

ITEM NO:14

DECISION-MAKER:	COUNCIL		
SUBJECT:	NEW MODELS OF GOVERNANCE FOR THE COUNCIL'S EXECUTIVE ARRANGEMENTS AND ELECTORAL CYCLE		
DATE OF DECISION:	12 MAY 2010		
REPORT OF:	SOLICITOR TO THE COUNCIL		
AUTHOR:	Name:	MARK HEATH	Tel: 023 8083 2371
	E-mail:	mark.heath@southampton.gov.uk	

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

None

SUMMARY

The Council needs to consult on a new form of governance for its executive arrangements. The Council must consult the public and interested persons before drawing up proposals for change and resolving between two governance models and deciding which it wishes to adopt. In addition, the Council has the choice of moving from elections by thirds to whole Council elections, and if the Council wishes to change its election cycle, it must consult and agree to do so by the 31 December 2010. This report therefore looks at the consultation arrangements that should be undertaken prior to the Council deciding which options should be approved.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (i) That the Solicitor to the Council be authorised to consult in respect of the two potential governance models together with the options for changing the Council's electoral cycle;
- (ii) That the consultation process set out in paragraphs 8 -17 be approved;
- (iii) That a further report be submitted to the September Council meeting to determine the results of any consultations in respect of changes to the Council's Executive governance arrangements;
- (iv) That a Special meeting of the Council be convened before the September 2010 meeting in order for Council to consider the results of the consultation and determine proposals for any change in its electoral governance arrangements;
- (v) That the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act joint Working Group be re-established and that each of the political groups be asked to nominate two representatives to serve as members of the Group.

- (vi) That the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act Working Group be requested to consider the results of the consultation and make recommendations on the options which should be approved by Council in September.

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Members need to consult on the options on a new form of governance for its executive arrangements together with the options of changing its electoral cycle prior to deciding which of the options should be approved.

CONSULTATION

2. This report has been the subject of consultation and discussion with the Chair of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Joint Working Group

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

3. The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act received Royal Assent in December 2007. The Council will be required to adopt the proposals within the Act. The option not to consult on the proposals is therefore not available to the Council.

DETAIL

FORM OF EXECUTIVE

4. The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 requires Councils which operate executive arrangements to operate one of the following models:
 - Leader and cabinet executive;
 - Mayor and cabinet executive;
5. The key features of each executive model are as follows.
 - Leader and cabinet executive – a councillor elected as leader for either a 4 year term, in the case of a local authority operating whole-council elections, or until his or her term of office as councillor expires, where the local authority instead operates elections by halves or thirds, and two or more councillors of the authority appointed to the executive by the executive leader;
 - Mayor and cabinet executive – a directly elected mayor, who will remain in office for a four year term and who appoints two or more councillors to the executive.
6. The Council must therefore consult on the two models available before deciding between the two governance models and agreeing which should be approved.

Electoral Arrangements

7. The Council has undertaken elections by thirds since 1980. However, legislative change introduced under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 enables the Council to resolve to change its electoral cycle and move to whole council elections every four years.

Methodology for Consultation.

8. The Council needs to consult with the public and interested persons on which of the 2 governance models it wishes to adopt. Similarly, if an authority wishes to move from thirds to whole council elections, it must also consult. Councils undertaking such consultation must:
 - Consult such persons as the Council thinks appropriate on the proposed change(s);
 - Have regard to the outcome of the consultation before making its decision on which proposals to adopt;
 - Convene a special meeting of the Council (for change to its electoral arrangements only);
 - Pass a resolution to change by a two thirds majority of those voting (for change to its electoral arrangements only);
 - Publish an explanatory document on the decision(s) and make this available for public inspection; and
 - Give notice to the Electoral Commission on any changes to the electoral arrangements.
9. It is therefore suggested that the Council undertakes a combined consultation exercise which includes an opportunity for the public, local organisations, interest groups and other stakeholders, to express their views on the options available.
10. It is suggested that a questionnaire be designed to obtain feedback in a consistent and structured way across all respondents. A copy of the questionnaire which would be available on-line at the Council's Web Site is attached as appendix 1.
11. The consultation questionnaire includes:
 - Information on the current Executive and Electoral governance arrangements;
 - Information on the proposed changes together with an explanation of the impact of change;
 - Arguments for and against the changes;
 - The choice of 'tick' boxes for the respondent to indicate their preferred options;
 - A question to indicate if they are completing the questionnaire in the capacity of a local resident, local business or as a representative of a group or organisation;
 - Basic demographic information such as gender and age;
 - Deadline for completion.
12. Tenants Link can carry the information and questionnaire as a four page supplement. City View can also carry an article and pull out survey on the consultation. To ensure the broadest reach of all audiences surveys can also be carried out by telephone and face to face.

13. Information and the questionnaire can be made available at council receptions, housing offices, libraries and leisure venues. To encourage participation, the consultation can be promoted via multiple channels, as follows:
- Press release to local media, possible interviews
 - Articles in City View, Weekly Bulletin, Tenants Link, InView
 - JC Decaux two week poster campaign
 - Reception screen/Gateway screens
 - A4 posters in key council reception areas indicating where the questionnaire is available
 - Get involved updates via Twitter
14. Links to an on-line questionnaire would be sent to the business community via the Chamber of Commerce, to community groups and tenants' and residents' groups through the Council's existing communications networks. Similarly, links would also be sent to other stakeholders such as the PCT, MP's, MEP's, and Southampton Universities.
15. Feedback would be provided at the end of the consultation via the Council's web-site, City View and by using the Council's existing communication networks for other community and interest groups.
16. An analysis of the results from the consultation would be included in a report submitted to the Council meeting in September 2010 for the Executive arrangements and a Special Council meeting to be held prior to the September Council meeting for the electoral arrangements
17. Key dates;

Report to Council	May 2010
Consultation questionnaire finalised	May 2010
Tenants Link questionnaire	April/May
Distribution of City View with pull out' survey	24 May 2010
Consultation questionnaire and web page launch	May/June
Consultation questionnaire distribution	May/June
Media Release	May/June
Consultation Ends	6 th August
Collation and results analysis	August
Meeting of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act Working Group to consider the results of the consultation and make recommendations on the options.	August
Report to Special Council meeting (Electoral arrangements)	September 2010
Report to Council (Executive arrangements)	September 2010

- 18 At the Council Meeting in May 2009 it was agreed that the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act Working Group, should consider the results of the consultation and make recommendations on the options to the September 2010 Council meeting. It is therefore recommended that Council agree the re-establishment of the joint Working Group and that each of the political groups be asked to nominate two representatives to serve as members of the Group.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital

19. None

Revenue

20. Cost of consultation:

JC Decaux poster campaign	£1750
Design time	£750
Tenants Link pull-out	0
City View page	£2880
Telephone survey	£3,750
Street survey	£4,950
Online Data analysis	£800
Total	£14,880

These one off cost will be met from within existing revenue budgets.

Property

21. None

Other

22. None

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

23. The proposed arrangements are dealt with under the provisions of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

Other Legal Implications:

24. None

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

25. None

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Non-confidential appendices are in the Members' Rooms and can be accessed on-line

Appendices

1.	Copy of questionnaire
----	-----------------------

Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	None
----	------

Background Documents

Title of Background Paper(s)

Relevant Paragraph of the
Access to Information
Procedure Rules / Schedule
12A allowing document to be
Exempt/Confidential (if
applicable)

1.	None	
----	------	--

Background documents available for inspection at: N/A

KEY DECISION N/A

WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	All
------------------------------------	-----