

URGENT DELEGATED DECISION

Date: 27 July 2020

Request to the Head of Paid Service to exercise delegated authority as per Responsibility of Functions in Part IV, page 28 of the Constitution.

“to determine any matter within the referred or delegated powers and duties of a committee / sub committee / board / working which is so urgent that a decision must be made before the next meeting of that committee / sub-committee / board / working group is due to be held.”

Limits on delegation: -

- Before making a decision using this delegated power, The Head of Paid Service shall consult with and take cognisance of the views of the Chairman (or in his absence the VC) of the relevant Committee / Sub-Committee etc; and
- Any decision taken by the Head of Paid Service under this delegated power shall be reported to Members within five working days of the decision taken.
- During the COVID-19 Pandemic we have also committed to consult with the Leader of the Opposition on such decisions.

Usual Decision Maker: -

This decision would have been taken by Corporate Policy and Resources Committee

This decision needs to be made and implementation commence, before the body is due to meet.

The decision is in response to changing Governance guidance and announcements relating to the easing of lockdown measures and economic recovery phases

Call-in does not apply. .

Background

On 23 April the Head of Paid Service took and urgent delegated decision relating to the Committee Timetable. The original decision can be viewed [here](#).

It was determined at that point that the original decision would be kept under constant revision and if there have been no changes by late July 2020 the feasibility of holding Annual Council on 7 September would be reconsidered.

This decision notice reviews that decision made on 23 April.

Reason for Urgency and Rationale for use of urgent Delegated Decision

In light of the current COVID 19 situation, an urgent decision is required in order to determine if Committee meetings can return to the Chamber from September and if so, to allow the necessary time to make any required adjustments to the Chamber

Notes of Consultation Relevant to the Decision

All agreed this decision did need to be reviewed now, as both from a Group perspective and Officer perspective there would be lead in work to undertake in advance of an annual meeting.

All agreed meeting in person for Annual Council was not currently permissible , and to hold an Annual Council any later in the year would seem unreasonable on the incoming Chairman.

With regard to returning to the Chamber it was a fine balance, between returning to some sense of normal, remaining with the guidelines and ensuring the Health and Safety of the Officer and Elected Member Core. Groups had canvassed Members and some held legitimate concerns. The legality of hybrid meetings was debatable, government guidance continued to change, but currently would not permit full council to meet. Hosting Committee's would be feasible within SD rules. Views from the MO were shared and taken into consideration.

Returning to the Chamber as a matter of urgency, was definitely the preference, for policy committees in particular. Consideration needed to be given to adapting the Council Chamber and undertaking necessary risks assessments etc. General consensus therefore was that a return to the Chamber for Committees be planned for 20 October onwards. This would allow necessary steps to be taken to ensure the Chamber was "safe" and hopefully for the pandemic to have eased further, along with people's concerns.

Substitute arrangements could be used thereafter and exemptions granted if need be. The decision should be kept under constant revision and if necessary a further decision be taken by early October.

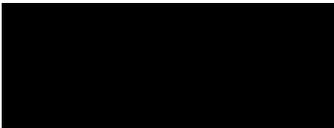
Although not part of the original decision, steer was taken in respect of the pending Community Awards, already re-scheduled to 7 October, again in light of preparation work, a decision would need to be taken around the feasibility of the event. It was not anticipated hosting the event in person would be realistic. It was not favourable to roll the event over to next year and therefore recommended that virtual options be investigated, in a hope that the event could be held on a virtual platform before the end of the year.

Decision

- All Meetings within the timetable for September up until 19 October be held virtually in accordance with the agreed timetable, including the re-commencement of Overview and Scrutiny (subject to workplan items). The first meeting to be held in the Chamber be the Prosperous Communities Committee on 20 October (subject to guidance remaining unchanged).
- Joint Staff Consultative Committee continue to meet on a virtual basis indefinitely;
- The Annual Council for 20/21 civic year be cancelled and all positions to remain in post until Annual Council 21/22.
- Council continue to meet virtually until such time as government guidance permits all Members to be present in the Chamber.
- The Community Awards at Hemswell Court (7 Oct) be cancelled and virtual options for hosting the event prior to the end of the year be investigated.
- The above decision be kept under constant revision and if necessary a further decision be taken in early October.

Financial Detail and Implications

No financial implications arising from this report.



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Ian Knowles
Head of Paid Service

As the Chairman of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee I have been fully consulted on this matter



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Leader of the Council

As the Chairman of the Prosperous Communities Committee I have been fully consulted on this matter



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Chairman of the Prosperous Communities Committee

As the Leader of the Opposition I have been fully consulted on this matter



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Leader of the Opposition.

Date all Members were notified of the decision: 31 July 2020