



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE
& PETERBOROUGH**
COMBINED AUTHORITY

Agenda Item No: 6

Report title: Review of Governance and ways of working at the
Combined Authority – Update on progress

To: Audit & Governance Committee

Meeting Date: 28th January 2022

Public report: Public Report

From: Interim Head of Governance

Recommendations: The Committee is recommended to:

a) Note the purpose of the review and comment on the progress made
to date

Voting arrangements: Note only item, no vote required.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This report provides the Committee with an overview of the purpose of the review of governance and ways of working at the Combined Authority and the evidence being gathered to inform the review

2. Background

- 2.1 Following the Mayoral election and the appointment of a new Chief Executive now is a good time to review the existing governance arrangements in order to identify how to deliver more effective decision-making and ways of working within the Combined Authority. Additionally concerns have already been raised regarding certain elements of governance at the Combined Authority, in particular the burden of business at the Combined Authority Board and the effective use of Executive Boards.
- 2.2 As a result the Interim Head of Governance has been commissioned to undertake a review of governance and ways of working at the Combined Authority. The purpose of the review is to identify how to deliver more effective decision-making and ways of working at the Combined Authority.

Review Scope

- 2.3 The scope for the review was developed in consultation with the Executive Team in October 2021, initially it was agreed that the review would have 3 objectives:
- ☐ Review of formal decision-making and consultative bodies
 - ☐ Identification of key barriers to deliver effective decision-making
 - ☐ Review and refresh the process of report drafting, preparation and effective engagement within Combined Authority processes
- 2.4 Subsequent engagement took place with the Chair of Audit & Governance and the Chair of Overview & Scrutiny to ensure they were aware of the review, able to ask any questions around its objectives and provide advice and guidance where appropriate.
- 2.5 The aim to deliver the 3 objectives in 2.3 required the review to focus on a number of key elements. These elements are set out below alongside key questions and areas for review within each element that will direct the review:

Governance Review Element	Key Review Areas & Questions
Governance Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Review of committee structure/ purpose/ outputs<input type="checkbox"/> Executive Committee operation and delegations<input type="checkbox"/> How can the CA deliver more effective decision-making?<input type="checkbox"/> What liaison meetings are in place between Mayor and Leaders and what business do they discuss?<input type="checkbox"/> How can the CA deliver more engaged decision-making?<input type="checkbox"/> Is the current structure fit for purpose?<input type="checkbox"/> What are the key issues regarding supporting processes for governance framework?
Governance Mapping Exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Mapping exercise to cover:<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Formal governance▪ Political requirements▪ Portfolio and Directorate level▪ Investment Funds▪ Stakeholder engagement<input type="checkbox"/> What does the mapping exercise tell us?
Purpose and Functionality of the Combined Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> 2017 Order<input type="checkbox"/> Strategic Priorities/ Mayoral Manifesto – how does this feed down organisation as golden thread?<input type="checkbox"/> What are the core roles of the CA?<input type="checkbox"/> How are core roles and strategic priorities translated into and supported by governance framework?
Policy Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> What policy space exists for politicians and how is it utilised and facilitated?<input type="checkbox"/> What opportunity for engaging government exists through policy space?<input type="checkbox"/> How do Politicians at CA currently debate and discuss key issues, differences and ways forward?<input type="checkbox"/> Impact on operation and view of CA Board activity
Portfolio Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Role and expectations associated with Lead Members

	<input type="checkbox"/> How are leads engaged within portfolios and policy development <input type="checkbox"/> Impact on one organisational approach/ silo working <input type="checkbox"/> Ability of Leaders to lead a Portfolio
Constituent Engagement	<input type="checkbox"/> What are Constituent requirements? <input type="checkbox"/> Do individual constituent conversations take place? <input type="checkbox"/> What is Exec. Team offer?
Portfolio Engagement	<input type="checkbox"/> How to ensure that the CA isn't working in Silos <input type="checkbox"/> How to avoid surprises <input type="checkbox"/> How to improve cross portfolio engagement <input type="checkbox"/> What are they key engagement issues?
Relationships	<input type="checkbox"/> How best to support positive development of Mayor/ Leader relationships
Forward Plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Is it currently fit for purpose? <input type="checkbox"/> How is it utilised? <input type="checkbox"/> Explore developments such as extended periods
Reporting	<input type="checkbox"/> How does current approach to reporting assist/ prevent effective decision-making? <input type="checkbox"/> Explore development of Member-Friendly reports <input type="checkbox"/> Quality/ Quality Assurance/ Cycle requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Guidance and support

Methodology

- 2.6 Initial methodology for the review is based around engagement and identification of key concerns/ areas to address which will lead to the identification of a number of key themes.
- 2.7 The review began in December through a number of interview sessions between the Interim Head of Governance and the following:
- ☐ Mayor
 - ☐ Leader and Chief Executive of each Constituent Council
 - ☐ Executive Team
- 2.8 As stated above the purpose of these sessions was to identify the key themes that would need to be addressed by the review in relation to governance and ways of working. Those key themes will be tested, questioned and examined throughout the review in order to develop proposals for improvement.
- 2.9 In addition the review will:
- ☐ Undertake a governance mapping exercise to identify a full picture of formal and informal boards, committees, bodies
 - ☐ Engage the Business Board
 - ☐ Undertake a comparison/ best practice review with all other Combined Authorities
 - ☐ Engage Cambridgeshire County Council (Democratic Services Provider)
 - ☐ Engage the Combined Authority Governance Team
- 2.10 A review of existing documentation will be undertaken to support the review, this involves examination of elements of the Combined Authority Constitution, Assurance Framework, Annual Governance Statements, Board and Committee terms of reference and Strategic Plan/ Mayoral Manifesto.

Review Progress

- 2.11 Interviews with Constituent Councils and the Mayor are complete and a number of key themes have emerged that will shape the direction of the remainder of the review. Proposals to address each key theme will be developed and then tested with the Mayor and Constituent Councils through a second round of discussions.
- 2.12 Benchmarking with other Combined Authorities has been undertaken and continues as the review develops.
- 2.13 Amendments have been made to the Mayoral Decision Notice and Officer Decision Notice process and an amended approach to the development and approval of the Forward Plan is currently being trialled as part of the review.

Next Steps

- 2.14 The next steps for the review are as follows:
 - ☐ Executive Team engagement on key themes
 - ☐ Business Board engagement
 - ☐ Second round of Mayor and Constituent interviews
 - ☐ Draft final report for consideration at March/ April Leaders Strategy Meeting
 - ☐ Final report for consideration to CA Board

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 No immediate financial implications. Changes to the proposed ways of working which will arise out of the completed review may lead to financial implications, which will be better understood at that time.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 Changes to the ways of working or governance structures of the Combined Authority may call for changes in the constitution to be implemented. Should that be the case these will be proposed in full detail to the Audit and Governance Committee.

5. Other Significant Implications

- 5.1 None.