

The Arc
High Street
Clowne
S43 4JY

To: Chair & Members of the Council

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Friday, 25th August 2023

Dear Councillor

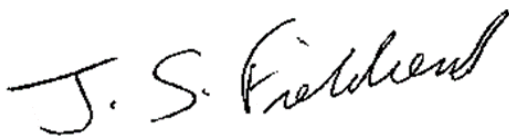
EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL

You are hereby summoned to attend an extraordinary meeting of the Bolsover District Council to be held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne on Tuesday, 5th September, 2023 at 10:00 hours.

Register of Members' Interests - Members are reminded that a Member must within 28 days of becoming aware of any changes to their Disclosable Pecuniary Interests provide written notification to the Authority's Monitoring Officer.

You will find the contents of the agenda itemised on page 3.

Yours faithfully



Solicitor to the Council & Monitoring Officer

Equalities Statement

Bolsover District Council is committed to equalities as an employer and when delivering the services it provides to all sections of the community.

The Council believes that no person should be treated unfairly and is committed to eliminating all forms of discrimination, advancing equality and fostering good relations between all groups in society.

Access for All statement

You can request this document or information in another format such as large print or **language** or contact us by:

- **Phone:** [01246 242424](tel:01246242424)
- **Email:** enquiries@bolsover.gov.uk
- **BSL Video Call:** A three-way video call with us and a BSL interpreter. It is free to call Bolsover District Council with Sign Solutions, you just need WiFi or mobile data to make the video call, or call into one of our Contact Centres.
- Call with [Relay UK](#) - a free phone service provided by BT for anyone who has difficulty hearing or speaking. It's a way to have a real-time conversation with us by text.
- **Visiting** one of our [offices](#) at Clowne, Bolsover, Shirebrook and South Normanton

**EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL
AGENDA**

***Tuesday, 5th September, 2023 at 10:00 hours taking place in the Council Chamber,
The Arc, Clowne***

Item No.		Page No.(s)
1.	Apologies for Absence	
2.	Declarations of Interest	
	Members should declare the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and Non Statutory Interest as defined by the Members' Code of Conduct in respect of:	
	a) any business on the agenda	
	b) any matters arising out of those items	
	and if appropriate, withdraw from the meeting at the relevant time.	
3.	Creation of a new Senior Accountancy Assistant post	4 - 10
4.	District Councillor Community Grant Scheme	11 - 14
5.	Changes to the membership of Scrutiny Committees	15 - 18

Bolsover District Council

Meeting of Extraordinary Council on 5th September 2023

Creation of a new Senior Accountancy Assistant post

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Resources

Classification	This report is public.
Report By	Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer
Contact Officer	Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer

PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT

To seek approval to create and fund a new position of Senior Accountancy Assistant – HRA and Capital.

REPORT DETAILS

1. Background

- 1.1 The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, require every Council to produce and publish an annual statement of accounts by 31st of May, immediately following the end of the financial year. This deadline is achieved by our finance team liaising with other departments within the Council to prepare the information for the accounts. We work hard to ensure we meet this deadline every year and this is a real measure of the finance team's performance.
- 1.2 There is a further requirement for the accounts to be audited and published by 31st of July of the same year. The finance team provide very detailed working papers to our external auditor Mazars, to try and limit the number of queries raised and therefore shorten the time taken to carry out the audit. Generally speaking, the longer an audit takes, the higher the cost. Unfortunately, because the pension fund audit is done by the County Council auditors not ours, this can cause delays in our auditor signing off the accounts to meet the statutory deadline. This is currently outside of our control.
- 1.3 The Department for Levelling-Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) has moved these statutory deadlines around quite a bit in the years since the Covid-19 pandemic started in 2019/20, for a number of reasons. The main reason was to try and ease the pressure put on finance teams as a result of the extra reporting responsibilities caused by government schemes and returns related to the

pandemic and by the increasingly complex accounting requirements for financial reporting.

