   Having considered the arguments for and against, the Working Group made no recommendations regarding the appointment of the Chairman of Scrutiny Committees.

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9.   Process, Timetable and Frequency of Meetings

9.1   Whilst not all decisions would be pre-scrutinised, in order to carry out the form of pre-decision scrutiny that members prefer, scrutiny committee meetings would need to be aligned to Cabinet to ensure there was no delay in decision making.

9.2   Under the Wandsworth model, five scrutiny committees met 4 times a year, and Cabinet met (8 meetings) in between scrutiny meetings to ratify recommendations of scrutiny. Special meetings were arranged as necessary.   In Wandsworth it was the delegation and urgency elements which made the system logistically workable. As stated above, unlike Wandsworth, the Working Group would prefer not to see further delegation or increased use of urgency powers.

9.3   Currently, Cabinet had 10 meetings a year, including two in February which tended to be budget focused, and each of the five Scrutiny Committees met six times a year (30 scrutiny meetings a year.)   In future, each Scrutiny Committee would need to meet prior to Cabinet, which would increase the number of times the Committees should meet (30 meetings a year i.e. the same number as at present.)

9.4   The Working Group proposed that each committee met eight times a year to shadow Cabinet[2] with a caveat that meetings may be cancelled if there were no matters to discuss. Any identified individual cabinet member decisions would need to be scheduled in around the scrutiny calendar. The agenda would require careful forward planning, and the early identification of those decisions identified as "key" where scrutiny's input would be of value.

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[2] On average two of the ten meetings discuss the budget for which there will be a separate process

9.5 In order to undertake pre decision scrutiny and to ensure timely decision making, the Group agreed that the most efficient option would be to have one report with officer recommendations which would go jointly to scrutiny and to Cabinet. Therefore the Cabinet agenda could be printed in 2 parts, those reports that are subject to pre decision scrutiny will be published at the same time as the agenda for scrutiny meetings (approximately 9-12 clear working days before the Cabinet meeting instead of 5 clear working days before the meeting).

9.6 In order to undertake pre decision scrutiny and to ensure timely decision making, meetings would need to be aligned to Cabinet meetings. For example, if Cabinet meets on a Monday, Scrutiny Committees would meet the week before i.e. Monday to Wednesday before the Monday Cabinet meeting. Following each meeting of scrutiny, a schedule would be published stating whether the Committee agreed with the officer recommendation and details of any specific amendments (the Wandsworth model). These would be published as a supplementary item to the Cabinet report. The timetable below is for illustrative purposes only

Timetable (illustrative only)

Week No	Mon	Tues	**Wed**	**Thurs**	**Friday**
1			Forward Plan Published (At least 28 clear days of the Cabinet meeting or Cabinet Member Decisions		
2		Chairman of Scrutiny & relevant Cabinet Members meet to discuss items for pre-scrutiny with officers present			
3			Forward Plan		
4					Cabinet agenda (part 1) & CMDNs published & included on the agenda of relevant Scrutiny Committee
5					Statutory deadline for publication of Cabinet agenda (part 2)
6	Scrutiny Committee meeting	Scrutiny Committee meeting	Scrutiny Committee meeting		
7	Cabinet				

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DIG 5 Recommendation

That each Scrutiny Committee meets eight times a year prior to shadow Cabinet with a caveat that meetings may be cancelled if there were no matters to discuss

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10.   Cabinet Member Decisions, Minority Reporting, and other safeguards

10.1   The Group discussed having safeguard mechanisms in certain circumstances:

10.2   **Cabinet Member Decisions (CMDN):** The Working Group considered that CMDNs were beneficial to ensure efficient decisions making. However, they would like to see certain safeguards. If the Cabinet Member were inclined to take a decision that went against the recommendation of the Scrutiny Committee, then the CMDN should automatically be referred to Cabinet and be taken in the public arena. The Leader of the Council who had responsibility for executive decisions, confirmed he had no objection to this proposal.

10.3   **Cabinet Decisions:** It was recognised that reports from Officers were based on professional judgement.   If the Scrutiny Committee did not agree with officer recommendations, then they needed to give reasons for that decision. If Cabinet did not agree with Scrutiny Committee recommendations, then Members of the Council had the ability to call in decisions under the existing call in arrangements

10.4   **Minority Reports:** Where a Scrutiny Committee makes recommendations which other members do not agree, opposing members on the committee should have an opportunity to submit a minority report to Cabinet. The Working Group recommended that the minority report including the alternative recommendations would be submitted to Cabinet at the same time as they receive the Scrutiny Committee's recommendation.

10.5   For individual Member Decisions, the Cabinet Member would refer the recommendation and minority report to Cabinet, rather than take the decision themselves.

10.6   The Group considered the above proposals would ensure there was public debate at Cabinet before the decision was made and was preferable to the Wandsworth model where Members may refer the recommendations to Council should an alternative recommendation be deemed more appropriate. The Wandsworth model could considerably delay decision making and it did not give the opportunity for Cabinet to consider the Scrutiny Committee's recommendations and any minority report before it made its decision. In addition, the Council met infrequently and the matter would have to be reported back to Cabinet after the Council meeting as Council cannot overturn executive decisions. Under the proposed model, Cabinet would consider both sets of recommendations, and make their decision. If members were not satisfied after that, they could call in the decision. Disputes could also be discussed informally at Group Leaders meetings.

10.7   **Speaking rights at Cabinet meetings:** The Working Group was concerned that scrutiny members, particularly the Chair, would need specific rights to speak at Cabinet. The Leader agreed to review the Executive Procedure Rules to accommodate this.

