

10. STRATEGIC ADVISORY GROUP - PROPOSALS TO REPLACE THE ADVISORY GROUP WITH A MEETING INVOLVING ALL MEMBERS

1. Purpose of the report

To consider proposals to change the way Members engage with strategic development by replacing the existing Strategic Advisory Group with a new forum in which all Members can participate.

Key Issues

- **Every two years a survey of Members is carried out to receive feedback on the following areas:**
 - o **Strategic and External Leadership**
 - o **Governance and Scrutiny**
 - o **Contribution and Development**
 - o **Communication**
 - o **Community Engagement**
- **The results of the 2016 Survey have been analysed and a report on proposed actions taken to the Strategic Advisory Group for discussion.**
- **The most significant proposed action is to adopt a new approach following the 2017 AGM so that meetings of the Strategic Advisory Group are replaced with an all Member Discussion Forum to take place following meetings of the Authority. It is suggested that this approach will address a number of issues identified in the survey analysis.**
- **This report is asking Members to confirm this new approach now to help inform preparations for the Annual Meeting**

2. Recommendations(s)

- 1. To confirm that, with effect from the 2017 Annual Meeting, the Strategic Advisory Group is removed from part 4 of Standing Orders and replaced with an all Member discussion forum with the terms of reference set out in Appendix 1.**
- 2. To agree a name for the new Member Discussion Forum.**

3. How does this contribute to our policies and legal obligations?

This work contributes to achieving the corporate strategy for 2016 - 2019 as part of the 4 Cornerstones to building a solid foundation:

Cornerstone 3 Our Organisation – Developing our organisation so we have a planned and sustained approach to performance at all levels

1. Develop and maintain appropriate standards of corporate governance
2. Implement our medium term financial plan
3. Develop key business processes underpinning the Corporate Strategy.

The Authority aims to enable Members to develop appropriate skills, knowledge and behaviours to improve effectiveness and fulfil their role as a Member of the Authority ensuring that processes are in place to support this within a framework of good

governance and continuous improvement.

Background Information

1. At the Annual Meeting each year the Authority makes appointments to the Strategic Advisory Committee (SAG). Membership of the Advisory Group normally consists of the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Authority, the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the two Standing Committees and three other Members, one for each constituent group ie one Local Authority Member, one Parish Member and one Secretary of State Member. Although all Members receive papers for meetings of SAG and there is an open invitation for all Members to attend at most meetings only the named appointees attend.
2. All Members were invited to attend the meeting of the SAG held on 28 April 2017 where the results of the 2016 Member Survey and draft recommendations were discussed. The report identified 9 actions which were supported by those Members present. Most of the recommendations can be implemented without Members making further decisions. However there is a proposal that from the Annual Meeting in July 2017 the Strategic Advisory Group is replaced by an advisory group which will include all Members and meet on the rising of full Authority meetings.
3. Although it is not proposed that the new approach be introduced before the Annual Meeting this report is seeking approval from the Authority now, as the outcome of this discussion will impact on the work of the Member Appointment Process Panel as we seek expressions of interest in appointments to Committees and Advisory Groups.

Proposals

4. The proposal to replace the Strategic Advisory Group with an advisory group which included all Members arises from a trend identified in a significant number of the 2016 Survey responses which suggested that there is a perception that the Authority has a group of approximately a third of Members who feel really well informed and supported, alongside an increasing number of Members who felt that they could neither agree nor disagree with many of the statements in the survey. Looking at the feedback on response choices it appeared that there was some scope for engaging more Members earlier in the decision making process so that when an issue is brought for a formal Member decision they have a greater understanding of why a particular recommendation has been put forward.
5. In the member workshop arising from the 2012 survey the need for Members to meet with each other outside of formal meetings was identified as an action point but, although there have been attempts to regularise this, it has not taken place on a regular basis This proposed new approach may help to address both previous concerns and new issues raised in this survey.
6. It is therefore proposed that in future SAG be reshaped into all Member briefing/discussion sessions following formal meetings of the Authority. The meetings would still have an agenda and follow the same format as SAG with broadly the same terms of reference but with no fixed membership. A copy of the proposed terms of reference is provided in Appendix 1.
7. These meetings would provide an opportunity for officers to informally share some of their thinking around emerging issues and allow all Members to have the opportunity to make their views known. It would also allow any Member task specific working groups to feedback on their thinking before a formal decision is made. By holding these meetings on the same day as full Authority meetings it will also help avoid extra trips to Bakewell and address the comments raised by some respondents about the recent

occasions when Authority meetings have only had one or two items on the agenda and make better use of member time.

8. These proposals were given support at the meeting of SAG. However there was a further discussion about how Members can get issues on the Agenda for discussion with other Members, if a Member is proposing to take a motion to full Authority for example. Members felt there was some merit to providing this facility so it is proposed that the agenda for the new meeting is divided into two parts. The first part will look like a normal SAG Agenda and therefore made up of items Officers would like Members to discuss and the second part would discuss items raised by Members with Officers only present by invitation by the Chair of the Authority or their Deputy.
9. During the SAG discussion it was suggested that there should be some parameters around what could and could not be discussed at the second part of the meeting. The following guidelines are suggested as a starting point:

Items suitable for a part 2 discussion

- Feedback from a Member Representative on a strategic issue
- Reporting on follow up action from a Member appointed by the Authority to an Outside Body
- Suggestions on possible areas for Member Scrutiny
- Proposals for a future Notice of Motion to a meeting of full Authority
- Feedback from Member Working Groups
- Feedback on National Parks England or National Parks UK initiatives
- Feedback from Constituent Councils

Items not appropriate for a part 2 discussion

- Individual Planning Applications and site specific proposals (eg not Enforcement, TROs, TPOs etc)
- Decisions made by officers under delegated authority
- Individual Applications for grants or assistance
- Revisiting decisions made during the past 12 months
- Complaints about employees or Members

Members may wish to put forward other suggestions at the meeting but it must be remembered that the meetings will be purely advisory and will not make legally binding decisions.

10. The final issue relates to what the new forum should be called. It could still be referred to as the Strategic Advisory Group but Members may wish to give it a different name to clearly demonstrate that there has been a change in approach.

Are there any corporate implications members should be concerned about?

Financial:

11. At this stage the proposed actions can be addressed within existing resources particularly as it is proposed that the new meetings are to be held following a scheduled meeting already involving all Members. Additional costs would be incurred if meetings were regularly arranged for separate days.

Risk Management:

12. The main risk these proposals aim to address is a failure to enable Members to develop and use their skills, knowledge and experience to fulfil their role. These proposals

intend to engage all Members in strategic development and provide the opportunities to make a contribution.

Sustainability:

13. None.

Equality:

14. None.

15. Background papers (not previously published)

Member Survey (2016) Analysis Report to SAG held on 28th April 2017

16. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Terms of reference for a new advisory group involving all Members.

Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date

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