

Committee Model Review Group

24 April 2025



Report of: Director – Legal and Democratic Services

Title: Harbour Committee

Ward: All

Recommendations:

That the Committee Model Review Group considers the matters set out in this report.

The significant issues in the report are:

This report provides an overview of the arrangements that the Council has in place in respect of the Harbour Committee.



1. Summary

The Council's arrangements for the Harbour Committee were agreed by Full Council as part of the development of the new Committee Model of governance and came into effect on 6 May 2024.

This report provides an overview of the arrangements that the Council has in place for the Harbour Committee and areas for consideration by the Review Group.

2. Harbour Committee

The Council established a Harbour Committee at the start of the 2024/25 financial year, following a review of the arrangements that the Council has in place for the management of the harbour assets. The establishment of a Harbour Committee is deemed to be best practice for Harbour Authorities.

As part of the establishment of the Committee Model of governance, the Harbour Committee became a standalone committee. However, the Harbour Committee only provides an assurance and oversight role; it does not currently have decision-making powers. The Economy and Skills Policy Committee retains the power to make key decisions in respect of matters relating to the harbour.

This report confirms the legal position in respect of decision-making by the Harbour Committee for the Review Group to consider.

3. Decision-making by the Harbour Committee

The Harbour Committee is currently structured to be an advisory committee only and the terms of reference for the Harbour Committee state that:

"The Harbour Committee will not have authority to make a key decision, but can make a recommendation to the Economy and Skills Policy Committee who will have the authority to make Key Decisions for the Harbour."

However, it would be possible to give the Harbour Committee decision-making powers in the same way as other policy committees. In doing so, the Harbour Committee would need to make decisions within the budget, plans and policies of the Council, for example in accordance with the annual budget approved by Full Council, in accordance with the Council's financial and procurement rules and in line with the Council's processes for the management of assets.

Any decision relating to changing the decision-making role of the Harbour Committee is a matter for Full Council.

4. Membership of the Harbour Committee

The current membership of the Harbour Committee consists of 5 Councillors and 4 co-opted members. In line with all other Committees of the Council, the Harbour Committee should be politically proportionate and therefore it is recommended that there are 7 Councillors (3:2:1:1), plus co-optees. In addition, it is recommended that the co-optees are voting members of the committee.

5. Summary of matters for consideration by the Committee Model Review Group

To summarise, the Committee Model Review Group could consider whether the Harbour Committee should have decision-making powers as set out in this report.

6. Recommendation

That the Committee Model Review Group considers the matters set out in this report.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Background Papers:

None

Appendices

None