- 1.4 Below is a table showing the recent history of the statutory deadlines and ours and the auditors performance against the dates:

	Prepared by finance		Audit sign off	
	Deadline	Achieved	Deadline	Achieved
2018/19	31/5/19	17/5/19	31/7/19	31/7/19
2019/20	31/8/20	28/5/20	30/11/20	30/11/20
2020/21	31/7/21	14/6/21	30/9/21	30/9/21
2021/22	31/7/22	27/5/22	30/11/22	28/11/22
2022/23	31/5/23	19/5/23	30/9/23	awaited
2023/24	31/5/24	next year	31/7/24	next year

- 1.5 To put the performance of this Council's finance team into context, for the 2019/20 accounts 45% of Councils in England were signed off by the 30th of November deadline. This reduced to 9% for the 2020/21 accounts and in 2021/22 we were in the 12% of authorities who were signed off by the auditors in time to meet the statutory deadline.
- 1.6 After Sir Tony Redmond's independent review into local financial reporting and audit, DLUHC have acknowledged there is a major problem with audit delays in England. Measures are being worked through with the National Audit Office in consultation with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), to try to resolve the backlog of local audits and to embed timely audits in the future.
- 1.7 This Council will not currently be affected by these new proposals because we have worked hard at being efficient in our work to ensure internally, we meet the deadline, and we continue to work with our auditors to ensure we meet the audit statutory deadline.
- 1.8 However, throughout the early part of the 2023/24 financial year, the capacity of the finance team has been greatly stretched as we've been heavily involved in setting up the financial arrangements for the Council's wholly owned company, Dragonfly. Staff were still preparing working papers for the external auditors so have had to work over-time to complete the extra work commitments. This was in addition to answering queries from the Council's auditor as well as carrying out year-end processes for Dragonfly and liaising with the external accountants undertaking their audit.
- 1.9 This extra workload meant the Financial Outturn 2022/23 report and the Quarter 1 Budget Monitoring report did not get reported in July as originally intended but will be reported to Members during September. In addition, the team are currently

behind in their preparatory work for the Revised Budget process which starts towards the end of September and this delay is expected to continue into the Medium-Term Financial Plan timetable. Currently, the biggest worry is that by the time work is due to start on year-end for 2023/24 (normally in January straight after the budget process) we may struggle to start this before March. To add to this, a substantial amount of work needs to be done this year before the 31st of March to prepare Group Accounts for the first time, now we are classed as having a subsidiary.

- 1.10 We are hoping to have the position filled by early November to enable us to get the new person familiar with our working practices and increasing capacity straight away. Should we fail to attract a suitable candidate we may need to make use of a recruitment agency while we consider our options.

2. Details of Proposal or Information

- 2.1 The finance team currently consists of 6 full-time, permanent staff and 2 full-time apprentices on fixed-term contracts. Historically there have been more staff in the team but as with other services within the Council, reductions have been made in the interest of efficiency where staff have left and not been replaced.
- 2.2 Unfortunately, the extra burdens placed on the finance team due mainly to the new company, mean we have no choice but to propose an increase in the permanent staff to 7 full-time officers. **Appendix 1** attached shows the proposed structure with the proposed new post highlighted.
- 2.3 It is expected that the duties of the new post will mirror those of the Senior Accountancy Assistant – General Fund but on the HRA and capital programme and on that basis, human resources are satisfied that the job doesn't need to be separately job evaluated and can be the same grade.
- 2.4 It is therefore proposed that the post will be a grade 7 post, full-time and permanent within Financial Services. The cost to the Council at the bottom of the grade will be £40,487 rising to £44,117 at the top, both of these amounts are subject to the settlement of the 2023/24 Local Government pay award.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 If approval for this new post is not received it is the Section 151 Officer's view that the current excellent performance of the finance team will be difficult to maintain. If statutory deadlines started to be missed this could result in reputational damage for the Council. It could lead to unacceptable workloads for staff, leading to stress and potentially lost sick days. It may cause staff to look for employment elsewhere.
- 3.2 It is in the interests of the Council to ensure it has a properly resourced finance team to allow the provision of essential services to Members and other departments of the Council, as well as its wholly owned company.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

