

Cabinet
8 July 2021

Title: Review & Revisions of Programme Advisory Boards

Lead Officer: Graham Leach, Democratic Services Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer, 01926 456114 graham.leach@warwickdc.gov.uk

Portfolio Holder: Andrew Day

Public report

Wards of the District directly affected: None

Contrary to the policy framework: No

Contrary to the budgetary framework: No

Key Decision: No

Included within the Forward Plan: Yes

Equality Impact Assessment Undertaken: No

Consultation & Community Engagement: None

Final Decision: Yes

Accessibility checked: Yes

Officer/Councillor Approval	Date	Name
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive	16/6/2021	Andrew Jones
CMT		
Section 151 Officer		Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer		Andrew Jones
Finance		Lorraine Henson
Portfolio Holder(s)	16/6/2021	Andrew Day

1. Summary

- 1.1. The report brings forward proposals for revisions to the Programme Advisory Boards following their first nine months of operation.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That Cabinet endorses the revisions to the remits of the Programme Advisory Boards (PABs) as set out at Appendix 1.
- 2.2. The Cabinet confirms the terms of reference for the PABs as set out at Appendix 2 and the Chairs, Lead Officers and Portfolio Holders are reminded of these.
- 2.3. The Cabinet approves that the work of the People Strategy Steering Group moves to the Transformation PAB from September 2021.
- 2.4. That Cabinet removes the requirement for each PAB to agree measures with the Leadership Co-ordinating Group (LCG).
- 2.5. The Cabinet asks officers to bring back an outline proposal, in consultation with the Chairs of Scrutiny, in November 2021 along with proposed funding arrangements for an independent assessment of these arrangements to take place in December 2021.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 3.1. Following a governance review during 2019 and early 2020 the Council introduced the six Programme Advisory Boards. The aim was to enable backbench members to have greater involvement in shaping the Cabinet decisions of the Council, particularly on services, key projects and programmes (but not day to day operations). This would also help to utilise the skills, knowledge and talent of all Councillors in a more effective way.
- 3.2. The PABs reflected the six Portfolio areas in place at that time and operated well from September 2020 through to May 2021. During that time two informal review meetings were undertaken to gain feedback on the work of the PABs.
- 3.3. At the review meetings it was agreed that their work had had a positive effect but for them to continue to be effective there was a need for investment of officer time which had been limited for a number of key reasons. It was considered that the use of PABs, rather than working parties and Shadow Portfolio Holder briefings, should reduce the overall number of hours officers had to work to provide this type of work. The dialogue between officers and Councillors had worked well and the involvement of a wider range of officers, who would not normally attend meetings with Councillors, had been beneficial as a development opportunity.
- 3.4. It has also been noted by Councillors that information/notes from meetings have not been made available to all Councillors as agreed and there has been some conflict in meeting dates as a result.

- 3.5. The revised remits will see a duplication of work between the People Strategy Steering Group (PSSG) and Transformation PAB, therefore it is proposed that the work moves to the PAB.
- 3.6. In discussion between the Chairs of the PABs, the Cabinet and Senior Officers it has proved difficult to identify measures of performance for the PABs. The important tool is the increased engagement of backbench members in helping to bring forward work for the Council. Therefore, it is considered appropriate not to require the PABs to have measures but undertake an independent external review to ensure the general approach and engagement is working.
- 3.7. At the review there were concerns over the wide remits of some of the PABs which it was agreed needed to be addressed and this has been picked up through the revisions as set out at Appendix 2. This workload will need to be monitored and it is intended to hold an informal review feedback session in mid-September between the Cabinet, PAB Chairs and Senior Management Team to share learning and help Officers and Scrutiny Chairs to develop the brief for the external review of the arrangements.

4. Policy Framework

4.1. Fit for the Future (FFF)

- 4.1.1. The Council's FFF Strategy is designed to deliver the Vision for the District of making it a Great Place to Live, Work and Visit. To that end amongst other things the FFF Strategy contains several Key projects. This report will contribute to enable the delivery for implementing the Council's Key projects.
- 4.1.2. The FFF Strategy has 3 strands, People, Services and Money, and each has an external and internal element to it, the details of which can be found [on the Council's website](#). Section 4.2 below illustrates the impact of this proposal if any in relation to the Council's FFF Strategy.

4.2. FFF Strands

4.2.1 External impacts of proposal(s)

People - Health, Homes, Communities – The proposal will not contribute to this directly.

Services - Green, Clean, Safe - The proposal will not contribute to this directly.

Money- Infrastructure, Enterprise, Employment - The proposal will not contribute to this directly.

4.2.2. Internal impacts of the proposal(s)

People - Effective Staff – The work enables a more informal environment to bring forward proposals for services and projects to enable Councillor involvement.

Services - Maintain or Improve Services - This overall aim of the PABs is to enable backbench Councillors to help provide advice on projects as they come forward for formal approval. This refinement process provides greater opportunity for maintaining or improving services.

