

REPORT TO:	GENERAL PURPOSES AND AUDIT COMMITTEE 25 November 2021
SUBJECT:	Implementation of Mayoral governance model
LEAD OFFICER:	Katherine Kerswell, Chief Executive
WARDS:	All

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Changing the Council's governance model will necessitate changes to the Council's expenditure on Members. At this stage the following issues have been identified:

- The costs of running a mayoral ballot in addition to existing elections will need to be incorporated into the budget;
- The Scheme of Members' Allowances needs to be reviewed;
- Support costs may change.

Work outlined in this report will inform the identification of detailed financial implications to be factored into the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

RECOMMENDATION

General Purposes and Audit Committee is recommended to:

1. Note actions underway to implement the Mayoral governance model.
2. Identify any further issues which require consideration and/or action by the Programme Board.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 A programme of work is underway to ensure effective implementation of the Mayor/ cabinet model of governance from 9th May 2022.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At its meeting on 11th October 2021, Council approved proposals to move to a directly elected Mayor/ Cabinet model of governance. This approval was required by the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended) following the outcome of the referendum held on 7th October 2021 in favour of a change to the Mayor/ Cabinet model.
- 2.2 The meeting noted that a report will be brought to a future meeting of Full Council with the proposed constitutional and governance amendments to enable operation of the new governance model from 9th May 2022, following the first election for the Directly Elected Mayor taking place on 5th May 2022.

3. UPDATE ON WORK TO IMPLEMENT THE NEW GOVERNANCE MODEL

3.1 The Chief Executive has convened and chairs a Programme Board to oversee work to prepare for the implementation of the new model. The programme of work is designed to ensure that work to implement the new model:

- is planned to ensure decisions are made as required in a tight timescale;
- is closely coordinated across multiple Council teams;
- informs and engages Members, staff and external stakeholders and partners as appropriate;
- is contained within available resources;
- enables effective operation of Council services and delivery of the Mayor's priorities in the weeks following the election.

3.2 The following workstreams have been identified within the programme:

- a) **Constitution review and revision:** the Constitution Working Group has been reconvened to inform this workstream which will include:
 - enabling increased understanding of the statutory requirements of the new model, the range of options for the Council to decide and those which will be made by the Mayor when they come into post;
 - preparation of proposals for consideration by the Committee for recommendation to Council to ensure a lawful constitution with effect from 9th May 2022;
 - preparation of proposals for consideration by the Committee for recommendation to Council in relation to the Scheme of Member Allowances;
 - coordination with the preparation of other constitutional revisions required;
 - development and implementation of plans for Member briefing and development, including support for both existing and new Members.
- b) **Access to the Council:** in preparation for an anticipated increase in the volume of people contacting the Council/ Mayor's office, the effectiveness and capacity of the Council's complaints, Members' Enquiries and other mechanisms will be further reviewed as part of the current improvement programme.
- c) **Support arrangements:** this workstream will focus on ensuring that there are appropriate arrangements in place to support both the directly elected Mayor and the ceremonial Mayor and that these are closely linked to and supported by services across the Council.
- d) **Culture change and staff development:** the change of governance model will not only require a good understanding of the role of the Mayor and how this relates to other Members and officers, but also some changes in organisational culture, building on the wider culture change programme already underway.

- e) **Partnerships:** preparatory work to enable the development of effective working relationships between the Mayor and the Council's partners in the borough and beyond.
 - f) **Communications and engagement:** the implications of the new model for the Council's approach to communications and engagement will be reviewed and a comprehensive internal and external communications plan will be developed and implemented.
- 3.3 The programme will be informed throughout by best practice and learning from other local authorities which have the Mayor/ Cabinet governance model, facilitated by the Local Government Association.
- 3.4 The Programme Board is currently meeting fortnightly to ensure close coordination of activity and timely action to address any issues. An update from each meeting is reported to the Corporate Management Team. A detailed risk register is being compiled and will be reviewed at each meeting. Any significant risks will be escalated to the corporate risk register and reported to the Committee.
- 3.5 The Council has asked the Local Government Association to conduct an assessment of the Council's readiness to implement the new governance model: it is currently anticipated that this will take place early in the New Year.
- 3.6 The Committee is asked to suggest any other issues or challenges which require attention as part of work to implement the Mayor/Cabinet governance model.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The work described in this report are designed to put into effect the outcome of a borough-wide referendum on the Council's governance model.

5. FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 Approved by: Matt Davis, Interim Deputy s151 Officer.

6. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 The report asks the Committee to note the programme of work that is and has been taking place subsequent to the referendum on the proposed change in governance that took place on 7th October 2021.
- 6.2 The Local Authorities (Elected Mayors) (Elections, Terms of Office and Casual Vacancies) (England) Regulations 2012 ('Elected Mayor Regulations') set out the date when the first election should take place, the length of time the directly elected mayor will remain in office for, along with when they actually come into office, which is the fourth day after the election at which he or she was elected.
- 6.3 The Local Government Act 2000 requires the Council to prepare and keep up to date the Council's constitution. As such, in readiness for the change in governance that is taking place on 9th May 2022, the Council is working on

revising the constitution so that it reflects the governance arrangements that will be in place in May 2022.

- 6.4 There are no further legal considerations arising from this report that require comment at this stage.

Approved by: Doutimi Aseh, Director of Legal Services.

7. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 7.1 Staffing arrangements to support both the directly elected Mayor and ceremonial Mayor will follow appropriate Council policies and procedures.
- 7.2 There are no further immediate Human Resources impacts arising from this report for Council staff and employees.

Approved by: Gillian Bevan, Head of HR Resources and Assistant Chief Executive.

8. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.1 Implementation of these arrangements will be in line with s149 of the Equality Act 2010.

Approved by: Denise McCausland, Equality Programme Manager

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 9.1 There is no environmental impact arising from this report.

10. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

- 10.1 There is no crime and disorder impact arising from this report.

11. DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 **WILL THE SUBJECT OF THE REPORT INVOLVE THE PROCESSING OF 'PERSONAL DATA'?**

No.

- 11.2 **HAS A DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT (DPIA) BEEN COMPLETED?**

No.

Approved by: Katherine Kerswell, Chief Executive

13. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS/PROPOSED DECISION

13.1 To inform General Purposes and Audit Committee of work underway to bring forward proposals for changes to the Constitution required to implement the outcome of the governance referendum held on 7th October 2021.

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APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS: None