

Dear Members

Resources Scrutiny Committee

A meeting of the Resources Scrutiny Committee will be held on **Wednesday 13 March 2024** at **6.30pm** in the **Craddock Room, Civic Centre, Riverside, Stafford** to deal with the business as set out on the agenda.

Please note that this meeting will be recorded.

Members are reminded that contact officers are shown at the top of each report and members are welcome to raise questions etc in advance of the meeting with the appropriate officer.



Head of Law and Governance

RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

13 MARCH 2024

Chair - Councillor M J Winnington

AGENDA

- 1 Minutes of 9 January 2024 as previously published on the Council's website.
- 2 Apologies
- 3 Public Question Time - Nil
- 4 Councillor Session - Nil
- 5 Called in Items - Nil
- 6 Members' Items - Nil

Page Nos

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HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE
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HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE

Membership

Chair - Councillor M J Winnington

E L Carter	A M Loughran
M G Dodson	B McKeown
F D J James	A Nixon
R A James	J S Powell
E G R Jones	M J Winnington

Agenda Item 7(a)

Review of the Constitution

Committee: Resources Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 13 March 2024

Report of: Head of Law and Governance

Portfolio: Resources

1 Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the Committee with details of the recommended amendment to the Constitution as suggested by the Task and Finish Review Group.

2 Recommendations

2.1 That the amendments detailed in the **APPENDIX** be forwarded for consideration at the Council meeting due to be held on 16 April 2024.

Reasons for Recommendations

2.2 Adoption of the amendments has been recommended by the Constitution Review Task and Finish Working Group as part of the 2024 annual review.

3 Key Issues

3.1 Article 15.1 of the current Constitution requires the Monitoring Officer to review the Constitution on an annual basis.

3.2 Accordingly, the Resources Scrutiny Committee agreed to establish a Task and Finish Review Group to undertake a Review of the Constitution.

3.3 The Constitution Task and Finish Review Group have recommended amendments to the Constitution during the course of their review.

3.4 If agreed by this Committee, the suggested amendments to the Constitution will be reported to the Council meeting on 16 April 2024.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

4.1 The Constitution supports all of the Council's Corporate Priorities.

5 Report Detail

- 5.1 Article 15.1 of the Constitution requires the Monitoring Officer to review the Constitution on an annual basis.
- 5.2 Following the last review, the Resources Scrutiny Committee at its meeting held on 7 November 2023 (Minute No RSC11refers) agreed to establish a Task and Finish Review Group in order to undertake the annual Review of the Constitution.
- 5.3 The aim of the Task and Finish Review was to report any suggested amendments to the Constitution to this Committee, with a view to making formal recommendations to Council on 16 April 2024.
- 5.4 The Constitution Task and Finish Review Group have recommended amendments to the Constitution during the course of their Review, which are detailed in the **APPENDIX**.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

None

6.2 Legal

None

6.3 Human Resources

None

6.4 Risk Management

None

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

None

6.6 Health

None

6.7 Climate Change

None

7 Appendices

Appendix 1: Amendments to the Constitution: 2024 Annual Review

8 Previous Consideration

None

9 Background Papers

File available in Law and Governance

Contact Officer: Jackie Allen

Telephone Number: 01785 619552

Ward Interest: All

Report Track: Resources 13 March 2024

Council 16 April 2024

Appendix 1

Amendments to Constitution: 2024 Annual Review

Part 2, Articles of the Constitution, Article 6, Scrutiny Committees

Insert “and 9F” and “Police and Justice Act 2006” and delete “Health and Social Care Act 2001, or regulations under section 32 of the Local Government Act 2000”. The amended paragraph to read:

- 6.1 The Council will appoint one or more scrutiny committees to discharge the functions of overview and scrutiny conferred by section 21 and 9F of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Police and Justice Act 2006. The Council will determine the terms of reference of and number of members on each scrutiny committee. The current approved scrutiny committees, the number of members on them and their terms of reference are set out in section 4 of Part 3 of this Constitution.

Part 2, Articles of the Constitution, Article 11, Joint Arrangements - Joint Health Scrutiny Arrangements

Add the new paragraph:

11.2 Shared Services with Cannock Chase District Council

11.2.1 In April 2023, the Council approved a Framework Agreement with Cannock Chase District Council to enable the sharing of staffing resource across both authorities (“shared services”).

11.2.2 Under section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972, and section 9EA of the Local Government Act 2000, a local authority may arrange for the discharge of any of its functions by any other local authority. Cabinet and Council agreed to delegate authority to Cannock Chase District Council to discharge the Council’s functions in respect of Regulatory Services, Wellbeing, Housing and Corporate Asset Management, Finance and Transformation and Assurance. The Council also agreed to accept delegated authority from Cannock Chase District Council to discharge that Councils functions in respect of Economic Development and Planning, Operations, Transformation and Assurance (Human Resources and Technology) and Law and Governance. It was also agreed that those functions would be delegated to officers in accordance with the Councils scheme of delegation to officers.

