

## Agenda Item 7

<b>Strategic Management Team Lead Officer</b>	Angela Griffiths
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<b>Date</b>	Council – 19 <sup>th</sup> March 2013

<b>Subject</b>	Governance
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### RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That the Council resolves that no change be made to the Council's model of Governance and that the Executive model be retained.
- (2) That the proposal of the Leader that the appointment of Members to represent the Council on outside organisations be undertaken by the Council at the Annual Meeting be approved, but that if vacancies/new appointments occur during the year, those decisions be taken by the Executive.
- (3) That Councillors representing the Council on outside organisations be asked to provide regular updates on the work of those organisations.

### The Council has the authority to determine the Recommendations

### COUNCIL PRIORITIES

The Council has three priority themes and any model of Governance must provide for the delivery of those themes:

- Access to Services
- Environment
- Value for Money

### 1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 At its meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2012 the Council agreed to establish a Working Group comprising Councillors Stephen Cooksey, Clare Curran, Vivienne Michael, John Northcott and David Preedy (subsequently Councillor Preedy was replaced by Councillor Margaret Cooksey) with the following terms of reference:

- (1) to identify the most appropriate Governance Model which will best enable the Council to deliver its priorities (including consultation with Group Leaders where appropriate), and following that
  - to identify the process that might need to be undertaken to enable the Council to adopt a committee model of Governance (if such a model is chosen) and to identify the implications of adopting such a model; and
  - to indicate the timetable that could be employed.
- (2) to report back to the Council accordingly.

1.2 The Working Group has met on five occasions and has:

- Considered the legal issues arising from the Localism Act – ie that a change from one Governance model to another must happen with effect from an Annual Meeting of the Council and that once a change of model has been made it is not possible to change away from it for 5 years.
- Considered previous models which have been operated in Mole Valley and committee structure models in place at other Councils.
- Given consideration to a number of options including:
  - Streamlined committee structure or Executive structure with localised Committees
  - Increased decision-making by the Council
  - The establishment of committees based around Council priorities
  - Establishment of a Policy Committee with Scrutiny Committee
  - Establishment of Services and Resources Committees with a Policy Committee
  - Establishment of differing three committee options.
- Sent a representative to an INLOGOV seminar devoted to consideration of a move to a committee model.
- Sent a questionnaire to all Councillors seeking their views on the role of the Councillor, their availability to attend meetings and their preferences for the number of meetings they attend – 24 Councillors responded.
- Arranged a Seminar for all Councillors which described a number of different Governance options and associated indicative costings, which 27 Councillors attended.

1.3 The Working Group met after the Seminar and discussed the options which had been discussed previously. The Group could not come to a view as to whether to recommend the Council to adopt either the retention of the Executive model or a return to a Committee model of Governance nor did it decide which of a number of committee models, it had considered, to recommend for consideration alongside an Executive structure.

1.4 The Leader recognises the desirability of all Members of the Council being involved/consulted before certain decisions are taken. One decision currently taken by the Executive is the appointment of Members to represent the Council on outside Organisations. The Leader is proposing that with effect from the May 2013 Annual meeting this function be undertaken by the Council.

1.4 He is also of the view that many Members would appreciate regular updates from those Members representing the Council on those outside organisations. These updates would be provided to all Members.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 That, as the Working Group has not been able to come up with a recommendation, the Council should agree that no change be made to the Council's model of Governance and that the Executive model be retained.

2.2 That the appointment of Members to represent the Council on outside organisations be undertaken by the Council at the Annual Meeting, but that if vacancies/new appointments occur during the year, those decisions be taken by the Executive.

2.3 That Councillors representing the Council on outside organisations be asked to provide regular updates on the work of those organisations.

## **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

**Legal Implications** – The Localism Act 2011 allows Councils to change their Governance arrangements to a Committee model if they so choose. Any decision has to be made to be brought into effect from the Annual meeting in any year.

**Financial and Risk Implications** – If the Council decides to move from an Executive model to a Committee model it cannot revert to the Executive model for 5 years.

There are no financial implications arising directly from the recommendations contained in this report.

**Equalities Implications** – Any model of Governance the Council adopts should not prevent or discourage anyone qualified to stand for election as a Member of Mole Valley District Council.

**Employment Issues** – None.

**Sustainability Issues** – None.

**Consultation** – All Councillors were invited to complete a survey seeking their views. 24 responses were received. 27 Members also attended a seminar which discussed possible models.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.