4.1 There are alternatives which could be considered

- Do nothing – this could eventually lead to missed statutory deadlines causing reputational damage to the Council. This will probably also lead to an unacceptable workload for staff, potentially leading to stress and lost work days
- Outsource – there are no small, isolated bits of work that this could apply to, the duties of the finance team are all interrelated so it would have to be the whole team outsourced which is not an acceptable alternative.
- Use agency staff – this would be expensive to fund in the long-term and skills would be lost as temporary contracts were completed and the agency staff left.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. That Members approve the creation of a new Senior Accountancy Assistant – HRA and Capital post permanently on the establishment.
2. That the cost of the new Senior Accountancy Assistant – HRA and Capital post, be added to the Medium-Term Financial Plan as a General Fund cost.

Approved by the Portfolio Holder - Cllr Clive Moesby, Executive Member for Resources

IMPLICATIONS.

Finance and Risk: Yes No

Details:

Financial implications are covered throughout this report but the cost of this post to the Council is £40,487 at the bottom of the grade, rising to £44,117 at the top of the grade, per annum. This is subject to the 2023/24 Local Government pay award.

There will be a charge to Dragonfly Developments for the services provided by the Council under the Service Level Agreements, this figure has not yet been finalised but it will help mitigate this new cost.

On behalf of the Section 151 Officer

Legal (including Data Protection): Yes No

Details:

Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires that “every local authority shall make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs” this includes ensuring the Section 151 Officer has a finance function that is resourced to be fit for purpose.

The Accounts and Audit Regulations require the Council to produce, publish and have audited the statement of accounts by statutory deadlines.

The Local Government Act 1992 require that billing authorities complete and approve their budgets and set a council tax before 11 March immediately prior to the start of the financial year on 1 April.

On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

Environment:

Please identify (if applicable) how this proposal/report will help the Authority meet its carbon neutral target or enhance the environment.

Details:

Not applicable to this report.

Staffing: Yes No

Details:

The Council’s policies and procedures will be followed for recruitment to this post.