11.2.3 Under section 113 of the Local Government Act 1972, a local authority may enter into an agreement with another local authority for the placing at the disposal of the latter authority the services of staff employed by the former

authority. In April 2023, both Councils agreed to place its officers at the disposal of the other Council for the purpose of delivering any services shared between them.

11.2.4 By virtue of the above, the functions delegated to the Council by Cannock Chase District Council can be carried out by officers under the Councils scheme of delegation regardless of whether the officer is employed by the Council or by Cannock Chase District Council.

Part 3, Responsibility for Functions, Section 6 - Scheme of Delegation, 2.4 Property Matters

Delete paragraph 2.4 and add paragraph 3.9:

2.4 Property Matters

2.4.1 The day to day management of land and property.

2.4.2 The maintenance of land and property within approved budgets.

2.4.3 In consultation with the Head of Law and Administration:

- (a) The disposal of property on lease or licence for a period not exceeding seven years.
- (b) The disposal freehold or on lease for a period exceeding seven years of incidental land not exceeding 0.1 hectare in area and £6,000 in value.
- (c) The granting of rights of way and other easements for periods not exceeding twenty-one years.
- (d) The conduct and determination of rent reviews and lease renewals in respect of property let to or by the Council.
- (e) Approval to amendments to user clauses in leases.
- (f) Consent to assignment or sub-letting of property leased from the Council.
- (g) Consent to alterations and improvements to property leased from the Council.

Add:

3.9 Head of Housing and Corporate Assets

3.9.1 To undertake all relevant property management activities including the acquisition and disposal of interests in land and premises; management of

property; rent reviews; lease renewal terms; accepting the surrender of leases (in consultation with the Legal service); granting licences; consents for assignments, sub-letting, alterations or improvements; variations to user clauses; proceedings for forfeiture; marketing; acquiring consents; granting wayleaves and easements; dealing with emergencies; appointing advisors; establishing and maintaining a property terrier; submitting planning and other applications.

- 3.9.2 To appoint a suitably qualified Officer(s) or agent(s) (where applicable and permitted):
- (a) to act as the Council's land and property valuer.
 - (b) To fulfil the Council's obligations as Client under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015, and/or
 - (c) to undertake any aspects, scope or remit of industry recognised roles for any schemes or projects or development on land designed and managed by the Council, and
 - (d) to undertake and discharge all enforcement powers, duties, obligations, and responsibilities arising out of the Council having an interest in land and premises including, but not limited to, the role of the Council as landowner.
- 3.9.3 To authorise the grant of licences on standard terms where future applications are received to take over land which has been the subject of a prior Standard Licence Agreement and there are no overriding reasons to object to such a renewal.
- 3.9.4 To decline on behalf of the Council, offers to purchase or dispose of land where such a purchase or disposal does not accord with Council policy.

Part 4, Rules of Procedure, Section 8 - Financial Procedure Rules, 8.16, 8.17 and Annex





Change the debt value from £2,500 to £10,000. The new paragraph to read:

- 8.16 Where debts are due and have been pursued, but remain unpaid, the Section 151 Officer is authorised to write-off bad debts up to the value of £10,000 on recommendation of the appropriate Service
- 8.17 For debts over £10,000, outstanding amounts may, on recommendation of the Section 151 Officer, be referred to the cabinet for consideration of write off.
- Annex 8.16 Maximum individual debt that can be written off by Section 151 Officer
£10,000

The Council - Delivery Plan for 2023 - 2024

Business Objective 4: To be a well-run, financially sustainable and ambitious organisation, responsive to the needs of our customers and communities and focussed on delivering our objectives.

Summary of Progress as at end of Quarter 3



				N/A	Total Number of Projects
Action completed	Work on Target	Work < 3 months behind schedule	Work > 3 months behind schedule	Action not yet due	
	1		2		3


Summary of Successes as at Quarter 3

The new customer portal went live on 29th November. Further processes are to be added in Q4 and throughout 2024/25

Summary of Slippage as at Quarter 3

There has been slippage on the transformation work due to capacity issues. Funding for additional capacity has been included within the budget for 2024/25 which will help to address some of the capacity issues.





