

Chichester District Council

THE CABINET

7 June 2022

Appointments to Panels and related Governance matters

1. Contacts

Report Author

Nicholas Bennett – Divisional Manager, Democratic Services

Telephone: 01243 534658 E-mail nbennett@chichester.gov.uk

Cabinet Member

Eileen Lintill – Leader

Telephone 01243 Email eLintill@chichester.gov.uk

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That Cabinet approve membership of Panels as set out in the appendix to this report.
- 2.2. That Cabinet approve appointments to current existing Panels: Boundary Review Panel, Business Routeing Panel, Development Plan and Infrastructure Panel, Economic Development Panel, Environment Panel, Grants and Concessions Panel, Joint Employee Consultative Panel, Strategic Risk Group as set out in the appendix to this report.
- 2.3. That Cabinet Confirm Housing and Communities Panel membership, Terms of Reference and appointments as set out in the appendix to this report.
- 2.4. That Cabinet approve a local protocol that Panel meetings are to remain private meetings as a default, but that the respective Chairs of each Panel should move to turn their meetings into public meetings, subject to discussion with the Monitoring Officer.

3. Background

- 3.1. The Council Corporate Governance Committee has undertaken work to consider governance arrangements for Panels at the authority including a task and finish group which reported to that Committee on 14th March 2022. The Committee considered and debated those reports and in turn now their recommendations are submitted at part 2 of this report. In particular these provide membership and appointment details for those Panels.
- 3.2. Meetings of the Council may be public or private. Whilst many meetings are public with related rights to attend, some meetings are private. Broadly the rules are that the public meetings are the more formal with the usual rights on publicity and timing which are very familiar to members. Private meetings are less formal and the public are only entitled to attend by agreement of members applying the rules on confidentiality. Another key difference is that private meetings may not decide matters, only make recommendations to another (public) meeting.

- 3.3. Panels are private meetings, though members have shown a wish to encourage access to them more often. So that the final decision lies with members on a case by case basis, recommendation 2.4 empowers Chairmen to make that decision following discussion (rather than formal consultation) with the Monitoring Officer.

4. Outcomes to be Achieved

- 4.1. The Council is required to have meetings to carry out its business and Panels operate to enable wider discussion by members of topics of interest to build understanding. They are typically private meetings and not subject to many of the rules related to formal public meetings. It is important that such arrangements are effective.
- 4.2. There is inherently some friction between the need to be transparent and the duties of confidentiality which apply to some matters being debated. The recommendation 2.4 gives a clarity that Chairmen have control of that decision panel to panel under advice from the Monitoring Officer depending upon the matters being discussed.

5. Alternatives Considered

- 5.1. Continue with the current structures and appointments Members have already indicated that they wish to enable the same opportunity to consider housing and communities matters in the model successfully applied for Economic development, Development Plan and Infrastructure Panel and Environment Panel.

6. Resource and Legal Implications

- 6.1. Resource will be required to support the new panel particularly from the relevant Directorate as well as Democratic Services division.
- 6.2. Legal services have advised on the proposed Housing and Communities Panel terms of reference and have no concerns or issues with the proposal as set out in this report.

7. Consultation

- 7.1. No external consultation has taken place though members have been involved at task and finish group and Corporate Governance Committee as described above.
- 7.2. Suggested appointments to each Panel follow consultation and discussion between Group Leaders.

8. Community Impact and Corporate Risks

- 8.1. If the new panel works effectively it will enable more informed debate and briefing to members on the key work of the Housing and Communities Directorate.
- 8.2. By creating an integrated consistent approach to panels at the authority it is considered that services will be protected and improved and that members

involvement in policy setting can be more in depth, both of these should reduce risks to the Council of successful challenge against those policies.

9. Other Implications

Crime and Disorder	None
Climate Change and Biodiversity	None
Human Rights and Equality Impact	None
Safeguarding	None
Health and Wellbeing	None
General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)	None

10. Appendices

- 10.1. Recommended appointments to all Panels and terms of reference to Housing and Communities Panel.

11. Background Papers

- 11.1. None