

# Public Document Pack

## NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of **Councillors Commission** held remotely via Microsoft Teams on Wednesday, 28 April 2021 at 2.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor R Blaney (Chairman)

Councillor Mrs L Dales, Councillor Mrs L Hurst, Councillor J Lee and Councillor P Peacock

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor L Brailsford

The meeting was held remotely, in accordance with the Local Authorities and Police & Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police & Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

### 42 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 25 FEBRUARY 2021

AGREED that the minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### 43 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no declarations of interest.

### 44 GOVERNANCE REVIEW - PROPOSALS FOR CHANGE

The Chief Executive presented a report which invited Members to consider proposals and options for taking forward new governance arrangements for the Council. It was proposed that a Leader and Cabinet system of governance, properly shaped and designed to the Council's needs and reflective of our local circumstances, offered the best solution to address the factors highlighted by the LGA peer review. It was considered that the Leader and Cabinet system was better aligned with the Council's ambition to operate in a modern and streamlined way.

Reference was made to the factors to be addressed in terms of the Council's current governance arrangements, and the key ingredients for effective governance as set out by the LGA. These were relevant in respect of achieving clarity, transparency and speed of decision making. It also provided a more effective framework to ensure timely scrutiny, challenge and performance management. The report outlined the statutory procedure to move to an Executive style of governance, and proposed the creation of a working party to formulate details of how the new governance arrangements would operate.

The Commission emphasised the importance of training for Members, and supported the notion of a working party to feed back to the Councillors' Commission on the progress of the move towards a new governance model.

AGREED (unanimously) that it be recommended to Full Council on 4 May 2021 that:

- a. the Council resolve to adopt a Leader and Cabinet style of governance, with implementation to take effect from May 2022; and
- b. a small working group of Members, with membership to be determined by Full Council, be established to formulate the detail of how the new governance arrangements should operate, with the aim of reporting back to Full Council on 14 December 2021 for its consideration and approval.

#### 45 GOVERNMENT CALL FOR EVIDENCE ON REMOTE MEETINGS FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES

The Business Manager – Law & Information Governance presented a report which sought views of the Commission on a consultation being undertaken by the Government on the current arrangements for local authorities to meet remotely, or in a hybrid format.

The Commission noted that the current Regulations brought in to expressly permit local authority meetings to take place remotely, expired on 7 May 2021, and despite appeals to the Government, had not been extended. The Government was now seeking representations on the use of current arrangements and to gather evidence on the question of whether there should be permanent arrangements to enable remote or hybrid meetings, and if so for which meetings.

A suggested Council response to the consultation was set out as Appendix A to the report. The Commission supported the proposed response but referred to the importance of having flexibility in terms of which meetings could be held in a remote or hybrid fashion going forwards as these would not be appropriate for all meetings.

AGREED (unanimously) that the suggested responses to the call for evidence document attached to the report as Appendix A, be submitted as the Council's response to the consultation.

Meeting closed at 2.33 pm.

Chairman