

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
COUNCIL – 15 NOVEMBER 2023
REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

CABINET PANELS

1 Executive Summary

1.1 The Council currently have a number of Cabinet panels, namely:

- Campus West Cabinet Panel
- Cabinet Planning and Parking Panel
- Cabinet Housing Panel

1.2 It is recognised by the new Joint Administration that Cabinet Panels should be further enhanced to mirror as much as possible the services under each of the Cabinet members.

1.3 There are two major changes that are being proposed:

- Expanding the remit of the Campus West Cabinet Panel (CWCP) to include Leisure, Youth Partnership, Mill green museum and Roman Baths; Customers, Bereavement Services; Communications; Marketing, Website and Community Outreach. And to rename this panel to Community Cabinet Panel.
- Promote the current Climate Change Member Panel to a Climate Biodiversity Cabinet Panel. This is to ensure that the council recognises the importance of Climate Change and it would also allow the public to participate at the meeting to some degree (e.g. they could submit public questions).

1.4 These changes were discussed at the Constitution Review Group on 6 September 2023 and it was unanimously agreed to recommend to Full Council for approval.

2 Recommendation(s)

2.1 Council agrees to expand the remit of the Campus West Cabinet Panel as set out in paragraph 1.3 and to rename this panel to Community Cabinet Panel, with the new terms of reference as shown in appendix A.

2.2 Council agrees to promote the Climate Change Member Panel to a Climate Biodiversity Cabinet Panel as set out in paragraph 1.3, with the new terms of reference as shown in appendix B.

3 Explanation

Expanding the remit of CWCP and renaming the panel to Community Cabinet Panel

- 3.1 It is proposed that the Community Cabinet Panel will cover Campus West, Leisure, Youth Partnership, Mill green museum and Roman Baths; Customers, Bereavement Services; Communications; Marketing, Website and Community Outreach.
- 3.2 The proposed terms of reference is shown in appendix A.

Promoting the current Climate Change Member Panel to a Climate Biodiversity Cabinet Panel

- 3.3 The proposed terms of reference is shown in appendix B.

Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA)

- 3.4 All existing Cabinet Panel Chairs currently attract SRA allowance and the amount is the same for all Cabinet Panels (£4279.03 for the current year).
- 3.5 The Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) will need to be called to consider whether the Chairs of the new Community Panel and Climate Change Cabinet Panel should be attracting the same SRA.
- 3.6 Members have also commented whether the Standards Committee Chair SRA should be reviewed, which is currently set at the same level as Cabinet Panel Chairs. It was therefore recommended by the Constitution Review Group that the IRP should consider the SRA for the new Cabinet Panel Chairs and the Standards Committee Chair.

Timescale

- 3.7 It is anticipated that the recommendation from the IRP will be brought to Full Council for consideration in February 2024, and that the new Cabinet Panels will take effect from the next municipal year. The political proportionality will therefore be determined after May 2024 Election.

4 Legal Implication(s)

- 4.1 If members agree with the recommendations, the Council's Constitution will be updated to reflect the changes set out in this report.

5 Financial Implication(s)

- 5.1 The changes set out in this report may have an impact on the overall members allowance budget, however this will not be known until February 2024 when Full Council considers the outcome of the IRP review on the Special Responsibility Allowance.

6 Risk Management Implications

- 6.1 There are no risk management implications arising from this report.

7 Security and Terrorism Implication(s)

- 7.1 There are no security and terrorism implications arising from this report.

8 Procurement Implication(s)

8.1 There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

9 Climate Change Implication(s)

9.1 It is anticipated that by promoting the Climate Change Member Panel to a Climate Biodiversity Cabinet Panel would bring a stronger focus on the Council's work on Climate Change and it would also enhance public participation.

10 Human Resources Implication(s)

10.1 There are no direct human resource implications arising from this report.

11 Communication and Engagement Implication(s)

11.1 There are no communication and engagement implications arising from this report.

12 Link to Corporate Priorities

12.1 The subject of this report is linked to the Council's Corporate Priority of being a well run council which puts its customers first. The report also links to the successful running of the council, and all its services, which will assist in the delivery of all corporate priorities.

13 Equality and Diversity

13.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment was not completed as the changes do not impact on policy or service provision.

Name of author	Ka Ng
Title	Chief Executive
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Appendix A - Community Cabinet Panel Proposed Terms of Reference

1. To work on the development of strategies and policies relating to the Council's Community functions and to make recommendations to Cabinet in relation to the adoption of such strategies and policies.
2. To monitor the financial performance of Campus West and Museum Services, with the aim of minimising the public subsidy required to operate the service.
3. To monitor the effectiveness of Campus West and Museum Services at providing community facilities which are well-regarded and provide a diverse range of activities for residents and visitors, generating social value for the Borough.
4. To receive updates on community engagement events across the Borough, with the aim of ensuring maximum accessibility and value for money.

Appendix B - Climate Biodiversity Cabinet Panel Proposed Terms of Reference

1. To receive information to assist Members in understanding the effects of climate change and the Council's role in adaption to and mitigation from those effects.
2. To work on the development of strategies, policies and action plan relating to climate change and biodiversity make recommendations to Cabinet in relation to the adoption of such strategies, policies, and plans.
3. To monitor the progress of the Climate Change Action Plan with the aim of reducing the Council's carbon emissions, with a target for net-zero carbon emissions by 2030. Leading by example to encourage and engage residents, communities, businesses and other partners to reduce carbon emissions with the aim to be Net Zero as a borough by 2050.
4. To consider the work of other Hertfordshire-wide Climate Change Groups such as Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership (HCCSP)
5. To set and recommend to Cabinet the criteria for grants to be awarded to local organisations to improve their carbon footprint.