

Shadow Dorset Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting	7 November 2018
Officer	David Fairbairn – Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer, Purbeck District Council
Subject of Report	Overview of work being progressed by the Governance Working Group
Executive Summary	The report provides an outline of the work of the Governance Working Group; its progress to date; the next steps and the timetable for the production of the new Constitution. In outlining the work of the Working Group, the report also sets out the Working Group’s initial thinking on overview and scrutiny committee arrangements.
Impact Assessment:	<p>Equalities Impact Assessment:</p> <p>Not applicable</p>
	<p>Use of Evidence:</p> <p>The evidence is that the Governance Working Group has a work programme and is making progress on formulating proposals for the governance arrangements. It recognises that the timescale is tight, but wishes nevertheless to ensure that there is wider member engagement where this can be accommodated</p>
	<p>Budget:</p> <p>Not applicable</p>
	<p>Risk Assessment:</p> <p>Having considered the risks associated with this decision using the LGR approved risk management methodology, the level of risk has been identified as: Current Risk: LOW Residual Risk LOW</p>
	<p>Other Implications:</p> <p>None</p>

Recommendation	The Committee notes the progress being made by the Governance Working Group and the timetable for the production and adoption of the Constitution
Reason for Recommendation	As the Governance Working Group is working steadily to deliver the outcomes required by its terms of reference, there are no issues to highlight.
Appendices	None
Background Papers	None
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1. The Governance Working Group

1.1. The terms of reference for the Working Group are:

- 1.1.1. To exercise member oversight of the legal and democratic workstream (excluding areas overseen by Boundary Group) and information governance workstream.
- 1.1.2. To review and make recommendations about the constitution of the Shadow Dorset Council.
- 1.1.3. To ensure that the Shadow Dorset Council: (a) operates effectively and efficiently and (b) is open and transparent.
- 1.1.4. Taking as its starting point the Joint Committee's vision for the Council, to formulate: (a) a proposed operating model; and (b) a draft Constitution for the Dorset Council.
- 1.1.5. To consider recommendations about the culture of the new Council which complements the emerging vision, and help accelerate the creation of an entirely new organisation.

1.2. The Working Group has met on three occasions which have also featured two workshop sessions. At the time of writing this report dates for a further three meetings have also been agreed together with the specific pieces of work that are to be considered. So far the Working Group has reached agreement on a number of principles that should underpin the drafting of significant areas of the Constitution, namely the Articles, a committee structure including provision for overview and scrutiny committees (see paragraph 4.1 below) and the Council Procedure Rules.

1.3. The Working Group has considered options for local area arrangements. It has identified a suitable option for development management purposes, but acknowledges that those boundaries may not be applied to Area Forums and that further work is required on them. However, members agreed that the principle of there being Area Forums was well based and essential in ensuring that local connection with communities is not lost with the new Dorset Council.

- 1.4. The Working Group has also set in train the work necessary for the Independent Remuneration Panel to form recommendations on a scheme for members' allowances.

2. Next steps

- 2.1. At its meeting on 31 October 2018 the Working Group will, in addition to the matters mentioned in paragraph 4.1 below, be considering reports on transitional arrangements for the period 1 April – 6 May 2019; member code of conduct; civic functions and arrangements for the annual meeting in May 2019.

3. Timetable

- 3.1. While recognising that the timescale for completion of the Constitution is tight, the Working Group is nevertheless very keen to ensure that that the timetable allows sufficient time for other members of the Shadow Authority to be consulted or informed. The timetable for the production and adoption of the Constitution is:

Governance Working Group	31 October 2018
Governance Working Group	20 November 2018
Members' Newsletter	26 November or 10 December 2018
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	3 December 2018
Member briefing	13 December 2018
Shadow Executive Committee	14 January 2019
Council (Adoption)	24 January 2019

4. Indicative proposals for Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- 4.1. At its meeting on 10 September 2018, the Working Group considered possible committee structures. In terms of the overview and scrutiny arrangements, the Working Group will be recommending that there should be four overview and scrutiny committees: People (responsible for education matters); Places (which will be responsible for crime and disorder scrutiny); Resources; and Health. Subject to further discussions, the last of those overview and scrutiny committees may be a joint committee with Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Council. In reaching its conclusions the Working Group considered whether there should be an overarching overview and scrutiny committee, but rejected this as too bureaucratic and not in keeping with the "governance-light" model that it would like to see for Dorset Council. Each overview and scrutiny committee is to have 10 members (excluding any additional persons who are not members, some of who will be required by law and others that may be appointed in accordance with provisions yet to be determined) with a quorum of 3 members.
- 4.2. The Working Group has suggested too that the Constitution should leave open whether a chair should be from opposition or not; members of the Executive to attend by invitation only; and that all overview and scrutiny committees should have the power to call in decisions
- 4.3. The Working Group will be considering the principles that should underpin the drafting of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules on 31 October 2018. A verbal update will be provided to the Committee at the meeting.