

Governance Proposals

1. The Committee System

The main issues raised by members were:

- 1.1 Members are all fully committed to the existing Committee System and none of them favour any form of Executive, Leader or Mayoral model.
- 1.2 All members believe to one degree or another that the Committee System works well and that members' role is to set policy and govern the Council and not to get involved in operational and procedural issues. The overriding intention is to focus officer and member energy and time on achieving positive outcomes for residents.
- 1.3 There is a lack of belief that the Scrutiny function works or adds any real value to the Committee System. Members generally hold the view that each committee effectively should and does scrutinise its own decisions as they are being debated and made in the public arena. It is generally accepted and therefore recommended that the Overview & Scrutiny Committee is no longer relevant and should therefore be disbanded with its work being taken on by the appropriate Committee or Working Group. This recommendation was approved by Council on 25th February 2014.
- 1.4 The national Standards regime has also undergone a fundamental change during the last three years and to reflect this it is also recommended that the existing Standards Board should be disbanded with its work being taken on by the Policy, Finance & Development Committee while any investigations would continue to be carried out using the existing and established processes. This recommendation was approved by Council on 25th February 2014.
- 1.5 Generally more members would like to become more involved in key policy development at an earlier stage. It is recommended that additional Task Groups (initially Waste and Customer Services) are created which will assist in increasing opportunities for members to get more actively involved in taking on extra responsibility and developing services at a more informal level. This would mean that there would be closer working with other members and officers which would in turn strengthen all those relationships. This would also assist with member development and successor planning. Initial suggestions for new groups have been made as Waste and Customer Services. Other specific Working Groups could also be set up and time limited as "task and finish" by Council as and when it deems necessary.
- 1.6 There would be a new *Waste Task Group* as the Council has work to do to review its policies both in order to achieve efficiencies and improve health & safety. The Working Group will need to consider the policy implications of the County Council's

intention to withdraw recycling payments for garden waste from 2015/16 from all district councils which will reduce this council's recycling income by approximately £100,000 pa from next year. The County Council is also intending to stop paying the annual inflationary increase on all recycling credits.

- 1.7 There would also be a new *Customer Services Task Group* which will focus on the policy changes that need to be made as a result of the national welfare reforms, whereby the Government is determined to make changes that will result in residents having to become more self-reliant when claiming benefits. Against that national backdrop the Council needs to look its policies on how it will improve the way it works to assist residents, particularly the more vulnerable.
- 1.8 There is also the opportunity to create new Task Groups however before this happens there should always be a full and rigorous evaluation to establish if there is a true need. If there is then the group should be task orientated and time limited. These groups should not become involved in operational issues.
- 1.9 It is recommended that this would be accompanied by a review of all existing Working Groups early in 2104/15 in order to assess their relevance, if they are still needed and if so to revisit and firm up their purpose, terms of reference, reporting lines, inter relationships to other groups (to prevent silo working), frequency of meetings (which would be published in the annual Calendar), and membership. Each Group would have a Work Plan and protocol for the production of Action Lists and papers in order to give them a clear structure. These Working Groups would be very focused on outcomes and not on operational management and they would have very clear terms of reference and wherever possible be time limited.
- 1.10 It is recommended that each Working Group/Committee should have a named officer as the primary link for that Chair and that they should then mutually agree and set out how that relationship will work including timetable, format and frequency of briefings etc.

2. Performance

The main issues raised by members were:

- 2.1 There was a general consensus that although performance information was available that more could be done to highlight, focus, streamline and publicise it.
- 2.2 It is recommended that performance information should be simple, consistent in format, focused on what is important, easy to access and understand. A suite of Service Charters have been approved by members and contain and highlight performance information which now needs to be refined to achieve this.
- 2.3 The Service Charter Performance information is being reported on a regular basis to the Service Delivery Committee and is published "live" on the Council's website.

In order to build on the strengths of the committee system and widen participation amongst members the following suggestion is recommended as to how the governance model could look.

