



**REPORT of
DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY, PERFORMANCE AND GOVERNANCE**

to
**COUNCIL
28 MAY 2020**

REMOTE COMMITTEE MEETINGS AT MALDON DISTRICT COUNCIL

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To review the procedures and arrangements for remote Committee meetings at Maldon District Council.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) That Members advise items they would like considered at Working Groups / areas they consider to be urgent business;
- (ii) That Members agree to review remote working arrangements in August 2020, ahead of the Statutory Annual meeting, allowing time to assess the way they work, and that this is based on a report of the Corporate Governance Working Group;
- (iii) That Members review a recommended start date for all Committees remotely from 5 October 2020.

3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 A report was considered by the COVID-19 Interim Measures Group (COVID-19 Group) to agree procedures as part of virtual committee's instatement at Maldon District Council and the report and associated documents (as amended by the COVID-19 Group) are attached at **APPENDIX A**.
- 3.2 Based on discussion of the COVID-19 Group, a Statutory Annual meeting of the Council has been scheduled to take place remotely on Thursday 3 September 2020. Based on appointments and Committee membership being agreed at that meeting, it is proposed to schedule all Council and Committee meetings to re-start from 5 October 2020.
- 3.3 As new processes allow for a streamlining of reports, Members will be invited to review frequency and size of the Committee meetings, as well as which meetings should be re-instated remotely in August ahead of the Statutory Annual meeting.

- 3.4 As this report is being considered at the first remote meeting of the Council, it is recommended that an additional paper be considered at the Council meeting on 6 August 2020 to include a report by the Corporate Governance Working Group.
- 3.5 The COVID-19 Group also requested that live public participation be implemented as soon as possible. The online form that has been currently implemented allows the public to submit questions / comments to be read and responded to. The officer team working on the technology for remote Committees are reviewing the options and risks around this and will action as soon as practicable looking to provide a solution as part of the August review, at the very latest.
- 3.6 The COVID-19 Group resolved that Area Planning Committees be reinstated at their meeting of 13 May 2020. These have now been included in the schedule for remote Committees and will start from 8 June 2020.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 **APPENDIX A** sets out the agreed procedure for remote meetings for Member review, and the recommendations and information is given to propose an approach to review and improve the implementation of remote Committees.

5. IMPACT ON STRATEGIC THEMES

- 5.1 Enables democracy to take place and be publicly viewable.

6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – Enables the elected representatives to participate in the democratic process and for the public to observe democracy.
- (i) **Impact on Equalities** – None.
- (ii) **Impact on Risk** – None.
- (iii) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – None.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (human)** – None.
- (v) **Impact on the Environment** – None.
- (vi) **Impact on Strengthening Communities** – Enables the elected representatives to participate in the democratic process and for the public to observe democracy.

Background Papers: None.

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