Good Governance Review

(a) Principles for approach to Good Governance - better decision making

- Be clear about why each board or task and finish group exists and its membership and purpose and do not set up new boards without a compelling reason to do so.
- We are clear and consistent about when and how members should be involved in formal decision making or engagement.
- We review sign-off levels and the schemes of delegation ensuring officers at the right level are empowered to make decisions with accountability.
- We ensure simple forms for reports that meet the needs of members and reduce the need for duplication to serve different processes.
- We use refresher training to help bring governance – the Constitution - to life and ensure that members and officers are clear about their roles and relationships.
- We value and promote relationships of trust and challenge.
- We have a clear strategy and vision for the organisation, so we know how our day-to-day decisions fit into that.
- We are open and honest about how and where decisions get made.
- We comply with processes: no-one feels the need to circumvent the system and is challenged if they do.
- Members are involved in scoping ideas at an earlier stage.
- We build on the work already done to make the Council more open and challenging.
- Scrutiny helps us get the best decisions and plans through constructive, well-informed challenge.

(b) Areas of work for the decision-making workstream

1. Capture a streamlined approach to formal member and officer governance in a single Place in a simple Code of Governance, which captures the purpose and role of all key bodies in a single place – and sets out where and how good decision and productive scrutiny is best carried out. The code should also be clear about expectations of ways of working and the role of members.

2. Extend use of flow charts that show who needs to be involved when. Produce clear guidance on when and how officers can most constructively engage members informally to help them better carry out their formal roles.

3. Strengthen content of member induction and training (tied closely to the Code of Governance). This should include periodic learning sessions with scrutiny and Cabinet to take stock of what is working, and what needs further improvement.

4. Explore coaching and learning options for Cabinet/committees to accelerate development of collective working.

5. Review of scheme of delegation, decision-making process and boards – co-led by a mix of functional and service directors. The aim will be to simplify,

streamline how we make good decisions – increasing delegation, transparency and accountability.

6. Map existing boards, terms of reference, delegations and processes; capture good and bad experiences of decision-making existing system; and, look outside at good practice elsewhere and see how that can inform our approach.