

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

Notice under s.9MA of the Local Government Act 2000

This Notice provides details of the proposed Committee model of governance as the alternative to the current Mayor and Cabinet model of governance.

INTRODUCTION

1. At a meeting held on 7 December 2021, Bristol City Council resolved to hold a referendum relating to the governance arrangements for Bristol City Council.
2. On 5th May 2022, the Council will hold a referendum of local electors to determine whether the governance arrangements for Bristol City Council should be changed. Local electors will have a choice between the current Mayor and Cabinet model of governance and the Committee model of governance.

OPTION TO OPERATE A COMMITTEE MODEL OF GOVERNANCE

3. Should the outcome of the Referendum support the option to operate a Committee model of governance, the Authority would adopt a new Constitution detailing amongst other matters the functions of Full Council, the Committee Structure of the Authority, the Terms of Reference of the Committees, and the Officer Scheme of Delegation.

FULL COUNCIL

4. The Full Council of 70 councillors would be the decision-making body for the discharge of all the Council's functions except for those functions that are required by law to be delegated to committees or individual officers. Full Council is required by law to make certain decisions itself but will mainly delegate its powers to committees of councillors or to officers.
5. Full Council will be the strategic decision-making body of Bristol City Council making decisions such as:
 - 5.1 Approval of the annual budget and setting the Council Tax;
 - 5.2 Approval or adoption of a plan or strategy for the control of the local authority's borrowing, investments, or capital expenditure, or for determining the authority's minimum revenue provision;
 - 5.3 Approval of the Council's policy framework of decisions reserved to it by law including the Development Plan and policies under licensing and gambling legislation;
 - 5.4 Approval of the Council's non-statutory plan for the delivery of the Council's policies and strategies (known as the "Corporate Plan");
 - 5.5 Approval of key governance policies and decisions including adoption of the Council's Constitution, the Members' Allowance Scheme and Annual Pay Policy.
 - 5.6 Establishment of and appointment to committees, including chairs of committees;
 - 5.7 Appointment of the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council;
 - 5.8 Appointment of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor;
 - 5.9 Appointment of the Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer and Chief Finance Officer;

5.10 Adoption of the scheme of delegation to officers;

5.11 To determine all other matters reserved by law only for Full Council decision (as set out in Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Committee System) (England) Regulations 2012/1020).

ESTABLISHMENT OF POLICY/SERVICE COMMITTEES

6. The Authority would establish a number of committees with responsibility for major policy/service areas, for example, Finance and Performance, Adult Social Care, Education, Children's Services, Transport, Environment and Housing. The detailed structure of policy/service committees will be agreed as part of the transitional arrangements.

ESTABLISHMENT OF REGULATORY COMMITTEES

7. The Authority would also establish a number of regulatory committees, with responsibility for matters such as planning, licensing, audit and human resources. The detailed structure of regulatory committees will be agreed as part of the transitional arrangements.

SCHEME OF DELEGATION TO OFFICERS

8. The Full Council may also delegate functions, where appropriate, to its Officers. Details of the functions delegated to Officers will be set out in an Officer Scheme of Delegation Scheme.
9. Certain functions are the responsibility of the Statutory Officers of the Authority. For example, the Head of Paid Service, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Finance Officer, the Director of Children's Services and the Director of Adult Services. The exercise of these functions is the personal responsibility of the relevant officer.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

10. The Authority is required to have a Health and Wellbeing Board. This Board has certain functions which are not subject to Full Council approval for example, preparing a health and wellbeing strategy and encouraging co-operation and joint working in the provision of health and social care services.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

11. The Authority could, but is not required to, have an Overview and Scrutiny Committee. However, the Authority must ensure that arrangements are in place to scrutinise health, community safety and flood prevention. Details of any overview and scrutiny arrangements that the Authority may put in place will be agreed as part of the transitional arrangements.

TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

12. If the referendum on 5 May 2022 results in a majority vote in favour of the Committee Model, the Referendum result must be considered at an Extraordinary Meeting of the Full Council within 28 days of the date of the Referendum. The change in governance arrangements would take effect from 5 May 2024.
13. Following this, a further report will be presented to Full Council setting out in detail the proposed transitional arrangements for the change in the Authority's governance. This will include a timetable for the change and the matters that need to be agreed to implement a change in the Authority's governance arrangements.

14. Copies of this notice are available for inspection by members of the public at Bristol City Council's offices at City Hall, College Green, Bristol, BS1 5TR between the hours of 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday (not including bank and public holidays).

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