

CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

14 JANUARY 2010

**REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

COUNCIL DECISION

Corporate Management and Finance – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Laing

ANNUAL MEETING

1. Summary

This report provides details of the Members' Advisory Panel's discussion relating to the format of future Council Annual Meetings and seeks approval of proposals coming from that discussion. The report also gives details of the Panel's agreement of the Annual Meeting venue for 2010.

2. Recommendations

That Cabinet recommend to Council that:-

1. the format of the Annual Meeting 2010, and future meetings, return to that used immediately prior to the 2009 meeting.
2. it note that the 2010 Annual Meeting will be held in the Jamal Building, New Street, Thornaby

3. Reasons for the Recommendations/Decision(s)

In January 2009 Council agreed to change the format of the Annual Meeting and also agreed that, following the 2009 meeting, a review of its operation be undertaken by the Members Advisory Panel. That review has taken place and the Panel agreed that the new format had been unsuccessful and made the recommendations as detailed above.

4. Members' Interests

Members (including co-opted Members with voting rights) should consider whether they have a personal interest in the item as defined in the Council's code of conduct (**paragraph 8**) and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with paragraph 9 of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest in the item, he/she must then consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest (**paragraphs 10 and 11 of the code of conduct**).

A Member with a prejudicial interest in any matter must withdraw from the room where the meeting considering the business is being held -

- in a case where the Member is attending a meeting (including a meeting of a select committee) but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under statutory right or otherwise, immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence as the case may be;
- in any other case, whenever it becomes apparent that the business is being considered at the meeting;

and must not exercise executive functions in relation to the matter and not seek improperly to influence the decision about the matter (**paragraph 12 of the Code**).

Further to the above, it should be noted that any Member attending a meeting of Cabinet, Select Committee etc; whether or not they are a Member of the Cabinet or Select Committee concerned, must declare any personal interest which they have in the business being considered at the meeting (unless the interest arises solely from the Member's membership of, or position of control or management on any other body to which the Member was appointed or nominated by the Council, or on any other body exercising functions of a public nature, when the interest only needs to be declared if and when the Member speaks on the matter), and if their interest is prejudicial, they must also leave the meeting room, subject to and in accordance with the provisions referred to above.

AGENDA ITEM

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14 JANUARY 2010

**REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

COUNCIL DECISION

ANNUAL MEETING

SUMMARY

This report provides details of the Members' Advisory Panel's discussion relating to the operation of the Annual Meeting 2009 and seeks approval of proposals for 2010 coming from that discussion. The report also gives details of the Panel's agreement of the Annual Meeting venue for 2010.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet recommend to Council that:-

1. the format of the Annual Meeting 2010, and future meetings, return to that used immediately prior to the 2009 meeting.
2. it note that the 2010 Annual Meeting will be held in the Jamal Building, New Street, Thornaby

DETAIL

1. In January 2009 Council received and considered recommendations from the Members' Advisory Panel and agreed the following format for future Annual Meetings of Council:-
 - Council to meet and elect the Mayor and Deputy Mayor (no ceremony) and undertake all other necessary business required. Guests would receive an invitation, directing them to an alternative room, for refreshments, at a time estimated for the conclusion of that business.
 - At the conclusion of the business part of the Annual Meeting a short break would be taken, during which, guests would be invited into the meeting room and a ceremony would take place, to mark the election and installation of the new Mayor.
 - At the conclusion of the ceremony the Mayor would invite guests and members to attend the post meeting civic lunch; and that
 - the Members' Advisory Panel receives a further report regarding the outcome of using the new format at the 2009 Annual Meeting.
2. Following Council's decision, arrangements were put in place to facilitate the Annual Meeting's operation under the new format at the Billingham Forum. These arrangements included revising the established Annual Meeting agenda and preparing a comprehensive 'run through' of the whole day. In addition, consultation with, and briefings of, key members

and officers was necessary to ensure the new arrangements were appropriate and understood.

3. During the above process it was recognized that, in order to avoid some of the specific problems associated with holding the business part of the meeting in the Theatre Auditorium, it would be necessary to hold that part of the meeting in a different room.
4. In view of this, the business part of the meeting was held in the Theatre Complex's Bar Function Room. This room was set up in a similar way to that used in previous years, within the Auditorium.
5. The basic format of the meeting proceeded as follows:-
 - Members took their seats in the Function Room ahead of the business meeting and civic and members' guests were encouraged to remain in the main Theatre Bar. There was seating reserved for certain guests (e.g Incoming Mayor's family) but there was also seating available to guests, officers or members of the public who wished to observe. Clearly, this was limited and subject to Health and Safety considerations.
 - Shortly before the end of the business part of the meeting guests in the main Theatre Bar were asked to take seats in the Auditorium. Guests who would sit at the top table in the auditorium were asked to assemble in an ante room. Ahead of the conclusion of the business part of the meeting members were asked to make their way to the Auditorium and the Mayor joined his guests in the ante room.
 - When guests had settled in the auditorium the civic party processed in and took its place on the stage. Following a Civic Welcome by the Chief Executive all the speeches, presentations and traditions associated with the Annual Meeting took place.
6. Following the meeting Members were contacted and asked for feedback on how the meeting had operated with the new format. 23 Members of the Council responded. Out of those responses, there was a majority (74%) that did not approve of the business and ceremonial aspects being split or did not understand the purpose of such a split.
7. Members comments were reported to the Members' Advisory Panel in September 09 and it discussed the operation of the Annual Meeting 2009 together with those comments. The Panel agreed that the format of the Annual Meeting should return to that which existed prior to last year. This would basically mean that the business and ceremonial aspects of the Annual Meeting would merge together again.
8. As the Billingham Forum Theatre will not be available for the Annual Meeting 2010 the Members' Advisory Panel have also given consideration to identifying a venue for the meeting.
9. The Panel considered the following potential venues and was provided with information relating to their main features, including cost, capacity and accessibility.

Wynyard Hall
Preston Park
Jamal Building
10. The Panel agreed that the Jamal Building should be used for the 2010 Annual Meeting as it offered the most cost effective and practical solution available.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

11. The proposed return to the pre 2009 format would not attract additional costs to those already budgeted for.
12. The change of venue to the Jamal will produce savings from previous years in terms of room hire and catering.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

13. The proposed new format does not effect any of the legal considerations surrounding the Annual Meeting.

RISK ASSESSMENT

14. This matter is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

15. The Annual Meeting continues to provide opportunities for community engagement and contributes to the Stronger Communities theme.

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

16. This report is not subject to an Equality Impact Assessment

CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

17. All Members of Council, Members Advisory Panel and Corporate Management Team

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Background Papers

Cabinet Report 8 January 2009
Council Minutes January 2009
Minutes of Members Advisory Panel meetings

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors:

Not Ward Specific

Property

None