Council

Supporting Leicestershire Families Coordinating Group

Community Safety Partnership

Armed Forces Working Group

Constitutional Task Group

Development Control DC Enforcement Sub

Policy, Finance & Development

Policy & Strategy

Finance & Budget

External Audit

Information Technology

Standards

Internal Audit Reports

Economic Development (via Place Shaping Working Group)

Working with the Community

Children & Young People

Resident Forums x 3

Community Engagement Forum

Customer Services Task Group

Licensing & Regulatory

Service Delivery

Service Charters

Service Delivery

Service Performance

Working Groups

Health & Wellbeing Board

Greening the Borough WG

Waste Task Group

Explanatory Note

a. The Policy, Finance & Development Committee has overall responsibility for setting the long term aims of the Council and moving it forward in line with them. Its role is to scrutinise and approve the policies of the Council.

b. The Policy, Finance & Development Committee sets the overarching strategic direction for the Council and the Service Delivery Committee oversees the development and performance of services within that overarching strategic direction (with the exception of those services which are the direct responsibility of the P,F & D Committee).

c. The Policy, Finance & Development Committee agrees and sets the overall budgets for the Council and the Service Delivery Committee is responsible for all financial issues relating to its services if they are within those budgets.

d. The Service Delivery Committee has the direct responsibility for the delivery and performance of services. Its role is to scrutinise the services provided by the Council.

e. The Service Delivery Committee has specific responsibility for all aspects of the Greening the Borough initiative both at a strategic and operational level.

f. The Policy, Finance and Development Committee would fulfil the Council's need for a "client" role if the Council tenders a service/contract that the Council would wish to bid for itself. That committee would agree the specification and oversee the tendering process. The Service Delivery Committee would fulfil the Council's need for a "contractor" role if the Council was to tender a service/contract that the Council wished to bid for itself. That committee would approve the bid

g. The existing Overview & Scrutiny Committee has been disbanded and each respective committee will continue to scrutinise their own decisions as they are being debated and made in the public arena.

h. The existing Standards Board has been disbanded with its work being taken on by the Policy, Finance and Development Committee.

i. The groups working with the community (Children & Young People, Resident Forms x 3 and Community Engagement (previously Equalities and Diversity) will report through the Policy, Finance and Development Committee as will the Customer Services Task Group. The Health & Wellbeing Board and Greening of the Borough Working Group will report through the Service Delivery Committee as will the Waste Task Group. The Supporting Leicestershire Families Coordinating Group, Community Safety Partnership, Armed Forces Working Group and Constitutional Task Group will report direct to Council.

j. The Place Shaping Working Group (incorporating Asset Management and Economic Development) will continue to report through the Policy, Finance and Development Committee.

3. Proposed Committees and Working Groups including Increased Numbers

The groups and committees listed below are only those that fall under the direct control of Oadby & Wigston Borough Council.

Development Control Committee (16)

LD	14
C	1
FC	1

Development Control Sub Committee (Enforcement) (5) (Chair sits on DC Committee)

LD	3
C	1

FC 1

Licensing & Regulatory Committee (14)

LD 12

C 1

FC 1

Policy, Finance & Development Committee (11) increase to (14)

LD 12

C 1

FC 1

Service Delivery Committee (11) increase to (14)

LD 12

C 1

FC 1

Children & Young Peoples Forum (10)

(Chair sits on P, F & D Committee)

LD 8

C 1

FC 1

Place Shaping Working Group (10)

(Chair sits on P, F & D Committee)

LD 8

C 1

FC 1

Community Engagement Forum (3)

(Chair sits on P, F & D Committee)

LD 3

Constitutional Task Group (5) increase to (8)

LD 7

C }

} 1

FC }

(New) Customer Services Task Group (10)

(Chair sits on P, F & D Committee)

LD 8

C 1

FC 1

Health & Wellbeing Board (6) increase to (8)

(Chair sits on Service Delivery Committee)

LD 7
C }
} 1
FC }

**Greening of the Borough Working Group (5) increase to (8)
(Chair sits on Service Delivery Committee)**

LD 7
C }
} 1
FC }

**(New) Waste Task Group (10)
(Chair sits on Service Delivery Committee)**

LD 8
C 1
FC 1

Armed Forces Working Group (8)

LD 6
C 1
FC 1

Supporting Leicestershire Families Coordinating Group (6)

Leader of the Council

Chairs of:

Policy, Finance & Development Committee

Service Delivery Committee

Children and Young Peoples' Forum

Community Safety Partnership

Health & Wellbeing Board

Appeals Panel (9)

LD 7
C 1
FC 1

Interview Panel (12)

LD 10
C 1
FC 1