

From: Ben Watts, General Counsel

To: **Selection and Member Services Committee – 29 July 2020**

Subject: Future of the Selection and Member Services Committee

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Summary:

The purpose of this report is to set out a draft proposal for expanding the work and remit of the Selection and Member Services Committee for discussion by Members and agreement on next steps.

Recommendation:

This Committee is asked to discuss the report and:

- a. Agree changes to the Committee Terms of Reference to recommend to County Council;**
- b. Agree the areas of work the Committee would like to see as regular items on the agenda;**
- c. Agree a work programme for the Committee and frequency of meetings**
- d. Make any other comments on the report.**

1. Introduction

- a) Building on earlier discussions at the Selection and Member Services Committee and informal discussions elsewhere, I gave a presentation to the Selection and Member Services Committee on 23 June 2020 setting out the options for enhancing and developing the role of the Selection and Member Services Committee.
- b) I was asked by the Committee to use this presentation as a basis for discussions with the political groups and to request individual responses from Members. This was then to be turned into a formal report to the Selection and Member Services Committee on its future role within KCC.
- c) The Committee is being asked to consider the proposal set out in this paper and agree, reject, or amend. Any changes to the Terms of Reference would require this Committee to recommend these changes to County Council.

2. Proposal Part A: Changes to the Terms of Reference

- a) The Appendix sets out the proposed changes that would be needed to enable the following:

- i. Reviewing Member Grants. It has been recognised that recent unprecedented events may require a different approach with Selection and Member Services taking a greater role. Currently, the Monitoring Officer and his team review the legality of the scheme and individual grants but reviewing the grants in aggregate and operation of the scheme would allow for the development of new guidance.
- ii. Member Development Sub-Committee. The Committee already has a role in developing the role of Members and there is also the Member Development Steering Group but the two are not formally connected. It is proposed that the Steering Group be converted into a Sub-Committee of this Committee so there is a natural reporting route for its work.
- iii. Informal Member Working Groups. Some Members have expressed concern about the number of informal Member Working Groups and the transparency surrounding their work. Where the outcomes of their work are not reported elsewhere, this Committee would be an appropriate place.

3. Operational Changes

- a) The following changes as to what the Committee could cover would come under the existing Terms of Reference but have not formed a regular part of its work. If these are agreed as areas that the Committee is interesting in having more regularly, Officers will be asked to liaise with the Chair as to the best way of managing this work:
 - i. Reviewing the changes made to the internal democratic process during the COVID-19 pandemic and identifying and maintaining positive changes.
 - ii. Review the balance between physical and virtual meetings.
 - iii. Providing a platform to explain to the public the work that is carried out by Members to provide a greater explanation of the time commitment and expectations placed on Members and the role they play in communities.
 - iv. Providing information on the work of the Chairman, Lord Lieutenant and Civic Office. This will also provide an opportunity for non-executive Members to understand the opportunities to link the Civic Office to their divisions.
 - v. Recommending changes to the Constitution necessary as a result of local government gaining new statutory powers/functions.
 - vi. Oversight of preparations for the new Council – pre- and post-elections 2021.
 - vii. Council and Member facilities, accommodation, and Member IT provision.
 - viii. Member support arrangements – agree principles prior to the election to allay staff concerns and ensure Member views are taken into account.

5. Resourcing and Support

- a) Expanding the scope and increasing the work of this Committee will require an increase in the frequency of meetings and have an opportunity cost in terms of Officer support for other areas of activity within Democratic Services. Members are asked to take this into account in their discussions and give their views on potential mitigations.

6. Recommendation:

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- c. Make any other comments on the report.**

7. Background Documents

None.

8. Contact details

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