Money - Firm Financial Footing over the Longer Term - This overall aim of the PABs is to enable backbench Councillors to help provide advice on projects as they come forward for formal approval. This refinement process provides greater opportunity for projects and work to contribute to mitigate the budgetary challenges faced by the Council.

4.3. **Supporting Strategies**

4.3.1. Each strand of the FFF Strategy has several supporting strategies and this proposal will enable a greater level of member in engagement on projects and work on these strategies and the work to deliver them.

4.4. **Changes to Existing Policies** – The report does not propose any changes to existing policies.

4.5. **Impact Assessments** - No impact assessment has been undertaken for this report because the focus is on the internal structure of the Advisory Boards and enabling wider Councillor engagement.

5. **Budgetary Framework**

5.1. The report does not directly impact on the Budgetary framework or the budget.

6. **Risks**

6.1. The recommendations within the report do not propose any changes which create significant risks for the Council.

7. **Alternative Option(s) considered**

7.1. No alternative options have been considered to the recommendations because they are brought forward following a review of the PABs and in light of the revisions to the Portfolio Holder structure.

Strategic Leadership – Undertaken by LCG - Councillor Andrew Day (Leader)

- Corporate Policy
- Partnerships
- Governance

Resources – Portfolio Holder - Councillor Mary Noone

- Budget & Finance
- Audit & Risk
- Procurement

Transformation – Portfolio Holder - Councillor Richard Hales (Deputy Leader)

- Programme Management – working together Digital and ICT
- Broadband delivery
- Digital Infrastructure
- Communications
- Human Resources

Climate Change - Portfolio Holder -Councillor Alan Rhead

- Climate Change
- Public Conveniences
- Car Parking
- Green Spaces – Development
- Bereavement Services
- Contracted Services (Refuse & Recycling, Street Cleansing, Grounds Maintenance)

Homes, Health & Wellbeing – Portfolio Holder -Councillor Jan Matecki

- Housing Landlord
- Homelessness
- Health and Wellbeing
- Private Sector Housing
- Travellers
- Development Programme (Local Housing Company and Joint Venture)
- Asset Management
- Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services

Culture, Tourism & Leisure – Portfolio Holder -Councillor Liam Bartlett

- Culture
- Tourism
- Leisure

Place & Economy – Portfolio Holder - Councillor John Cooke

- Economic Development & Inward Investment
- Regeneration
- Planning Policy
- Physical Infrastructure – transport, energy, etc
- Events & Markets

Planning – Portfolio Holder - Councillor Moira-Ann Grainger

- Building Control
- Development Management
- Land Charges
- Planning Enforcement

Community Protection – Portfolio Holder -Councillor Judy Falp

- Environmental Health incl. Licencing
- Community Leadership, Forums & VCS
- Health & Safety
- Safeguarding, Community Safety and CCTV
- Emergency Planning
- Parish/Town engagement

Programme Advisory Boards (PABs)

Purpose:

To act in advisory capacity, or providing guidance, in developing and delivering the projects/policies of Warwick District Council and in so doing, enabling backbench members to have greater involvement in shaping Cabinet decisions of the Council, particularly on services, key projects and programmes (but not day to day operations). This also helps to utilise the skills, knowledge and talent of all Councillors in a more effective way.

They will not be a decision-making Group or be scrutinising service or policy delivery as these will remain the responsibility of Council/Cabinet and Scrutiny respectively.

Organisation:

- Chaired by backbench members selected from across political groups, appointed by the Leader following consultation with LCG.
- No more than six members per PAB and if less than three volunteers PAB will be reviewed.
- Not politically proportionate (but all groups offered at least one place).
- Members nominate their preferred PAB; not required that every Member serves, with some able to serve on more than one PAB, if unfilled seats are available.
- Final PAB appointments agreed by LCG and confirmed by Council.
- No substitutes be permitted for the PABs.
- Chairs of PAB will be appointed annually by the Leader after consultation with Group Leaders.

Meetings:

- Time will be allocated within the calendar of meetings for each PAB to meet 4 times a year
- Additional meetings held as scheduled at a date and time agreed by the Chairman of the PAB.
- They will meet either remotely or in-person, subject to agreement of Chairman of the PAB.
- The Chairman of each PAB would be expected to conclude business within 2 hours.
- Additional meetings of the PAB can be requested by the relevant Portfolio Holder but final decision on date and time is that of the PAB Chairman.
- At least five clear working days' notice to be given of the PAB meeting.
- Attended by Portfolio Holder, who provides an update on key projects / programmes.
- Supported by an officer from the service or relevant area.
- The meetings will not be in public but actions from the meeting will be agreed with the Chairman and made available to all Councillors and SMT.

Agenda Items

- Items will be brought to each PAB, within their remit defined below, by the relevant project lead, in liaison with the relevant Portfolio Holder and PAB Chair as required.
- These will be at key stages of reports and in good time before formal decisions are required.