

Governance Update Appendix 1 – County Council 13 March 2025

Minutes except from Selection and Member Services Committee – 13 December 2025

Item 6 – Governance Working Party Updates

1. The Governance Working Party Updates paper was presented by the Cabinet Member for Communications and Democratic Services and Chair of Governance Working Party, Mr Dylan Jeffrey.
2. Mr Jeffrey drew Members' attention to an error contained in 1e of the Introduction; Mr Chard and Mr Bond were also Members of the Committee but had not been mentioned.
3. Mr Brady confirmed that he had been on the Governance Working Party since it was first formed.
4. Some of the key highlights were as follows:
 - a) Thanks was given to everyone who took part in the group.
 - b) Cabinet Committees would be retained however, reform was necessary and this topic would need to return for further discussion.
 - c) It was agreed that the Children Young Persons and Education (CYPE) Cabinet Committee would be separated to reflect the individual portfolio holders. This would mean establishing an Education Cabinet Committee and a Children and Young People Cabinet Committee.
 - d) The Health Reform and Public Health Committee would be merged into the Adult Social Care Cabinet Committee.
 - e) An Annual State of the County item would be presented by the Leader and then open for debate by all Members. This would be facilitated by the Committee Chairmans, who would provide the Leader's report to the individual Committee and Members could debate in that arena.
 - f) The group were looking at a way to publish written responses to individual Member question asked at full Council.
 - g) Changes to Member training had been looked at, particularly the areas of critical thinking, diversity and the legal framework of the Council which would be fed into the Member Induction Programme.
 - f) The improvement and development of Member interaction and the quality of Committees was also looked at in detail.

- h) Lengthy discussions had been held around the Scrutiny Committee, in particular the external auditor's report which implied that the Committee should be chaired by a Member of the Opposition. The discussions involved thresholds, which Opposition Party and how they should be selected and a model to conduct this had been created.
5. RESOLVED Members to:
- a) NOTE with thanks the contribution and efforts of the Members of the Governance Working Party.
 - b) NOTE and comment on the retention of Cabinet Committees.
6. RESOLVED the Leader to:
- a) CREATE an Education Cabinet Committee.
 - b) CONSOLIDATE the Health Reform and Public Health Cabinet Committee into the Adult Social Care Cabinet Committee.
 - c) ASK the General Counsel to carry out a review of the Terms of Reference of Cabinet Committees.
7. RESOLVED Members to recommend to the County Council:
- a) To DEBATE AND DECIDE whether the Constitution be changed so that the Chairman of Scrutiny be an opposition Member.
 - b) To AGREE the introduction of the "Annual State of the County" item at County Council.
 - c) To AMEND the constitution to provide an opportunity for the Proposer of Amendments to have a right of reply before the end of the debate on the amendment they proposed.
 - d) To NOTE the outputs of the Governance Working Party.
 - e) To NOTE ongoing work around further reporting from other Committees.
 - f) To AMEND the constitution to require the publication of all questions received in accordance with the constitution and their answers irrespective of whether the questioner attended County Council.
8. RESOLVED Members to note the recommendations regarding training and induction for May 2025.
9. RESOLVED that discussions around hybrid/physical/remote meetings be paused until the Government determines any changes following the current

consultation, with a further review by the Committee in six months if no changes are forthcoming.

10. RESOLVED to ask the General Counsel to:
 - a) DEVELOP governance to support the annual reporting mechanism for all Committees.
 - b) PROVIDE support to the Governance Working Party to develop and finalise their further activity in time for the March County Council.
 - c) PROVIDE a report to the Committee on Democratic Engagement proposals.
 - d) PROVIDE a report on the changes to report templates.
 - e) REVIEW proposals around the Executive-Scrutiny Protocol and provide advice to the GWP that can be incorporate into future recommendation for the March County Council.
 - f) REVIEW agenda setting protocols.
11. RESOLVED to note the ongoing work of the group and AGREE that a further report come to the Committee ahead of the March County Council.