

AUDIT COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM No. 6
27 MARCH 2017	PUBLIC REPORT

Report of:	Director of Governance	
Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Councillor Seaton, Cabinet Member for Resources	
Contact Officer(s):	Pippa Turvey, Democratic and Constitutional Services Manager	Tel. 452460

CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH CITY COUNCIL COMBINED AUTHORITY QUESTIONING PROCESS

R E C O M M E N D A T I O N S	
FROM: The Member Officer Working Group	Deadline date: N/A
<p>It is recommended that the Audit Committee recommend to Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approval of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough City Council Combined Authority Questioning Process Protocol (Appendix 1) for inclusion within the Council's Constitution; and 2. Approval of the amendment to Council Standing Orders (Appendix 2) to allow for a report to be received by Council on the actions and decisions of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, and to allow Members the opportunity to submit questions on notice to the Combined Authority Council representatives. 	

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report is submitted to the Audit Committee following the resolution of Council on 17 November 2016 to:
- (i) agree in principle, for a protocol requiring the Council Leader and the representative on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to report to each meeting of Council setting out the activities and decisions related to their respective roles within the Combined Authority; and
 - (ii) to request that the Member Officer Working Group develop the protocol through the Audit Committee with a view to inclusion of the protocol in the Council's constitution.

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is for the Audit Committee to consider the proposed arrangements to require the Council's representatives to the Combined Authority and Overview and Scrutiny Committee to provide a briefing report to each meeting of Full Council, setting out the activities and any decisions of the Combined Authority, and to allow Councillors the opportunity to submit questions on notice to the Combined Authority Council representatives.
- 2.2 This report is for the Audit Committee to consider under its Terms of Reference No. 2.2.1.10: *To maintain an overview of the Council's constitution with the exception of those matters under the remit of the Executive or a regulatory committee.*

3. **TIMESCALES**

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	NO	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	N/A
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4. **BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES**

- 4.1 On 17 November 2016 the Council considered and consented to the establishment of a Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority. At this time it was also agreed that an appropriate mechanism be put in place to allow for the Council's representatives on the Combined Authority and the Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee to report back to Council.
- 4.2 The current representative on the Combined Authority is Councillor Holdich and Councillors Over and Jamil are the current representatives on the Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee, appointed on 17 November 2016 and 25 January 2017 respectively.
- 4.3 In accordance with the November 2016 resolution of Council, the Member Officer Working Group considered how this mechanism could work in practice at its meeting on 1 February 2017.
- 4.4 Attached at Appendix 1 is a draft protocol that outlines the process for Combined Authority representatives to be able to submit reports to Council on recent decisions and other related matters. It also outlines the ability for all Councillors to be able to submit questions on notice to the Councillors representatives on recent decisions and other related matters.
- 4.5 The process outlined in the protocol will require changes to be made to Councils' Standing Orders. Accordingly, the Councils' Standing Orders have been amended and are attached at Appendix 2, underlining the appropriate changes.
- 4.6 These amendments provide for a report from the Combined Authority representatives. In practice this would be presented in a similar format to the 'Executive Decisions Since the Previous Meeting' report that is already provided to Council. It is proposed that the Mayor will, at a Council meeting, go through the report providing Councillors with the opportunity to ask questions.

5. **CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 The proposals as set out in this report were considered by the Member Officer Working Group at its meeting on the 1 February 2017. At this meeting additional suggestions to the protocol were made and have been incorporated into the protocol as presented to the Committee.
- 5.2 Group Leaders were briefed on the proposals at their meeting on 13 March 2017. During the discussion, it was suggested that the Audit Committee may wish to consider introducing a separate time limit for Questions on Notice from Combined Authority representatives. The current time limit for Questions on Notice as whole is 30 minutes.

6. **ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT**

- 6.1 It is anticipated that the introduction of this protocol will ensure effective feedback from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority to Peterborough City Council and greater transparency of Combined Authority actions and decisions in relation to their impact on Peterborough City Council.

7. **REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION**

- 7.1 The recommendations have been proposed in order to allow for an effective questioning process to Peterborough City Council on the actions and decisions of the Combined Authority and the Combined Authority Scrutiny Committee.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

To Maintain the Status Quo

- 8.1 This option is not recommended as this would not allow for an adequate questioning process from the Combined Authority representatives to Peterborough City Council, in a public forum.

To Allow for Questions Without Notice Only

- 8.2 This option was considered by the Member Officer Working Group, but was ultimately dismissed. It was felt that the provision of Questions on Notice to the Combined Authority representatives would allow for greater involvement from Councillors and would allow for questions to be submitted that were not directly related to recent decisions.

9. IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

- 9.1 There are no financial implications arising from this decision.

Legal Implications

- 9.2 There are no legal implications arising from this decision.

Equalities Implications

- 9.3 There are no equalities implications arising from this decision.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

- 10.1 Peterborough City Council Extraordinary Meeting 17 November 2016 - Minutes

- 10.2 Peterborough City Council Meeting 25 January 2017 - Minutes

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix 1 – Draft Cambridgeshire and Peterborough City Council Combined Authority Reporting Process Protocol

- 11.2 Appendix 2 – Peterborough City Council Constitution Part 4, Section 1 – Council Standing Orders (as amended)

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