10.8   **Amendments to Call in:** The Working Group noted that under the existing call in arrangements set out in Part 4 Section 8 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules, the relevant

Scrutiny Committee discusses any requests for call-in and may refer it back to the decision making body for reconsideration.

10.9   The Working Party discussed whether it was appropriate for a scrutiny committee to consider a call in where it had been involved in the original decision and had made recommendations to the Cabinet. They recommended that the Scrutiny Procedure Rules should be amended to state that any request to call-in a decision cannot be considered by the Scrutiny Committee that made the original recommendations to Cabinet. The call in must be considered by another Scrutiny Committee to provide independence.

10.10   **Urgency:** Current standing orders provide for urgent decisions. The Working Group considered whether any processes should be put in place where there was no time to go through the "pre-scrutiny decision" process. They considered an informal process was more appropriate, and recommended that the Cabinet Member and Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee should agree informally to exemptions to pre-scrutiny of decisions for reasons of urgency as part of their review of the forward plan or where a decision becomes urgent as it goes through the process.

10.11   They also recommended that where an individual cabinet member decision (CMDN) had been identified for pre-scrutiny but could not be scheduled for a Scrutiny Committee, the Cabinet Member could take the decision in consultation with the Chairman. The decision would be subject to the existing call in procedure.

DIG 6 Recommendation

That the Constitution, Executive and Scrutiny Procedure Rules be amended to include the safeguards in paragraph 10.1. to 10.11 above.

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11.   Budget Process

11.1   The Working Group considered options for the budget process under a hybrid model. A summary of the proposed arrangements is set out in Appendix 1 b. The Budget & Policy Framework rules in the Constitution would need to be amended and would be reported to a future Council meeting as part of the necessary constitutional changes that are required, once Council had agreed the proposed hybrid model.

ALTERNATIVE GOVERNANCE: DESIGN & IMPLEMENTATION GROUP
TERMS OF REFERENCE

Objective

A cross party working group of members to design and implement the structure of the proposed governance of the Council. The working group will report to Council in December 2015 with detailed proposals for implementation of the new proposals for the civic year 2016/17.

The objective of the working group is to provide a personalised set of governance arrangements for Peterborough City Council based upon a hybrid model of executive decision making with a greater involvement of pre-scrutiny decision making.

Purpose

To design and plan the implementation the new governance arrangements to include:
- The role of Cabinet
- Individual Cabinet Member decision making
- Executive decisions by officers
- Forward Plan and the corporate work programme
- Budget process
- Urgent decisions
- The new role of Scrutiny Committees
- The call-in process
- Senior officer engagement and the role of CMT
- Consultation processes
- Changes to the constitution
- Alteration of the civic calendar
- Resourcing the changes

Consultation and communication

To undertake consultations with senior officers, partner organisations, businesses and other stakeholders on the proposed future governance arrangements

To report into Group Leaders meetings and CMT on a monthly basis regarding proposals being considered

To report back to Council by December 2015 outlining the detailed proposals for the new governance system

Constitution & powers

The working group shall comprise up to ten members. The working group shall be a cross party working group.

Group Leaders will attend/nominate to the Working Group. Substitution arrangements will apply.

Working Group meetings will be held monthly commencing in July. Meetings may be held more frequently as the Group sees fit.

The Working Group is an informal meeting of members to which the Access to Information rules shall not apply
The Working Group shall appoint a Chairman and Vice-Chairman at its first meeting

The quorum of the Working Group shall be 3 members

Meetings of the Working Group will be supported and administered by a senior officer within the Governance team and at least one other senior officer to represent the service delivery function, a research officer and administrative support. Briefing papers will be issued in advance of the meeting.

ALTERNATIVE GOVERNANCE: DESIGN & IMPLEMENTATION GROUP
BUDGET PROCESS

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1. Introduction and background

As part of the review of political management arrangements, it is necessary to consider how the budget setting process within the council will operate. The Design and Implementation Group meeting on 26th October considered an outline of the process that operates within Wandsworth.

The emerging view from that discussion was that the Wandsworth model was not suitable for Peterborough, but rather that elements of that process could be combined with the elements of the current PCC process to develop a new Peterborough model.

Options were presented and discussed at the Design and Implementation Group meeting on 25th November.

2. Proposed PCC process

Following the discussion and feedback from Design and Implementation Group on 25th November, a proposed process was agreed. A flowchart of the proposed process can be seen in the appendix.

Essentially the process is similar to the process that has been followed in recent years, but has a number of key features:

- Formalises the two phase budget process, enabling scrutiny review of savings proposals earlier than if a single phase process after the financial settlement was followed

- The Group felt that the Budget Working Group has a helpful role and should be retained

- Scrutiny Committees would be consulted on Cabinet budget proposals at each phase

- Alongside this, the Committees have the ability to develop their own proposals as part of themes they are reviewing

- One Scrutiny Committee (Growth, Environment & Resources Scrutiny Committee) will have overall oversight of the Budget and finance issues (and corporate issues such as Council Tax and the Treasury Management Strategy); The Scrutiny Committee with responsibility for Budget did not need to sit 'above' all other Scrutiny Committees

- However following this approach may mean proposals scrutinised on an individual basis, when a collective approach may more appropriate. A joint budget scrutiny meeting could be called for if it was felt necessary. This could be a decision left to the Chairman of each Committee;

APPENDIX – PROPOSED BUDGET PROCESS

Note – will be repeated for each of the two phases

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