

CONSTITUTION AND ETHICS COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM No. 5
17 JULY 2023	PUBLIC REPORT

Report of:	Rochelle Tapping, Director of Law and Governance	
Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Councillor Coles, Cabinet Member for Legal, Finance and Corporate Services	
Contact Officer(s):	Rochelle Tapping, Director of Law and Governance Charlotte Cameron, Senior Democratic Services Officer	Tel.07973 945459 01733 384628

PETERBOROUGH CITY COUNCIL: CENTRE FOR GOVERNANCE AND SCRUTINY GOVERNANCE (CfGS) REVIEW UPDATE

RECOMMENDATIONS	
FROM: Director of Law and Governance	Deadline date: N/A
It is recommended that the Constitution and Ethics Committee:	
1. Review the progress of the review and make comments as necessary.	

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

1.1 This report is submitted to the Constitution and Ethics Committee following a request from Members at the Governance Review Working Group meeting that any work being carried out by the CfGS be reported into the committee.

The Director of Law and Governance has also requested that the committee is kept up to date with progress of the review.

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an update on the progress of the CfGS Governance Review and the proposed timeline of delivery.

2.2 This report is for the Constitution and Ethics Committee to consider under its Terms of Reference No. 2.7.2.1

Authority to oversee the operation of the Council's Constitution and authority to make recommendations to Full Council as to amendments and improvements to the Council's Constitution (including the codes and protocols) subject to the receipt and consideration of a report prepared by the Monitoring Officer, with the exception of those matters under the remit of the Executive.

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 Peterborough City Council (PCC) are undertaking a Governance Review with external support from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS). The team at CfGS supporting this work are;

- Ed Hammond, as the project sponsor responsible for quality assurance.
- Helen Mitchell, as the project lead and day-to-day contact.
- Ian Parry, as a subject matter expert on governance and finance.
- Cath Buckley, as a subject matter expert on governance and scrutiny.
- Mel Stevens, Chief Executive and as subject matter expert on governance.

In respect of PCC, day-to-day support will be provided by Charlotte Cameron, Senior Democratic Services Officer in consultation with Rochelle Tapping, Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer.

The initial stage of the review has begun with colleagues in Democratic Services arranging interviews with Members and Officers. The list of those invited can be found below;

Cllr Wayne Fitzgerald	Leader of the Council
Cllr Dennis Jones	Labour Group Leader
Cllr Christian Hogg	Liberal Democrats Group Leader
Cllr Chris Harper	Peterborough First Group Leader
Cllr Nicola Day	Green Group Leader
Cllr Alison Jones	Employment Committee Chair
Cllr Muhammed Haseeb	Audit Committee Vice-Chair
Cllr Shabina Qayyum	Adults and Health Scrutiny Committee Chair
Cllr Asif Shaheed	Children and Education Scrutiny Committee Chair
Cllr Nicola Day	Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee Chair
Cllr Amjad Iqbal	Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee Chair
Cllr Nick Sandford	Mayor of Peterborough
Matt Gladstone	Chief Executive
Rochelle Tapping	Director of Law and Governance, Monitoring Officer
Rachel Edwards	Head of Constitutional Services
Pippa Turvey, Dan Kalley, Jane Webb, Ramin Shams, Karen Dunleavy and Charlotte Cameron	Democratic Services Team
Ray Hooke	Head of Corporate Delivery Unit
Cecilie Booth	Executive Director Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer
Emma Riding	Service Director- Financial Management & Deputy S151 Officer
Jill Evans	Service Director - Corporate Finance & Deputy S151 Officer
Steve Crabtree	Chief Internal Auditor

The Constitution and Ethics Committee Chair was invited to interview but declined as he did not want to be predisposed to any findings before they were brought to the Constitution and Ethics Committee.

These interviews will help to establish the needs and expectations of the Organisation and gather both the views and experiences of Officers and Members regarding the operation of our governance procedures. Following the initial round interviews, a survey will be circulated to the wider Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) and Extended Corporate Leadership Team (ECLT) team to capture a more comprehensive view of Governance within the organisation.

Alongside the interviews, colleagues from CfGS have been reviewing decisions, minutes, meeting recordings, relevant procedural documentation, and the constitution to gather a wider picture of the governance processes at the Council.

The Democratic Services Team held a session with ECLT to seek views on the decision-making process, the roles and responsibilities within the Council and the scrutiny process. The feedback from this session has been collated and will be used to inform the governance review work.

Finally, ECLT and all Councillors were invited to complete a survey on the decision-making process and its culture within the authority. The results of this survey were submitted directly to CfGS colleagues and will be used to inform the diagnostic report.

4.2 **Timeline of Delivery**

The agreed timeline of delivery is:

W/c 10 July – CfGS Draft Diagnostic Report submitted to PCC for Monitoring Officer comment and review.

W/c 24 July – CfGS Final report submitted to PCC.

1 August – Final report presented to CLT

8 August – Final report presented to Group Leaders

18 September – Final report presented to the Constitution and Ethics Committee

We remain on track to deliver to the above timeline, with all interviews having taken place in June. At the time of writing and publication, the draft report had not been received. It is expected that at the time of the meeting, the draft diagnostic report will have been submitted to the Monitoring Officer for review and comment.

The final report would then be submitted to PCC for presentation at the CLT meeting on 1 August 2023 and until this time, the final report will not be shared more widely.

4.3 The Constitution and Ethics Committee, in October 2022, agreed to setup a working group to look at different governance arrangements. A number of meetings were setup to discuss the arrangements, however following on from conversations the Director of Law and Governance approached CfGS to enquire about carrying out an external review of the Council's governance arrangements.

This proposal was put to the members of the Governance Review Working Group who agreed to the proposal to allow CfGS to undertake a review with findings being presented to the Constitution and Ethics Committee as per the timeline outlined in the report.

All previous work carried out by the Governance Review Working Group has been circulated to CfGS by way of background information.

5. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 5.1 This report and its recommendations link to the Council's Corporate Priorities in so far that a review of the governance procedures will ensure that the Sustainable Future City Council targets are met by improving how we work, how we serve the community and how we enable ourselves to make informed decisions.

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1 There has been consultation with Officers, Members and colleagues from CfGS.
- 6.2 Officers from the Local Government Association (LGA) were also consulted at the beginning of the review process.
- 6.3 As part of the process Officers within CLT and ECLT have had the opportunity to feed into the governance review and express their views.

In addition, the Council's Independent Improvement and Assurance Panel have also been kept up to date with the progress of the review along with the Financial Sustainability Working Group.

7. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT

- 7.1 The outcome of this report will be that the Committee are informed of the progress of the review prior to the review of recommendations submitted in the diagnostic report.

8. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 The reason for the recommendation is that the Committee are informed of the progress of the review.

9. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 9.1 An alternative option would be to not provide the Committee with an update on the progress of the review. This option was not considered as it is important for the Committee to be informed.

10. IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

- 10.1 Following the completion of the work, there may be some additional costs involved to support the implementation of the recommendations included in the diagnostic report.

Legal Implications

- 10.2 There are no legal implications in respect of what is proposed which is an update on the review.

Equalities Implications

- 10.3 The outcome of the report has no direct implication on the residents of Peterborough; however, the outcome of the review will consider all residents to ensure that the governance processes within the Council are fair for all.

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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

- 11.1 None.

12. APPENDICES

12.1 None.

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