



Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	CONSTITUTION WORKING GROUP (CWG) 04.05.2022 ANNUAL COUNCIL 25.05.2022
Subject	DRAFT “MODELS OF GOVERNANCE” GROUP – OPTIONS APPRAISAL
Wards affected	ALL
Accountable member(s)	Cllr Mike Evemy – Deputy Leader of the Council Email: mike.evemy@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer(s)	Angela Claridge, Director of Governance & Development Email: angela.claridge@cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	Modernising the Constitution.
Annexes	Annex A – Models of Governance Group Terms of Reference Annex B – Options Appraisal (Analysis of Governance Models against Working Principles) Annex C – Timeline of the Key Requirements for a Change in Governance Arrangements.
Recommendation/s	The Constitution Working Group (CWG) is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">i) feedback on the report’s contents, and,ii) determine if any recommendations are to be presented to Annual Council.
Corporate priorities	Ensure that all services provided by the Council are delivered to the highest standard
Key Decision	Yes
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	Internal: Elected Members of the Models of Governance Group (Cllrs Andrews, Coleman & Evemy), plus supporting officers. Local Management Team; Head of Legal Services. Managing Director – Publica Group Ltd. External: Elected Members and senior officers from a number of local authorities. Ed Hammond, Deputy Chief Executive – Centre for Governance & Scrutiny.

I. BACKGROUND

The Council's model of governance determines how and by whom decisions are made. This is particularly important for major policy and strategic decisions that are reserved to elected councillors.

Following a commitment in the Administration's manifesto to review the Council's governance structure. The Constitution Working Group at its meeting on 21.09.2021, agreed to set up a working group of elected members – The Models of Governance Group, made up of Cllrs Evely (Chair), Andrews and Coleman, with the following objectives:

- To review of the Council's governance structure - evaluate the current structure and compare with alternative models (committee structure and Mayoral options).
- Consider and propose any enhancements to the current structure
- Explore the practicalities and feasibility of 'area committees'.

The Group's Terms of Reference are included in Annex A.

Following an appraisal of the range of governance models available to this authority, this report presents the group's findings for the Constitution Working Group to consider and formulate recommendations for Annual Council to consider at their meeting on 25 May 2022. Any change is intended for implementation from May 2023.

2. REPORT

The Group have met fortnightly and collect research and evidence, including guest speakers from other councils that operate a model of governance other than a Leader & Cabinet structure, and professional bodies. Views were sought on the advantages and disadvantages of the various models. The other Councils consulted are:

- Eastleigh Borough Council who operate Area Committees
- Derby City Council who after an eighteen month review to move to a committee structure decided to retain their Leader and Cabinet model.
- Wiltshire County Council who operate Area Committee / Boards
- Arun District Council who changed from Cabinet to Committee in May 2021
- Stroud District Council who have operated with a Committee system for some time
- Bedford Borough Council who operate a Mayoral model of governance.
- Milton Keynes Council who operate a Cabinet model with enhanced transparency for individual cabinet member decision making.
- Adur & Worthing Councils who extensively use individual cabinet member decision making, minimising Cabinet decision making.

A number of working principles were agreed by the Models of Governance Group as part of their terms of reference, these principles that any alternate model provide are:

1. maximising individual member talents, and provides the opportunity for greater engagement in Council activity;
2. ensures that alternative options are appropriately costed and fully resourced;

3. the option facilitates decision making at an appropriate pace;
- 4 demonstrates propriety, regularity and accountability.

The following options for governance have been assessed against these working principles which is detailed at Annex B - Governance Models Options Appraisal:

- Current Leader/Cabinet Model;
- Leader/Cabinet Model with enhanced transparency for individual decision making by Cabinet members;
- Mayoral;
- Committee System.

2.1 AREA COMMITTEES

There aren't any Area Committees or Boards currently in operation, although the Council's Constitution already provides for their operation.

In addition to the governance models available to the Council, the introduction of area committee/boards has also been assessed against the same working principles which, could be in conjunction with another governance change, or in isolation.

3. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The legal arrangements for Councils to follow when changing their governance arrangements can be found in Chapter 4 of the Local Government Act 2000. Upon adopting a change in governance model, the Localism Act 2011 precludes any further change for a period of five years without a referendum.

Annex C provides the legislative framework and timeline dependent upon the process for change.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

One of the Group's working principles has been - that any alternative to the existing governance arrangements model is fully costed and resourced. The Governance Model Options Appraisal at Annex B incorporates indicative costs for the implementation and ongoing costs. For ease of reading, those costs are replicated in the table overleaf.

The Centre for Governance & Scrutiny have indicated that the cost of implementation of a change of governance model is typically £50k - £100k. Although the Department of Communities and Local Government, a decade ago, quoted £80k - £250k. In addition, Publica have indicated £30k – £40K for the cost of project managing a governance model change before other costs are factored in.

Changing governance model will incur costs across a number of headings - staff resources, IT system and working process changes, members' allowances and training. Publica's Managing Director has flagged his principal concern as the impact on Democratic Services,

whose resources are currently at the minimum level to sustain the service. In summary any changes to current arrangements that demand more support from a team that is already stretched will require additional resources.

Governance Model	Additional Implementation Costs	Ongoing Costs
Current Cabinet Model	None	Included in base budget
Cabinet Model with enhanced individual decision making.	None	Publica have expressed concerns regarding resource implications if used extensively
Elected Mayor	As specified in section 4 plus £150k - £200K for a referendum	Included in base budget
Subject Committees	As specified in section 4.	£81,744 pa (2 FTE) not budgeted for, plus members allowances
Area Committees	Estimated £10k	£130,599 pa (4 FTE) not budgeted for, plus members allowances.

It is anticipated, although difficult to quantify, the costs of additional pressure and secondary impact on the rest of the system that new governance structures would require. For example, new or increased frequency of meetings will mean more reports, more agendas, more pre-meetings, and could require additional support in planning, housing and other areas that would be expected to generate material for these meetings.

5. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Rethinking council governance for the 20s: Learning from councils changing their formal governance option: Centre for Governance & Scrutiny (2021)

(END)

