

**STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS**

**PROFORMA**

Cabinet Meeting .....2nd September 2010

1. Title of Item/Report

New Executive Arrangements

2. Record of the Decision

Members considered a report that outlined the outcome of further consultation relating to New Executive Arrangements. The report also detailed possible proposals for change, which were required to be submitted to the Secretary of State.

Members were reminded that at the meeting on the 26 November, 2009 Cabinet considered a report which outlined the feedback from the initial consultation which had been undertaken on new executive arrangements.

This followed an earlier report to Cabinet on 6 August, 2009 and a decision by Council on 9 September, 2009 that:-

- Information regarding the two executive models would be provided:-
  - at information points in key council buildings, such as reception areas and libraries;
  - on the Council's website;
  - through a programme of consultation; and
  - in Keeping you in Touch
- Interested persons would be asked to indicate which of the executive models they would prefer to see included in a referendum.
- Responses should be able to be provided in a variety of ways e.g. in writing, by email.
- An appropriate press release would be issued.
- The consultation/response period would be 4 weeks.

This initial consultation resulted in only 425 replies and of these, opinion

was fairly evenly split with regard to which of the following two models was preferred:-

- Council Leader and Cabinet
- Directly Elected Mayor and Cabinet

Taking this into account and although Council had previously (9 September 2009) resolved that a referendum should be held on a preferred or chosen model identified via the consultation, Cabinet Members expressed concern at the apparent lack of public interest shown both in Stockton Borough and other parts of the country, which it was felt cast doubt as to whether the cost of holding a full scale referendum (the equivalent of full local elections at an approximate cost of £200k) was justified in the current economic climate.

On the 26 November 2009 Cabinet therefore recommended to Council and Council agreed (on 9 December, 2009) that:-

- (i) the decision to hold a referendum regarding the chosen executive model and related proposals for change be rescinded.
- (ii) further consultation takes place as follows:-

Information regarding the two executive models will be provided to all local government electors, who will be asked to indicate which of the executive models they would prefer to see introduced by the Council.

- (iii) a report be submitted to Cabinet regarding the outcome of this further consultation, with a view to one of the executive models and the related proposals for change being recommended to Council for approval.

- (iv) the Chief Executive, in consultation with Cabinet Members and Group Leaders, be authorised to finalise:-

- the details of and arrangements relating to the further consultation outlined at recommendation 2, including the timescale for replies.
- A communications programme regarding the outcome of Council's consideration of these recommendations; and subject to that the reporting of the results of the further consultation to Cabinet and Council.

- (v) the costs of further consultation process be met from corporate balances.

In accordance with Council's decision, information regarding the two executive models was provided to all Local Government electors, who

were asked to signify their preferred model by completing and returning a consultation reply slip in a prepaid envelope. Details of that information were provided.

In addition, details about the consultation and the supporting information were placed on the Council's website; an article appeared in Stockton News and a press release was issued.

The further consultation ran from 7 July to 29 July 2010 and details of the replies were provided:-

26069 consultation reply slips had been returned. This represented a turnout of 18.47% (electorate 141,164). The breakdown of responses was as follows:-

13445 in favour of a Council Leader and Cabinet

12513 in favour of a Directly Elected Mayor and Cabinet

111 void for uncertainty

It was explained that taking the further consultation outcome into account, it was now for the Council to determine which of the two executive models should be adopted. The next steps after this decision were set out in a timetable/project plan provided.

The next steps must culminate in the Council implementing/operating one of the two new executive models by 8 May 2011.

Proposals for change were required to be submitted to the Secretary of State, providing appropriate details of the new executive model, which was to be implemented/operated.

Members noted that when approved the agreed proposals would have to be submitted to the Secretary of State.

After the proposals had been submitted to the Secretary of State, a notice had to be published as soon as possible. The notice would state that the Council had drawn up the proposals, describe briefly what they were and state that they were available for inspection at the Municipal Buildings.

Subject to this, a further resolution would then have to be passed at a Special Council meeting agreeing to implement the new proposals for change.

A second notice must then be published confirming this decision had been made and indicating when the new arrangements would come into force.

Cabinet considered the report and results of the consultation. Members commented that the turnout had been relatively good and noted that a majority of responses had indicated a preference for a Council Leader and Cabinet model.

RECOMMENDED to Council that:-

1. the Council Leader and Cabinet new executive model be approved.
2. the proposals for change based on the Council Leader and Cabinet executive model, as detailed at Appendix 5 of the report, be approved for submission to the Secretary of State.
3. delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Finance to finalise the agreed proposals for change for submission to the Secretary of State.

3. Reasons for the Decision

To agree the procedure for complying with the requirements of the legislation following the consultation which had taken place

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Directly Elected Mayor and executive form of governance.

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

None

6. Details of any Dispensations

Not applicable

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Not applicable

Proper Officer  
06 July 2010