	Objective & Actions	Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
4.1	Use our resources in the most effective and efficient way by focusing on financial recovery, reform and sustainability							
4.1.1	Determine a medium term financial strategy to maintain the financial resilience of the Council	A rolling Medium Term Financial Strategy produced				X	The Medium Term Financial Strategy has been produced and is due to be approved by Council in January	
4.2	Continue to work towards organisational and transformational change, integrating equality objectives into everything we do							
4.2.1	Consider the impact of change and future ways of working on the Council workforce, members and customers	Pilot of the Way We Work completed and evaluated	X				The review of the pilot has slipped due to capacity issues within the HR team. Intention is to complete this in Q1 2024/25	
		Overarching framework for workforce plan to be developed		X			Cabinet has approved deferring this to 2024/25	
		Review of digital strategy and development of action plan	X				The digital strategy is with the Deputy Chief Executive Resources for review but has been delayed by work on the budget	

	Objective & Actions	Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
		Implementation of new Customer Portal System Phase 1		X			The new system went live on 29 th November with the garden waste permits. Other processes will be added during Q4 and the system will continue to be developed in 2024/25.	
4.2.2	Investigate the opportunity for further shared services with neighbouring authorities	Implementation and transformation of shared services including the delivery of savings	X	X	X	X	The restructure of the service manager tier has been delayed slightly but consultation will commence in Q4	

KPIs for Business Objective 4 - The Council

Description	Symbol	Number of KPIs
Performance exceeds target	★	3
Performance on target	✓	1
Performance below target	✗	2

	Indicator	Target	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year	Symbol	Comments
	Local Taxation and Benefits								
L13	Days taken to process new HB/CT Claims	20 days	33.7	42.5	24.2			✗	The cause of the performance earlier in the year was largely due to a high turnover of staff and a number of new staff undergoing training). Performance has improved and was better than target during November and December. Q4 results should therefore be on target.
L14	Days taken to process new HB/CT change of circumstances	9 days	7.5	8.7	6.9			★	

	Indicator	Target	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year	Symbol	Comments
	% of Council Tax collected annually	98% by year end	28.8%	56.0%	83.1%				Compares to 82.3% in the same period of last year so improving toward the pre-pandemic position.
	% National non-domestic rates (NNDR) collected	98% by year end	28.9%	60.4%	83.9				Compares to 81% last year and better than pre-pandemic performance (83.4% in December 2019)
Calls									
	% of calls answered	94%	94%	94%	88%				December call volumes were very high due to residents signing up for their garden waste subscriptions. 3037 calls for garden waste were taken which accounted for 40% of our calls.
	Average call wait time	2 min	1.21	1.18	1.36				Despite the high call volumes the average call wait time was lower than the target

Agenda Item 7(c)**Work Programme - Resources Scrutiny Committee**

Committee:	Resources Scrutiny
Date of Meeting:	13 March 2024
Report of:	Head of Law and Governance
Portfolio:	Resources

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the Resources Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the report be noted.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 The first stage in achieving a Member-led Overview and Scrutiny process is to develop a Work Programme for the Members of the Committee to own.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 Accordingly, an up-to-date copy of the Resources Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme is provided for Members to consider or amend as appropriate.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 This report is most closely associated with the following Corporate Business Objective 3:-

To be a well-run, financially sustainable and ambitious organisation responsive to the needs of our customers and communities and focussed on delivering our objectives.

5 Report Detail

- 5.1 Members will recall that one of the fundamental philosophies behind the creation of Overview and Scrutiny is that the process should be Member-led and the first stage in achieving this is to develop a Work Programme that is:-

- Owned by all Members of the Scrutiny Committee;
- Flexible to allow the Committee to react to urgent items;
- Contain aspects of both Overview and Scrutiny.

5.2 Therefore, at each scheduled meeting of the Resources Scrutiny Committee, an up-to-date copy of the Work Programme will be provided for Members to consider or amend as appropriate.

5.3 The Work Programme includes provision for the Committee to scrutinise appropriate items delivered through the Council's Service Delivery Plan up to twelve months in advance, whilst maintaining the flexibility to respond to any issues that may arise.

5.4 Accordingly, attached at **APPENDIX** is the Resources Scrutiny Committee's current Work Programme to consider or amend as appropriate.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

Nil

6.2 Legal

Nil

6.3 Human Resources

Nil

6.4 Risk Management

Nil

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

Nil

6.6 Health

Nil

6.7 Climate Change

Nil

7 Appendices

None

8 Previous Consideration

Nil

9 Background Papers

File available in Law and Administration.

Contact Officer:	Ian Curran
Telephone Number:	01785 619220
Ward Interest:	Nil
Report Track:	Resources 13 March 2024 (Only)
Key Decision:	N/A

Appendix

Work Programme - Resources Scrutiny Committee**Date - to be confirmed****Report Deadline****To be confirmed****Officer Reports:****Performance Update/Budget Monitoring Report**
Head of Transformation and Assurance**Business Planning Report****Work Programme 2024/25**
Head of Law and Governance

Future Items:

- **Procurement**