
Corporate Governance Panel

Addendum to the Report of meeting of the Panel held on 26th March 2013

33. REVIEW OF COUNCIL CONSTITUTION

Further to Item No 33 (page no. 51) of the Council Agenda, as Chairman of the Panel I now have had time to consider proposals to –

- ◆ vary the terms of reference and title of the Corporate Governance Panel such that it either becomes a Panel with responsibility for standards issues or the terms of reference of the existing Standards Committee are extended to comprise some of the responsibilities of the Panel; and
- ◆ rationalise the membership of Panels such that they either would comprise 12 or 8 Members bringing the total number of seats to 84.

Having had the opportunity to explore the practices operated by the other Cambridgeshire authorities, it is apparent that there is no preferred model for dealing with standards, constitutional or corporate governance issues. For example, Cambridgeshire County, South Cambridgeshire and Fenland District Councils divide the functions between two Committees/Panels, whereas Peterborough and Cambridge City and East Cambridgeshire District Councils manage the functions through one Committee/Panel. Names and functions assigned are various.

In view of the results of this preliminary research and given that it still is a little early to assess the impact, going forward, of the new standards regime, as Chairman of the Panel I propose, in addition to the recommendations on pages 52/53 of the your Council Book –

that, in consultation with the Deputy Executive Leader and the Chairman of the Standards Committee, the Corporate Governance Panel be requested to review its role, responsibilities and terms of reference and that of the Standards Committee with a view to a report on the outcome being submitted to the Panel meeting on 26th March for potential implementation with effect from the Annual Meeting in May 2014.

In terms of the composition of Panels and to bring synergy and consistency to the Democratic Structure, I believe it is reasonable and non controversial to rationalise the number of Members which comprise the various Panels and Committees. As the membership of Overview & Scrutiny Panels can be varied without constitutional change, I propose that –

- i. the Corporate Governance Panel and Standards Committee comprise 8 Members rather than 7 (to align with the Employment Panel); and**
- ii. that the Council membership of the Overview & Scrutiny Panels be increased from 10 to 12 (to align with the Licensing & Protection Panel and Licensing Committee).**

As mentioned on page 52 of the Panel's Report to Council, the Head of Legal & Democratic Services will undertake a further review of the operating practices of the Overview & Scrutiny Panel and the desirability of the continued involvement of external co-opted members and will report on the outcome, after consultation with the Deputy Executive Leader and the Chairmen of the Overview & Scrutiny Panels, to a future meeting of the Corporate Governance Panel.