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

DECISION INFORMATION

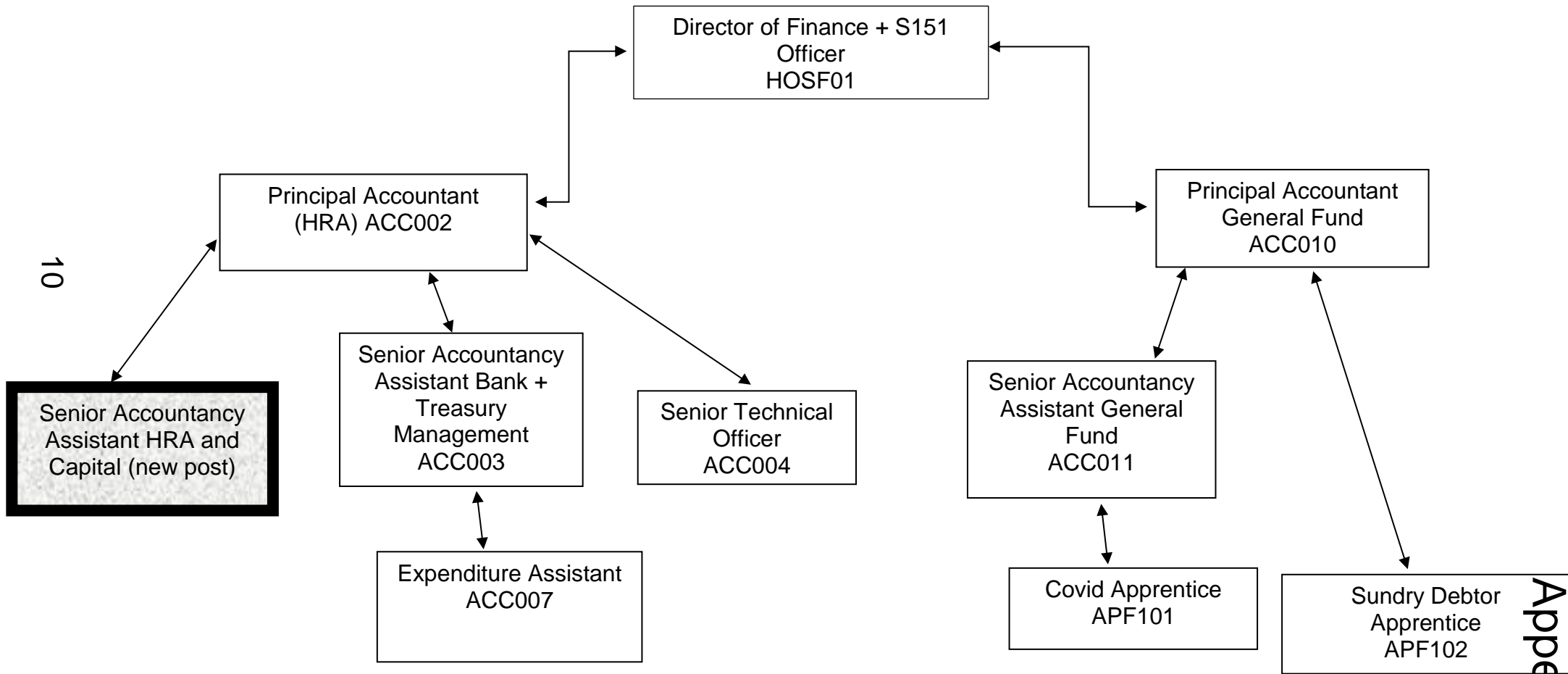
<p>Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:</p> <p>Revenue - £75,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £150,000 <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i></p>	No
<p>Is the decision subject to Call-In? <i>(Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</i></p>	No

District Wards Significantly Affected	None
Consultation: Leader / Deputy Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Executive <input type="checkbox"/> SLT <input type="checkbox"/> Relevant Service Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Members <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Details: Portfolio Holder for Resources

Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy, and Environment.

DOCUMENT INFORMATION	
Appendix No	Title
1	Proposed Structure of Financial Services

Background Papers
<i>(These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Executive, you must provide copies of the background papers).</i>
None



10

Appendix 1

Bolsover District Council

Meeting of Extraordinary Council on 5 September 2023

District Councillor Community Grant Scheme

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Policy, Strategy and Communications

Classification	This report is Public.
Report By	Pam Brown Director Executive, Customer Services, HR and Payroll and Partnerships
Contact Officer	As above

PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT

To gain approval for a budget of £37,000 per annum to be allocated for the above Councillor Community Grant Scheme.

REPORT DETAILS

1. Background

- 1.1 During 2022/2023, a one-off budget for £37,000 was agreed by Members. This enabled each District Councillor to support their local community groups and organisations for services and activities within their Ward, up to a value of £1,000 each Councillor.
- 1.2 The grant scheme was well utilised by members and numerous local communities have benefited. **Appendix 1** contains the statistics.

2. Details of Proposal or Information

- 2.1 After taking into account the positive outcomes and impact achieved by the small grant scheme, it is proposed to continue with the scheme on an annual basis.
- 2.2 This would require the budget of £37,000 per annum to be added to the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) each year to enable the scheme to continue. However, as with any other revenue budget within the MTFP, if the allocation isn't utilised in year, the balance will not be carried over into the following year.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 Having the evidence of the positive impact and benefit to local communities it is proposed to continue the scheme across the district.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 4.1 An option to discontinue with the scheme has been considered, however, in the current climate and the cost-of-living crisis affecting our local residents, it is a small way in which the District Council can support the smaller groups and organisations in our district in difficult times.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. Council agree to a budget of £37,000 for the District Councillor Community Grant Scheme and for this to be added to the Medium-Term Financial Plan on an annual basis.

