

**REPORT TO: MEETING OF DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL - 24 MAY 2007**

**REPORT ON: CHANGES TO COMMITTEE STRUCTURES, ETC**

**REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**REPORT NO: 291-2007**

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To make proposals to streamline the Council's Committee Structure, Standing Orders, Delegated Powers, Financial Regulations and Tendering Procedures to support the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

To approve the proposals included in this report.

**3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The cost of implementing the new scheme for the payment of remuneration to members is estimated at £659,660 and this sum will be contained within the 2007-2008 Revenue Budget.

**4. SUSTAINABILITY POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

These changes will assist the Council to deliver its Sustainability Policies and Action Plans through increased monitoring and scrutiny.

**5. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**

The changes will assist the Council to deliver the Council's Disability and Equalities Policies and Action Plans through increased monitoring and scrutiny.

**6. BACKGROUND**

The Council's Committee Structure needs to ensure that all elected members feel involved in establishing policies, monitoring performance and ensuring that the Council delivers the services required by the citizens of Dundee. The Committee Structure also needs to demonstrate to external parties such as Best Value Auditors and Inspection Teams that the Council can develop user focused services, improve quality, and efficiency, and strengthen accountability. The Council also needs to lead Community Planning within the city and find new ways to join up services and share resources with Community Planning Partners, other Local Authorities and other Scottish Executive agencies.

**7. PROPOSALS**

**7.1 Service Committee Structures**

It is proposed to establish the undernoted Service Committees:

The Committee names may be changed over time but existing names which are currently well understood have been retained.

- i) Policy & Resources Committee  
(to include present functions plus Finance, Audit and Personnel)

The Policy & Resources Committee would take responsibility for setting policy direction, strategy and standards for the Council as a whole as well as supervising the provision of central support services to the other Service Committees.

- ii) Planning and Transport

It is proposed that the functions of the previous Planning and Transportation Committee remain unchanged with the Committee retaining its emphasis on land planning policies and major transport issues.

- iii) Economic Development

The functions of this Committee should be expanded to take the lead role in the marketing of the city, including the "City of Discovery Campaign".

- iv) Housing, Dundee Contract Services and Environment Services Issues

These Departments deliver services at a housing and local level and have close contacts with the same client groups.

- v) Education

It is proposed that the functions of the Education Committee remain unchanged due to the high priority accorded to the Best Value Review on Attainment.

- vi) Social Work and Health

It is proposed that the Social Work Committee be expanded to involve Health issues where the Council can assist in addressing health inequalities in the city.

- vii) Leisure, Arts and Communities

It is proposed that the Leisure & Arts Committee and the Communities Committee now be formally merged in line with the department structure.

- viii) Licensing Committee  
Development Quality Committee  
City Council  
Licensing Board

These will all continue to operate unchanged.

- ix) Best Value, Performance and Efficiency Sub Committee

The role of this Sub Committee should be expanded to enable the Council to scrutinise its performance in more detail than is possible at a Service Committee. This will be achieved through the Sub Committee's work in examining Best Value Audits, Performance Information including information from the Strategic Monitoring Database and Efficiency Reports. Where necessary, matters will be remitted back to the originating Committees.

## 7.2 Frequency and times of Meetings

It is proposed to hold two meetings of the City Council and each of the undernoted Committees each month, subject to there being relevant business.

- Policy & Resources Committee
- Planning and Transport
- Economic Development
- Housing, Dundee Contract Services and Environment Services
- Education
- Social Work and Health
- Leisure, Arts and Communities

The Policy & Resources Committee and the Service Committees would be held on the second and fourth Monday in each month.

The Development Quality Committee would be held on the third Monday of each month.

It is proposed that all of the foregoing meetings will commence at 6pm in the evening allowing for a continuity of business as well as addressing the concern of very late nights. A number of Councils have revised committee meeting times to afternoon or early evening and in order to arrive at an optimum time for committee meetings in Dundee it is suggested that the Assistant Chief Executive (Community Planning) undertakes a survey of all 29 elected members to obtain opinions on the most suitable time for committee meetings. In the meantime Committees will commence at 6 pm.

It is suggested that other Committees and Sub-Committees that meet during the day, will where possible, be held on a Thursday. Of these the Licensing Committee will meet once a month and the others will meet on an ad hoc basis. The current restriction on Committees/meetings being held on a Friday should be withdrawn.

