

Corporate Governance & Standards Committee Report

Ward(s) affected: All

Report of Director of Resources

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Review of the Councillors' Development Steering Group

Executive Summary

Council Procedure Rule 24 (v) requires the appointing body to review annually, the continuation of task groups appointed by them. Although the Councillors' Development Steering Group was set up originally as an Executive working group, it was agreed in 2015 that the Steering Group would report on its work to this Committee.

This report asks the Committee to review the work carried out by the Steering Group over the past twelve months and the work they are likely to undertake over the next twelve months and to agree that it should continue its work. The current political composition of the Steering Group is as follows:

Conservatives: 2
Liberal Democrats: 1
Guildford Greenbelt Group: 1
Labour: 1

The Lead Councillor has asked the Committee to consider increasing the number of Conservative councillors on the Steering Group from two to four.

Recommendation to the Committee:

- (1) To agree that the Councillors' Development Steering Group should continue its work and to approve the numerical allocation of seats on the Steering Group to each political group.
- (2) Subject to paragraph (1) above, to ask political group leaders to confirm the councillor membership of the Steering Group in accordance with the agreed numerical allocation of seats.

Reason for Recommendation:

To comply with the requirement for this Committee to review the continuation of the Councillors' Development Steering Group, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 24 (v).

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report asks the Committee to review the work carried out by Councillors' Development Steering Group over the past twelve months and the work they are likely to undertake over the next twelve months. As part of this review, the report also asks the Committee to agree formally that the Steering Group should continue as presently constituted, and the numerical allocation of seats to each political group.

2. Strategic Priorities

- 2.1 The councillor working/task groups' work should assist in the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan and the fundamental themes that support that Plan.

3. Background

- 3.1 Council Procedure Rule 24 (v) requires the Committee to review, annually, the continuation of those task groups for which it is responsible. The Councillors' Development Steering Group is such a group.
- 3.2 The Committee will recall that the Council agreed in December 2016, as part of a review of the Constitution, to include for the purposes of clarity and avoidance of doubt, information in Council Procedure Rules on the appointment, terms of reference, composition and duration of:

- working groups (appointed by the Leader, a lead councillor, or the Executive) and
- task groups (appointed by Council, a committee, or an EAB),

including the appointment of working/task group chairmen and substitutes.

- 3.3 At its meeting on 23 May 2017, the Executive considered a report on the review of working groups for which it is the appointing body. The format of this report is similar to the Executive report and sets out in **Appendix 1**:

(a) the terms of reference and current composition of the Steering Group; and

(b) a summary of general progress including work undertaken, goals achieved and work still to be carried out.

- 3.4 Clearly, the work of the Steering Group is vital to ensure that the Councillor training and development programme continues to meet the needs of councillors and strives to maintain the standards required by the South East Employers Charter for Elected Member Development. Accordingly, the Committee is asked to agree that the Steering Group continues with its work.

3.5 The current political composition of the Steering Group is as follows:

Conservatives: 2
Liberal Democrats: 1
Guildford Greenbelt Group: 1
Labour: 1

3.6 The Lead Councillor has asked the Committee to consider increasing the number of Conservative councillors on the Steering Group from two to four. Under Council Procedure Rule 24, this Committee may determine, amongst other things,

- the number of councillors on a task group,
- whether the task group should be cross-party (it is essential that *all* political groups are represented on the Steering Group) and
- whether to ask political group leaders to nominate councillors for membership of the Steering Group or appoint those councillors itself.

4. Equality and Diversity Implications

4.1 The Steering Group is responsible for taking due regard to the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010) when making any policy recommendations.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report. Any proposals, projects or suggestions from the Steering Group with financial implications will either be contained within approved budgets or considered as part of the Service and Financial Planning cycle.

6. Legal Implications

6.1 There is no legal requirement to establish working groups but most councils use them for purposes similar to ours. As stated above, we have made provision for their operation in Council Procedure Rules.

7. Human Resource Implications

7.1 Currently, we are able to service the Steering Group from within existing staffing resources.

8. Summary of Options

8.1 In the light of the information provided in this report, the Committee (as the 'appointing body') is asked to agree that the Steering Group continues with its work.

8.2 The Committee may also revise terms of reference and composition of the Steering Group. In that regard, the Committee is also asked to agree the numerical allocation of seats to each political group.

9. Background Papers

None

10. Appendices

Appendix 1: Table showing details of the Councillor Development Steering Group including work undertaken over the past 12 months, and work still to be carried out

Appendix 1

NAME OF GROUP <i>and number of appointed councillors</i>	DATE ESTABLISHED/ FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS	DATE OF NEXT MEETING	TERMS OF REFERENCE	DETAILS OF GENERAL PROGRESS AND WORK STILL TO BE UNDERTAKEN
<p>Councillors’ Development Steering Group</p> <p><i>Currently 5 members:</i> Cllr Furniss Cllr Gunning Cllr Hurdle (C) Cllr Manning Cllr Reeves</p>	<p>Dec 2005/ The Group met on 4 occasions in 2016-17</p>	<p>TBC following CGSC meeting on 15 June 2017 (anticipated number of meetings in 2016- 17: 4 based upon the group continuing to meet on a quarterly basis)</p>	<p>The terms of reference of the group are as follows and will be reviewed shortly:</p> <p>“To continue to develop a clear structured Action Plan for councillor development that responds to the fundamental themes that support the vision of the Corporate Plan; Our Borough, Our Economy, Our Infrastructure, Our Environment and Our Society.</p> <p>To continue to support councillors in their ongoing development and training needs particularly with the introduction of new governance arrangements taking effect as of 1 January 2016.”</p>	<p><u>Progress:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council continued to meet the standard of the SE Charter for Elected Member Development as demonstrated by our assessment re-accreditation by South East Employers on 8 November 2016. The Council’s next full assessment will take place in November 2019 with an 18- month interim assessment due in May 2018. • At each meeting, the steering group reviews: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the councillors’ training and development programme ○ evaluation forms completed after each training/ seminar session and recommends changes to organisation of future events where required ○ the councillors’ training and development budget. <p><u>Work to be undertaken:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to consider the opportunity for wider group membership and enhanced strategic focus. • to review the current Councillor Role Profiles and include a clear reference to the importance of member development.

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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To include in the Councillor Development Work Programme links to leadership development courses hosted by the Local Government Association and Leadership Academy. • To create a feedback form on the loop for those councillors attending external courses and where course materials are available to all councillors. • To explore options for increasing councillor attendance levels at training sessions. A potential suggestion is to provide more bite-sized training sessions prior to committee meetings such as the bite-sized training offered prior to Planning Committee meetings. • To explore options to monitor the number of councillors viewing training webcasts. To explore options to evaluate councillors' knowledge following viewing training webcasts.