

Overview and Scrutiny Board 2024

16th January

Governance Systems Task Group – Progress Update

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor C. Hotham, Cabinet Member for Finance and Enabling
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Claire Felton, Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services
Report Author Claire Felton	Job Title: Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services Contact email: c.felton@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
Wards Affected	No specific ward relevance
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	An Effective and Sustainable Council
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Overview and Scrutiny Board is asked to RESOLVE that the update in respect of progress with the actions arising from the Governance Systems Task Group review be noted.

2. **BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The report provides an update on the work that is currently being undertaken to implement the recommendations arising from the Governance Systems Task Group review that was completed in September 2023.
- 2.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Board is invited to note this update.

3. **OPERATIONAL ISSUES**

- 3.1 The Governance Systems Task Group completed a review of the Council's governance model in September 2023. The findings detailed in the group's report were subsequently approved at an extraordinary meeting of Council held on 20th September 2023.
- 3.2 Since Council approved the group's recommendations, the Constitution Review Working Group (CRWG) has held a number of meetings to consider progress with the implementation of the actions that were proposed.

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- 3.3 In November 2023, the CRWG considered draft terms of reference for the Cabinet Advisory Group (CAG) and a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) concerning cross party working.
- 3.4 Recommendations in respect of these items were considered and, subject to a small number of amendments, endorsed by the Overview and Scrutiny Board at a meeting held on 20th November 2023.
- 3.5 These recommendations were subsequently considered and endorsed, subject to a few further amendments, at meetings of the Cabinet and Council held on 22nd November and 6th December 2023 respectively.
- 3.6 In addition to this work, it is important to note that a comprehensive review of the Council's constitution is currently being undertaken on behalf of the Council. Findings arising from the Governance Systems Task Group will be taken into account as part of this process, whilst the review also aims to simplify and reduce the current length of the constitution.
- 3.7 The CRWG is due to consider an update in respect of this work at its next meeting, scheduled to take place on 30th January 2024. The outcomes of this meeting, including any recommendations, will be reported for the consideration of the Overview and Scrutiny Board at the meeting scheduled to take place on 12th February 2024.
- 3.8 Members are asked to note that any proposed changes to the constitution arising from this process will ultimately need to be determined by Council.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 In line with proposals detailed in the Governance Systems Task Group's final report, Officers are submitting a budget bid in the Medium Term Financial Plan Tranche 2 report to fund an additional Democratic Services Officer post at a cost of £40,000.
- 4.2 Subject to the approval of this budget bid, the Council will aim to recruit a new Democratic Services Officer in spring 2024.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Review and revision of the Constitution is governed by Article 15 of the Constitution.

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6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Relevant Strategic Purpose

- 6.1 The action proposed in this report supports the strategic purpose “an effective and sustainable Council”.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.2 There are no specific climate change implications.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.3 There are no equalities and diversity implications.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 There is a risk that if the Council does not progress in a timely manner with consideration of the changes to the constitution required as a result of the Governance Systems Task Group, these amendments will not be in place in time for the start of the 2024/25 municipal year as intended.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Background Papers

Governance Systems Task Group’s final report: [Governance Systems Task Group - report](#)

Minutes of the meeting of the extraordinary Council meeting held on 20th September 2023: [Minutes - Council meeting, 20th September 2023](#)

Governance systems Task Group – Update Report – report to the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 20th November 2023: [Governance Systems Task Group - Update Report - 20th November 2023](#)

Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 20th November 2023: [Overview and Scrutiny Board minutes - 20th November 2023](#)

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Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 22nd November 2023: [Cabinet minutes 22nd November 2023](#)

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9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor C. Hotham, Cabinet Member for Finance and Enabling	07/01/24
Lead Director / Head of Service	Claire Felton, Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services	05/01/24
Financial Services	Pete Carpenter, Acting Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer	08/01/24
Legal Services	Claire Felton, Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services	05/01/24