## 7.3 Convenerships

To ensure that the business of the Committees can be dealt with efficiently and the public understand which elected member is responsible for a particular Service/Department, it is proposed to appoint 6 Senior Councillors as Conveners of the undernoted Committees (in addition to the Convener of the Policy and Resources Committee):

- Planning and Transport
- Economic Development
- Housing, Dundee Contract Services and Environment Services
- Education
- Social Work and Health
- Leisure, Arts and Communities

In addition, it is proposed to establish 7 Depute Conveners for the above Service Committees. The Depute Convener of the Policy & Resources Committee will have specific responsibilities for resource services, including Finance, Audit, Personnel, IT, Architectural and Legal and Administration Services, and should be deemed a Senior Councillor. It would also be necessary to appoint a Senior Councillor as Convener of the Licensing Committee and Chair of the Licensing Board, and a Senior Councillor as Convener of the Development Quality Committee as well as Depute Conveners and

Depute Chair for each respectively. The Lord Provost would remain as Convener of the City Council.

The terminology used in this section of the report is in accordance with the new scheme for payment of remuneration to members. The proposed remuneration to the Leader of the Administration, Conveners and Depute Conveners as Senior Councillors is shown in the report on Members Salaries, Pensions and Expenses by the Depute Chief Executive (Finance). The Lord Provost will be paid at the level included in the new remuneration scheme, and the remaining members will be paid a basic allowance, currently £15,452.

#### 7.4 Membership of Committees

All elected members are members of the City Council, and it is proposed that all members serve on the Service Committees and the Development Quality Committee. In respect of the undernoted Committees, Boards and ad hoc Sub Committees it is proposed that the membership would be allocated between the recognised political groups. The present allocations are shown below:

Licensing Committee (present membership - 5 Administration, 5 SNP and 4 Conservative)

Licensing Board (present membership - 4 Administration, 5 SNP and 3 Conservative)

Standing Sub Committee - Best Value Sub Committee of the Policy & Resources Committee - present membership - 3 Administration, 2 SNP and 1 Conservative

Superannuation Investment Sub Committee of the Policy & Resources Committee (present membership - 3 Administration, 2 SNP and 1 Conservative)

Audit & Risk Management Sub Committee of the Policy & Resources Committee (present membership - 3 Administration, 2 SNP and 1 Conservative)

Personnel Appeals Sub Committee of the Policy & Resources Committee (present membership - 3 Administration, 1 SNP and 1 Conservative)

Personnel Appointments Sub Committee of the Policy & Resources Committee (present membership - 3 Administration, 3 SNP and 1 Conservative)

Social Work Cases Sub Committee of the Social Work Committee (present membership - 2 Administration, 1 SNP and 1 Conservative)

Licensing Sub Committee (present membership - 1 Administration, 1 SNP and 1 Conservative)

In respect of the Education Committee, members are aware that the Council is required to appoint three Church representatives to the Education Committee and nominations will be sought in the usual way.

However, since 1994, there has been no requirement for the Council to appoint two staff members to this Committee. Since then, the DNCT (Dundee Council Joint Negotiating Committee for Teaching Staff) has been established which allows consultation and negotiation to take place with the Teacher Trade Unions. The staff members on the previous Education Committee were not covered by the National Code of Conduct for elected members. If they had been covered, in considering many of the items on the Education Committee agenda, they would have had to declare an interest and, in many cases, leave the debating chamber. In the interests of natural justice, and to ensure that there are no conflicts of interest which cannot be explained to the public, it is suggested there be no staff representatives on the Education Committee. This would be consistent with all other Service Committees. However, the DNCT will ensure that the views of staff representatives are made known and, as with all Trade Unions within the Council, the usual three weeks will be given for consultation on matters affecting the workforce.

### 7.5 Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Delegated Powers

To ensure that the Service Committee can concentrate on the development of policy, new methods of service delivery and performance, it is necessary to make changes to the above documents. These changes will however ensure that there are adequate controls for delegated decision making where joint contractual arrangements are being entered into with community planning partners to achieve more joined up working and sharing of resources across the public sector. The proposed changes are incorporated in the review of these documents issued in conjunction with this report.

### 7.6 Joint Working

The proposals included in this report will enable the Departments reporting to a particular Service Committee to work with the Convener and Depute Convener to improve service delivery and joint working between Departments. The Chief Executive, Leader of the Administration, and the 6 Service Conveners will be able to have regular leadership meetings to ensure that cross-service Department initiatives such as integrated children's services move forward within the Council and with the Council's partners. The Depute Convener of the Policy and Resources Committee may also be required to attend these meetings in respect of issues relating to Finance, Audit, Personnel, IT, Architectural and Legal Services. They will also be able to examine performance and possible efficiencies across departmental boundaries to deliver joined-up service improvements for users of the Council's services.

## 8. **CONSULTATIONS**

The Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Assistant Chief Executive (Management), Assistant Chief Executive (Community Planning) and Head of Finance have been consulted on the content of this report.

## 9. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Transforming Public Services - The Next Phase of Reform, The Scottish Executive, June 2006

Alex Stephen  
Chief Executive

22/05/2007