

Welcome to the January issue of Governance Matters.

Our regular in-depth feature 'Spotlight on..' focuses on the consultation on the new executive arrangements. The consultation will be running from February 2009 – please keep an eye on the intranet, and our 'front page news' for more details.

We also take a look at what the governance committees have been doing since November, and at their busy schedule for their first meetings of the new calendar year.

We hope you find the information helpful and interesting. You can play your part by emailing suggestions for articles to cxd.corporategovernance@leeds.gov.uk

Front Page News...

Leeds City Council Partnerships Toolkit and the Register of Significant Partnerships

The Council's Partnerships Toolkit is now taking shape. Corporate Governance and Audit Committee will be presented with the toolkit at a seminar after their January Committee meeting, and will be offered the opportunity to make comments on the draft toolkit. It is hoped that the toolkit will be approved and ready for use by the end of this municipal year. We hope to provide you with more information about the toolkit in the 'spotlight on' section of the March issue of Governance Matters. A review of the Council's Register of Significant Partnerships is also underway.

Amendments to the Constitution

The Constitution has been amended following the establishment of a new General Purposes Committee by Full Council. The Committee had its inaugural meeting on 20th November 2008. The key functions of the new Committee are to:

- Consider matters referred to them by an appropriate officer which are not within the terms of reference of any other committee;
- Consider proposals to amend the Constitution and make recommendations to Full Council; and
- Make recommendations to Full Council in relation to any of its functions.

For details of their work programme see the Committee pages. There have also been several other amendments to the Constitution since our last issue including amendments to the Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules. These amendments have been distributed to those who hold paper copies of the Constitution, and an up to date version is available online by [following this link](#).

Spotlight on...

Consultation on the new executive arrangements

Under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, councils must adopt either a 'new style' Leader and Cabinet executive or **Elected Mayor** and Cabinet executive form of governance. Councils must consult on what model they wish to adopt, and resolve to adopt this model by December 2009.

In the Mayor and cabinet model the Mayor is directly elected by the electorate. The Mayor is not a councillor, and therefore does not represent a particular ward. He or she serves a four year term, and cannot be removed by the council during this time.

In the Leader and Cabinet model the Leader is a councillor who is elected by the council to the position. Under the 'new style' arrangements, the Leader serves until the first annual meeting after the normal day of retirement. The Council can, if it wishes, adopt arrangements which will enable it to remove the Leader at any time. The Leader must appoint a Deputy Leader, who will stand in for Leader if they are unable to perform their duties at any time.

The government's aim in making these changes is to create strong, visible leadership for communities. In particular, being able to serve for full four year terms would enable either a

Mayor or a Leader to set their own agenda, although a Leader is more accountable to the Council.

Although Leeds City Council already operates a Leader and Cabinet model, this is slightly different to the 'new' Leader and Cabinet model. The Council must still consult and resolve to move to one of the models.

The Council will be carrying out a consultation with members of the public and elected members, to get their views on which model of governance the Council should adopt. Consultation will take place online and through a Citizen's Panel, and will be publicised through 'About Leeds' and local newspapers. Elected members will be invited to respond through their group leaders.

The consultation will be running from February 2009 – please keep an eye on the intranet for more details.

JARGON BUSTER

An **Elected Mayor** would **not** replace the position of **Lord Mayor** in Leeds. The role of Lord Mayor is largely a ceremonial function and is non-political, unlike the role of an Elected Mayor.

The best known elected mayor is the Mayor of London, who heads the Greater London Authority. However, the Mayor of London has wider, more strategic powers than an elected mayor in Leeds would have.

Corporate Governance and Audit Committee

26th November 2008

At its most recent meeting the Committee considered reports on Fraudulent Tenancies and the Corporate Governance Statement Action Plan 2008.

FRAUDULENT TENANCIES

The Committee considered a report outlining the extent of fraudulent tenancies, and the measures being undertaken by ALMOs to ensure that all tenancies are tenanted correctly. The Committee raised some concerns including the need for more consistency between the ALMOs in certain areas and a more accurate calculation of the number of fraudulent tenancies. It was therefore agreed that a report would be brought back to the Committee at its meeting in March 2009 in order to address the issues raised.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT ACTION PLAN 2008

The Committee were provided with an update on the progress that has been made in implementing the Corporate Governance Statement Action Plan.

Members noted that good progress has been made against the identified improvement activities, and that the Corporate Governance Board would continue to monitor the Action Plan on a regular basis.

21st January 2009

Items to be considered in January include:

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- Data Security Update; and
- Independence Wellbeing and Choice Inspection of Adult Social Services 2008.

General Purposes Committee

20th November 2008

The Committee met to consider reports on the Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations and proposed amendments to the Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules.

REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS

The Committee considered proposals of the Electoral Working Group for a further full review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations under the Electoral Administration Act 2006, to be completed before December 2009, which were approved.

AMENDMENTS TO SCRUTINY BOARD PROCEDURE RULES

Members were presented with some proposed amendments to the Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules, and it was agreed that Full Council should be recommended to amend the Procedure Rules in order to ensure that all Scrutiny Board recommendations are submitted to Executive Board, and to require original (rather than electronic) signatures on the Call In request form.

20th January 2009

Items to be considered in January include:

- Standards Committee Terms of Reference and Membership; and
- Community Governance Reviews.

Standards Committee

16th December 2008

The Committee met to consider reports on the Three Monthly Review of Local Assessment Arrangements and the Standards Committee Membership.

STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Members considered a report outlining the issues with the current membership of the Standards Committee, and proposals to resolve the difficulties.

It was agreed to recommend to the General Purposes Committee that the Standards Committee's membership should be amended to include two additional Leeds City Councillors, one additional Parish or Town Council Member and one additional Independent Member.

REVIEW OF LOCAL ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

Members considered a report providing details of the consultation process undertaken as part of the review of the Standards Committee's local assessment procedures. The proposed amendments to the procedures were discussed and a report will be brought back to the Committee seeking final approval of the proposed amendments.

17th February 2009

Items to be considered in February include:

- A report on the administrative arrangements underpinning the Local Assessment process; and

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- Draft Standards Committee Annual Report 2008/09.

Corporate Governance Board

14th November and 11th December 2008

The Board received reports concerning the revised Governance Framework for Significant Partnerships; progress against the Corporate Governance Statement Action Plan; ALMO governance arrangements; and Skills and Competency Frameworks.

Other items to be considered at forthcoming meetings of the Board include:

- The draft partnership governance toolkit;
- Quarter 2 performance report;
- Officer indemnities;
- Public Private Partnerships Unit governance arrangements;
- Lessons learned from the procurement of the confidential waste disposal contract; and
- Updated Financial Procedure Rules.

THE NEXT ISSUE OF GOVERNANCE MATTERS

We hope you have found this issue of Governance Matters useful. In the next issue we will focus on Leeds City Council's Partnerships Toolkit.

If you have any ideas for our 'Spotlight On...' feature or any questions you would like answering, please contact the Corporate Governance Team on 0113 39 50261 or email us at

cxd.corporategovernance@leeds.gov.uk