

By: Joel Cook – Democratic Services Manager

To: County Council – 18 December 2025

Subject: Committees Review – Update Report

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary

This follow-up report updates the Council on the recommendations made by the Selection and Member Services Committee on 16 December to allow for decision-making.

1. Proposals for moving various Committee functions to deliver a more efficient approach to formal meetings were considered by the Selection and Member Services (SMS) Committee on 16 December. The published SMS report was included in the original County Council agenda pack.
2. The proposals involve the ‘merging’ of some of the Ordinary Committees of the Council and the disbanding of a sub-committee.
3. Following SMS – it is recommended that Full Council agrees to the following:
 - Planning Application Committee to take on all functions from the Regulation Committee, including the transfer of sub-committees and Panels.
 - Selection and Member Services Committee to take on all functions from the Electoral and Boundary Review Committee.
 - Delete Member Development Sub-Committee.
 - Delete the Regulation Committee and the Electoral Boundary Review Committee from the list of Committees.
4. The implications of the ‘mergers’ is that Planning Applications Committee would expand its remit to include all functions covered by the Regulation Committee. The Regulation Committee would then be disbanded. Similarly, Selection and Member Services Committee would expand to take on the functions of the Electoral and Boundary Review Committee which would also be disbanded. The Terms of Reference for the continuing Committee would be updated to reflect the expanded remits and the Committee names would also be changed to reflect the updated arrangements.
5. As per the covering report included in the main County Council agenda pack, these changes would not require the formal establishment of entirely new committees. On that basis, the membership (subject to any seat number changes under the Proportionality decisions) and elected Chairs will remain in place.

6. In terms of Membership details for the committees, should the change be agreed, a slight increase in Committee seat numbers is proposed to account for the increased responsibilities. In addition, in the case of Panels and sub-committees presently operating under the Regulation Committee but in future would sit under the Planning Applications Committee, there is a need to maintain a reasonable pool of Members who are trained and able to meet as required to support the Panel decision making on a regular basis. The decision on the seat numbers is subject to the Proportionality item but for information, the proposal is to expand SMS to 13 Members (currently 9) and Planning Applications Committee to 15 (currently 13).
7. Selection and Member Services Committee also noted the Leader's proposals to change Cabinet Committee arrangements, specifically;
 - Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee to take on all functions from the Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee.
8. Cabinet Committee arrangements are not subject to Proportionality or the determination by Council of the number of Committees. They are therefore for decision by the Leader but are referenced here to ensure Members are sighted on the wider consideration of all Committee arrangements. Written confirmation of any decisions made on this issue will be communicated to all Members in accordance with the requirements in the Constitution.
9. The progression of these proposals has a direct impact on the Proportionality arrangements as the removal of Committees from the list of Committees reduces the overall number of Committee seats. The details of the Committee seat allocations in line with the Proportionality requirements are set out in the relevant reports for that item.
10. The financial implications of the proposals, as discussed with Selection and Member Services, include the potential for an approx. £75k saving. This is achieved through a combination of reduced staff costs arising from committee support resource reduction and increased efficiency through modernisation and increased use of technology (£45k), reduction in the number of payable Special Allowances (£21k) and a reduction in the full year budget for Member travel expenses, support and administrative costs (£9k).
11. Assurances were provided to Selection and Member Services Committee that the changes would not result in a reduction to the administrative and governance support provided by Democratic Services to ongoing Committees.
12. Having reviewed the proposals, Selection and Member Services resolved to recommend the changes to the Ordinary Committees and they are presented to Council for decision.

Recommendations:

County Council is asked to;

- a) Approve the proposed amendments to the Ordinary Committee arrangements:
- Planning Application Committee to add the functions of the Regulation Committee into its terms of reference and take on the latter's sub-committees and Panels in line with this change.
 - Selection and Member Services Committee to add the functions of the Electoral and Boundary Review Committee into its terms of reference.
 - Delete the Regulation Committee and Electoral and Boundary Review Committee from the list of Committees.
 - Delete the Member Development Sub-Committee.
- b) Delegate authority to the Democratic Services Manager, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer, to implement the above changes subject to appropriate Member training and transition arrangements.
- c) Request that the Monitoring Officer, at the point of implementation, make the required changes to the Constitution and current Committee Terms of Reference to reflect the transfer of functions and the deletion of obsolete Committees.
- d) Request that the Democratic Services Manager, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer, undertake a review of the updated Ordinary Committees' Terms of Reference to improve and develop their arrangements on a longer term basis, with the outcome of the review to be considered by Selection and Member Services in due course.

Background documents:

Appendix 1 – [Report to Selection and Member Services Committee 16 December \(provided for information\)](#)

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