

Council Report

Ward(s) affected: all

Report of Director of Finance

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Executive Advisory Boards: Proposed Revised Remits to reflect Corporate Plan Themes

Executive Summary

The remit of each Executive Advisory Board (EAB) is aligned to themes in the Council's Corporate Plan and set out in their Terms of Reference (attached at Appendix 1). As reported at the Selection meeting of Council held on 15 May 2018, it is now necessary to review the remits of the EABs to reflect the three fundamental themes of Place-Making, Community and Innovation, which underpin the newly adopted Corporate Plan 2018-2023 and differ from the five themes within the previous Corporate Plan.

The Council is invited to consider the suggested changes to the names of the two EABs and their respective remits to reflect the three fundamental themes of the new Corporate Plan.

Recommendation to Council (24 July 2018)

- (1) That the Borough, Economy, and Infrastructure EAB be re-named the Place-Making and Innovation EAB.
- (2) That the Society, Environment, and Council Development EAB be re-named the Community EAB.

Reason(s) for Recommendation:

To enable the remits of the two EABs to be amended to align with the three themes of the new Corporate Plan 2018-2023.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To consider suggested changes to the respective remits of the two EABs so that they align with the three fundamental themes of Place-Making, Community and Innovation that underpin the new Corporate Plan 2018-2023. Changing the remits will also necessitate changing the names of the EABs.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council will recall that, at its meeting on 15 May 2018 which dealt with the approval of terms of reference of committees and appointment of councillors to those committees (including the two EABs), it was noted that the terms of reference of the EABs were currently aligned with the five themes in the Corporate Plan 2015-2020. At that meeting, the Council adopted the new Corporate Plan 2018-2023, which incorporated three new fundamental themes: Place-making, Community, and Innovation.
- 2.2 The Council agreed that consideration of amendments to the remits of the EABs to reflect the revised themes in the new Corporate Plan, would be dealt with at this meeting. In the meantime, the Council made no changes to the EAB remits/terms of reference and appointed councillors to the current Borough and Society EABs.

3. Proposal

- 3.1 As three Corporate Plan themes do not obviously divide between the remit of two EABs, thought has been given to the nature of the themes and the number and complexity of projects or actions sitting under the priorities for each theme with a view to identifying synergies and achieving an even balance of work. The conclusion reached is that combining the Place-Making and Innovation themes into the remit of one EAB of the same name would bring together the two most closely linked themes leaving the remaining Community theme as the stand alone remit of the other EAB, which would be named accordingly.
- 3.2 Encouraging sustainable and economic growth, creating smart places infrastructure, and improving value for money and efficiency are the strategic priorities of the Innovation theme which have some common ground with the strategic priorities of the Place-Making theme, namely, delivering the Borough Local Plan, easing travel across the Borough, and regenerating and improving the town centre and other urban areas. As the Community theme is people focused it has few links with the two other themes. Also, as many of the projects and actions under the Place-Making theme are in train and as Innovation is the theme with the fewest projects and actions, the work of these combined themes approximately balances with the work of the Community theme.
- 3.3 In approving revised terms of reference/remits for the EABs to align with the new themes in the new Corporate Plan, it will be open to the political groups, if they wish, to make any changes in the membership of the EABs at the meeting.

4. Proposed Fundamental Review of the EABs

- 4.1 The Council will recall that the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge review conducted at the end of 2017 commented that the EABs as currently constituted were a “work in

progress”, but found that there was some confusion among councillors and officers about the role of EABs. It was suggested that the Council may wish to review ways to make their work more effective.

- 4.2 Officers will be drawing together options, including the merits of a single EAB going forward, for consideration by the Council at its next meeting in October.

5. Legal implications

- 5.1 There are no significant legal implications arising from this proposal.

6. Financial implications

- 6.1 There are no significant financial implications arising from this report.

7. Human Resource implications

- 7.1 There are no significant human resource implications arising from this proposal.

8. Risk Management Implications

- 8.1 There are no significant risk management implications arising from this report.

9. Summary of Options

- 9.1 The Council could decide to leave the remit and names of the EABs unchanged or opt for an alternative approach to aligning the remit of the EABs with the new Corporate Plan themes.

10. Conclusion

- 10.1 Combining the Place-Making and Innovation themes into the remit of one EAB and making the Community theme the sole focus of the other EAB appears to be the most logical approach to aligning the remit of the two EABs with the three themes in the new Corporate Plan.

11. Background Papers

Guildford Borough Corporate Plan 2018-2023

12. Appendices

Appendix 1: Terms of Reference of the EABs showing proposed revised names/remits.

