

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer	Governance Committee	Tuesday, 26 July 2022

## Centre for Governance and Public Scrutiny - Review

Is this report confidential?	No
------------------------------	----

Is this decision key?	Not applicable
-----------------------	----------------

### Purpose of the Report

1. To present to the Governance Committee the report prepared by the Centre for Governance and Public Scrutiny (CfG&PS).

### Recommendations to Governance Committee (change committee name if not applicable)

2. That members of the Committee receive the recommendations and findings in the report and note the further presentation to members through a workshop facilitated by CfG&PS.
3. That the membership of the workshops be
  - a. Leader of the Council
  - b. Deputy Leader of the Council
  - c. Leader of the Opposition
  - d. Deputy Leader of the Opposition
  - e. Leader of the Liberal- Democrats
  - f. Mayor.
4. That it is agreed that following the workshop it is intended a report be taken to full council to review and approve the recommendations, actions and proposed responses for further implementation.

### Reasons for recommendations

5. The report was commissioned by the Council to provide an independent view of the changes the council has implemented to its governance environment, identify any additional areas for improvement and make recommendations to address these issues. To ignore the report would undermine its intention and lose an opportunity to improve.

### Other options considered and rejected

6. For the reasons above no other option is considered appropriate.

## Corporate priorities

7. The report relates to the following corporate priorities: (please bold all those applicable):

<b>An exemplary council</b>	Thriving communities
A fair local economy that works for everyone	Good homes, green spaces, healthy places

## Background to the report

8. As part of the Council's commitment to continuous improvement and in response in part to the 2020/21 External Audit the Centre for Governance and Public Scrutiny were commissioned to undertake a high-level stand back review of the Council's Governance environment.
9. This was an independent consideration of areas of highlighted concern to suggest improvements and of where changes had been made what had been the implications.
10. As part of the review process, CfG&PS met with members and officers and reviewed recordings of meetings. The findings are detailed in the review and a number of recommendations were made.
11. Overall the views of CfG&PS should be seen as positive. The constitutional changes relating to Member led decision making are considered an improvement providing greater transparency and accountability. However, the scheme of delegation needs refreshing to ensure responsibility for decision making is clear.
12. Whilst the review did not find that the behaviours during meetings went beyond what could be expected in political push and shove, there were recommendations relating to training of committee chairs, development of members in understanding their roles and concentrating on developing relationships between members to enable constructive debate and not overly concentrate on the past.
13. Similarly to the finding above, the review did find that some committees acted beyond their remit and this had led to duplication of work. Recommendations to refocus these meetings included, specific agenda items and reports for Scrutiny, the refreshing of the protocol for Governance and Scrutiny Committees to embed the understanding of the roles of those committees and improvements to the agenda management process.
14. The final area for consideration related to public engagement. The review finds no issue with the level of public engagement at meetings which reflects that members interviewed had no appetite to change this. However, it is recommended to re-sequence public involvement, which currently takes place at the end of the debate, to ensure members have the opportunity to consider and respond to points raised.

## Next steps

15. The CfG&PS recommend that the findings and recommendations are presented to members through a workshop facilitated by them. This enables the CfG&PS to provide context to the report, and members to flag up any issues or seek further explanation before the recommendations are developed and agreed to be presented to full Council for approval and implementation.

## Climate change and air quality

16. The report has no implications for climate change and air quality.

## Equality and diversity

17. It is not envisaged that the outcomes from this report will have matters which have implications for equality or diversity, but any changes proposed will be considered in this context in accordance with Council policy.

**Risk**

18. Any changes proposed or adopted through the recommendations will be considered carefully to establish the consequences of the changes to ensure they are fit for purpose.

**Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer**

19. There are no financial consequences of this report.

**Comments of the Monitoring Officer**

20. The comments are contained in the body of the report..

**Background documents**

There are no background papers to this report

**Appendices**

Appendix A – Centre for Governance and Public Scrutiny – stand back review report

Report Author:	Email:	Telephone:	Date:
Chris Moister (Director of Governance)	chris.moister@southribble.gov.uk	01772 62xxxx	