

Report to Governance and Constitution Review Committee

22 June 2021

Subject:	Constitution Review – Cabinet Advisor Roles
Director:	Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer, Surjit Tour
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1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That Full Council be recommended to approve the revised role descriptions for Cabinet Advisors as attached at appendix 1 to the report.

2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 The Governance and Constitution Review Committee is the body charged to review and make recommendations to Council on the content of the Constitution. Any changes to the Constitution are reserved matters for Council to determine.



3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

The proposals support the delivery of all objectives contained in the corporate plan.

	Best start in life for children and young people
	People live well and age well
	Strong resilient communities
	Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods
	A strong and inclusive economy
	A connected and accessible Sandwell

4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 In 2019, Council approved the establishment of 6 Cabinet Advisor roles. Absorbing the previous Member champion roles, the purpose of the Cabinet Advisors is to provide alternative views, opinions and advice on wider, often cross-cutting issues and matters, to the Executive with a view to supporting and enabling more informed policy and strategy development. The roles enable Cabinet Advisors to share their own experiences, areas of expertise and views/opinions from wider engagement they undertake in relation matters falling within the scope of each Cabinet Advisor role.
- 4.2 The Cabinet Advisors do not form part of the Executive. However, the Executive is able to seek their views, engage them in relation to matters and issues so as that important insight, ideas, thoughts and views can be harnessed when executive functions are considered.



- 4.3 Cabinet Advisors provide an additional mechanism and opportunity for important views and opinions to be ascertained, particular from the public, partners and stakeholders. This is in addition to the other functions, mechanisms already in place, such as the Council’s Scrutiny function and arrangements, consultation arrangements and methodologies and the like.
- 4.2 The current roles are aligned with Sandwell’s Vision 2030 ambitions and are themed as follows:
- Adult Social Care and Health;
 - Children and Young People;
 - Community and Neighbourhoods;
 - Community Wealth Building;
 - Housing;
 - Transport and Community Cohesion.
- 4.3 The Corporate Plan as approved by Council in March 2020 is in the process of being refreshed, to ensure it remains relevant, and that objectives support the current and emerging needs of local communities and the borough as a whole. Following the recent election of the new Leader and re-alignment of portfolios, the Governance and Constitution Committee is requested to consider and make recommendations to Full Council on proposals to revise the existing Cabinet Advisor roles, focusing their remit towards corporate objectives as follows:
- Business Ambassadors and Community Wealth – Cllr Ahmad Bostan;
 - Clean & Green – Cllr Peter Hughes;
 - Crime & Community Safety – Cllr Richard McVittie;
 - Digital Inclusion and 5G – Cllr Gurdesh Gill;
 - Wellbeing & Mental Health – Cllr Elaine Costigan;
 - Young People and Skills – Cllr Kay Millar.

Re-shaping the overarching responsibilities, as outlined in the draft job descriptions at appendix 1, would support delivery of portfolio activity and influence the direction of travel for the Council.



5 Alternative Options

- 5.1 Council could determine to retain the existing roles and remits. Whilst the existing themes would continue to contribute to the overall ambition of the Council, this may not be as effective as the proposed refreshed roles.

6 Implications

Resources:	The Independent Remuneration Panel previously recommended, and Full Council approved, a Special Responsibility Allowance of 33.3% of the Leaders allowance be paid to Cabinet Advisors. Costs are met from within approved budgets.
Legal and Governance:	Whilst not part of the executive, the role of Cabinet Advisor enables non-executive members to contribute, alongside the work of the Overview and Scrutiny function, to the direction of travel for the Council, shaping and influencing policy.
Risk:	None specifically associated with this report. However, Cabinet Advisors may from time to time receive confidential, personal or sensitive information that will need to be managed in accordance with information governance obligations.
Equality:	<p>The existing appointments to Cabinet Advisors demonstrate that the council's approach to ensuring diversity and inclusion in respect of council appointments.</p> <p>It is recognised that the roles of Cabinet Advisor will inevitably mean that the Advisors will engage with a variety of people from different backgrounds. Ensuring such views are captured and considered is an important part of the role of Cabinet Advisor.</p>
Health and Wellbeing:	The remit of several of the proposed revised roles would contribute to the health and wellbeing of our communities.



Social Value	The remit of several of the proposed revised roles would contribute to enhancing social value.
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7. Appendices

Draft role descriptions

8. Background Papers

None associated with this report.

