

By: Benjamin Watts - General Counsel

To: Cabinet – 2 December 2019

Subject: Cabinet meetings – Update

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This item provides an update for Members around ongoing work to review the agenda and scope of Cabinet meetings

- 1 At the Cabinet Meeting on 28 October 2019, Members discussed the opportunity to refresh the agenda and scope of Cabinet Meetings and asked the General Counsel to reflect and advise on possible changes.
- 2 Cabinet is currently programmed to meet 9 times a year and has the following standing items which are considered on a regular basis:
 - a. Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring
 - b. Quarterly Performance Monitoring
 - c. Corporate Risk Register
- 3 Cabinet also has a role set out in the Constitution in relation to the development of the Budget and Policy Framework documents prior to their submission to County Council for approval.
- 4 Cabinet also has a role under the Select Committee process to consider and comment on the final Select Committee report prior to its submission to County Council for endorsement.
- 5 Currently the overwhelming majority of Executive decisions are taken by individual Cabinet Members:

In 2016:

Total number of decisions taken by Individual Cabinet Member: 67

Total number of decisions taken by Cabinet: 0

In 2017:

Total number of decisions taken by Individual Cabinet Member: 97

Total number of decisions taken by Cabinet: 6

In 2018:

Total number of decisions taken by Individual Cabinet Member: 64

Total number of decisions taken by Cabinet: 1

In 2019 (up to 2 December 2019):

Total number of decisions taken by Cabinet Member: 52

Total number of decisions taken by Cabinet: 1

- 6 The agenda for this meeting has been changed to include verbal updates from Cabinet Members in relation to initiatives and recent developments in their portfolios.
- 7 Since the last meeting, the new Cabinet has begun work on delivering the new portfolios and working with the non-executive Members through the Cabinet Committee and informal governance processes.
- 8 During that time, the Leader has also had discussions with non-executive Members about improving the utilisation and involvement of the broad range of skills and experience of those Members. As a result of those conversations, it is proposed that the General Counsel looks more broadly at the Council's formal meeting arrangements. The Leader has asked the General Counsel to involve non-executive Members in discussions around the development and design of proposals to provide greater involvement of all 81 Members whilst retaining the executive scheme of governance.
- 9 It is apparent that the review of the role of the formal Cabinet meeting should form part of that broader review. That said, changes can and will be made in the meantime to the agenda and running of Cabinet to maintain the momentum, albeit major changes around scope will await the outcome of work with non-executive Members.

Recommendations

Cabinet are asked to:

1. **NOTE** the update regarding the future of Cabinet Meetings
2. **AGREE** that the Leader and General Counsel should review the Council's meeting structure with non-executive Members and develop proposals to be considered in March 2020