

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the **Councillors Commission** held virtually by Teams on Thursday, 2 December 2021 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor R Blaney (Chairman)

Councillor Mrs R Crowe, Councillor Mrs L Dales, Councillor P Harris,
Councillor Mrs L Hurst, Councillor J Kellas and Councillor P Peacock

50 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 28 SEPTEMBER 2021

AGREED that the minutes of the meeting held on 28 September 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

51 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no declarations of interest.

52 PROPOSALS FOR NEW GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

The Assistant Director – Legal and Democratic Services presented a report which updated the Commission on the progress made by the Governance Review Working Party on the design of the new governance arrangements for implementation in May 2022. The report set out the proposals of the Working Party, which were to be recommended to the Full Council at their meeting to be held on 14 December 2021.

During the debate, the Commission raised the following points which it considered required further consideration, prior to the governance arrangements being formally agreed in a final form.

- Appointment of Portfolio Holders – it was considered that the appointments of portfolio holders (including any change in numbers and remits), although appointed by the Leader of the Council, should be subject to endorsement by the Full Council.
- Proposed Shareholder Committee – it was considered that if the scrutiny of the Council's wholly owned companies was an executive function, then there should be two bodies created in order to separate the scrutiny of Arkwood Developments and Active4Today.
- Key decision threshold – the Commission sought an explanation for the proposed increase in thresholds to £150,000 revenue and £300,000 capital. It was also considered that although a decision may be on a specific site or area, its impact may be far greater than just on two or more Wards.
- Policy & Performance Improvement Committee – Working Groups – it was considered that there needed to be a formal process by which all Members of the Council were made aware of specific working groups as they are convened given that the membership can be drawn from the whole of the Council. It was also considered that where appropriate, local Ward Members would also need to be allocated a place on relevant working groups. The Commission were also of the view that non-councillor representatives could also be invited to attend such working groups where external advice and expertise were required.

- Call-In Procedure – the Commission expressed concerns about the proposed officer role in considering the merits of a call-in. It was felt that as drafted the criteria was too restrictive and a further ground should be added to read ‘concerned with public interest’.
- Strengthening the representative role of Members – it was considered that the proposed ‘What’s Going On’ presentation should be held at least twice per year. The Commission also agreed that the points made at the end of the Area Committee discussion paper should also be included as ideas to progress to strengthen the representative role of Members.
- Training – it was suggested that a further training session could be set up with Members from Melton Borough Council to share experiences.

AGREED that:

- (a) the progress to date be noted; and
- (b) the Councillors Commission meet when required to discuss further details once agreed with the Governance Review Working Party.

Meeting closed at 7.15 pm.

Chairman