EXECUTIVE ADVISORY BOARDS**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Each Executive Advisory Board will consider reports on matters relating to the functions of the Executive that fall within its remit. The remits of each Executive Advisory Board are shown below and are aligned to themes in the Corporate Plan; they will be reviewed and approved at the Council's Selection meeting each year. The Executive Advisory Boards will meet in public, be webcast, and be subject to Part C of the Council Procedure Rules, Public Speaking Procedure Rules and Access to Information Procedure Rules in Part 4 of the Constitution.

Membership:

- (a) Each Executive Advisory Board shall comprise 12 non-executive councillors, one of whom shall be appointed by the Council as chairman, with normal voting rights.
- (b) The Council shall appoint a vice-chairman for each Executive Advisory Board.
- (c) Proportionality rules will apply.
- (d) Substitutes will be allowed in accordance with the rules and procedures of this Constitution, and in respect of each Executive Advisory Board, the Council may appoint up to seven substitute members for each political group.

Meetings:

- (a) Each Executive Advisory Board shall normally meet eight times annually.
- (b) Relevant Executive members will be expected to attend Executive Advisory Board meetings and should normally present matters (with officer support) for discussion at meetings and engage actively in a dialogue with the Executive Advisory Boards regarding those matters.
- (c) The quorum of each Executive Advisory Board will be 4.

Responsibilities:

Each Executive Advisory Board will have the following general responsibilities within its remit:

- (a) To consider and (where necessary) make recommendations on all Key (or other significant) Decisions, prior to the formal consideration of all such decisions by the Executive.
- (b) To assist and advise the Executive in the development of Policy Framework issues.
- (c) To undertake research and reviews for the purpose of advising the Executive on the delivery of Corporate Plan Priorities.
- (d) To advise the Executive at an early stage in respect of the formulation and development of policies and projects that will help to deliver Corporate Plan Priorities
- (e) To assist in the development of Executive Decisions
- (f) To assist and advise the Executive as regards budget preparation.
- (g) To develop and maintain a work programme ensuring that there is efficient use of its time

Powers:

Each Executive Advisory Board will have the power:

- (a) To require the Leader and/or lead councillors and officers to attend before it to answer questions
- (b) To question and gather evidence from any person (with their consent)
- (c) To co-opt expert individuals on a non-voting basis to assist their work.
- (d) To set up panels, task groups or breakout groups to look at specific issues relating to the delivery of the Corporate Plan (or other significant priorities) in order to inform decision making by the Executive. For the avoidance of doubt, the membership of such panels and groups shall be open to all councillors.

Remits:

The remits of the Executive Advisory Boards will be as follows:

- (a) [The Place-Making and Innovation] Executive Advisory Board. [To be aligned to themes in the new Corporate Plan]
- (b) [The Community] Executive Advisory Board [To be aligned to themes in the new Corporate Plan]

Protocol for their operation:

- (1) EABS are advisory in nature and do not have any substantive decision-making powers delegated to them. EABs are to act as a source of advice to the Executive.
- (2) EABs will enable greater involvement and engagement of councillors and the public in significant Executive decisions.
- (3) EABS will advise the Executive at an early stage about the formulation and development of policies and projects that will help deliver Corporate Plan priorities. The EABs are intended to enable backbench councillors to be more closely involved with issues of greatest importance to the Council.
- (4) The chairmen and vice-chairmen of the EABs will meet regularly to identify priorities and prepare draft work programmes for consideration and approval by the EABs and, as part of this process, will take into account the forthcoming key or significant Executive decisions set out in the Forward Plan. Subject to paragraph (5) below, those matters identified in the agreed work programmes will be considered by the EABs in detail.
- (5) When considering an Executive decision, the EABs will aim to do so at a time when it is still open to influence, that is to say, when there is an expectation that a recommendation or suggestion for improvement could realistically lead to change. EAB agendas will list all forthcoming key or significant Executive decisions set out in the Forward Plan, except those that are urgent.
- (6) EABs will determine their final recommendations to the Executive by consensus if at all possible.
- (7) The advice of EABs to the Executive, including explanation for any recommendations, will be contained within a report considered by the Executive. The justification for not accepting advice from an EAB is to be made clear in the options considered by the Executive.

- (8) Membership of both an EAB and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee does not inevitably create a conflict of interest. As a rule, councillors should not be involved in scrutinising a decision in which they have been involved directly; yet, EABs are advisory and it remains the responsibility of the Executive to formally take and implement the decision.