Approved by Councillor Steve Fritchley, Portfolio Holder for Policy, Strategy and Communications

IMPLICATIONS.

Finance and Risk: Yes No

Details:

The cost of this proposal will be an extra cost to the General Fund of £37,000 per year. Previous schemes have been closed due to the budget not being fully spent and the amount of administration taken to manage the scheme. As with all revenue budgets, any under spend at 31st March will be moved into balances, there will not be any rolling over of budgets to the next financial year.

On behalf of the Section 151 Officer

Legal (including Data Protection): Yes No

Details:

Under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 a local authority may incur expenditure where it will bring direct benefit to their area or any part of it or all or some of its inhabitants.

On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

Environment: Yes No

Please identify (if applicable) how this proposal/report will help the Authority meet its carbon neutral target or enhance the environment.

Details:

Staffing: Yes No

Details:

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

DECISION INFORMATION

<p>Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:</p> <p>Revenue - £75,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £150,000 <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies.</i></p>	No
<p>Is the decision subject to Call-In? <i>(Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</i></p>	No

District Wards Significantly Affected	ALL
<p>Consultation: Leader / Deputy Leader <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Executive <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SLT <input type="checkbox"/> Relevant Service Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Members <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/></p>	Details:

Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy and Environment.
The District Councillor Community Grant Scheme enables, through it's grant awards to support all of the Council's ambitions.

DOCUMENT INFORMATION	
Appendix No 1	Title Grant awards and Impact measurement into local district wards

Background Papers
<i>(These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Executive, you must provide copies of the background papers).</i>
N/A

Appendix 1

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR COMMUNITY GRANT SCHEME 2022/23

In total 111 awards of funding were made.

Beneficiaries targeted:-

- Everyone 53
- Families 20
- Older People 9
- Young People 29

Amounts Awarded:-

- 68 grants approved between £50 - £250.
- 29 grants approved between £251 - £500.
- 14 grants approved between £501 - £1000.

Grants were used for a wide variety of activity including:-

- Christmas events
- Community events (e.g. Outdoor family theatre shows, Coronation celebrations and dance events)
- Warm spaces/meals
- Physical activity sessions
- Equipment (e.g. Pool, Snooker and Cricket equipment, Toys, Youth club provision)
- Capital expenditure (e.g. Outdoor spaces, repair of paths, creation of a peace garden)
- Transport
- Youth activities

Bolsover District Council

Meeting of the Extraordinary Council – 5th September 2023

Change to the membership of Scrutiny Committees

**Report of the Director of Corporate & Legal Services Governance
and Monitoring Officer**

Classification	This report is Public
Report By	Jim Fieldsend Director of Corporate & Legal Services Governance and Monitoring Officer
Contact Officer	Jim Fieldsend Director of Corporate & Legal Services Governance and Monitoring Officer

PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT

For Council to approve changes to the membership of a number of scrutiny committees.

For Council to decide upon the appointment of the Vice Chair of the Local Growth Scrutiny Committee

REPORT DETAILS

1. Background

- 1.1 At Annual Council on 24th May 2023 the Council agreed the appointments to its Committees and Advisory Groups.
- 1.2 Subsequently the Council nominated four councillors to become directors of the Dragonfly Development Ltd and Dragonfly Management (Bolsover) Limited. In addition the Leader of the Council has appointed 5 councillors as Junior Executive Members.
- 1.3 Due to potential conflicts of interest resulting from either being a member of the Dragonfly board or being a Junior Executive Member it is necessary to make some changes to the membership of some of the Scrutiny Committees.

1.4 In addition, the current Vice Chair of Local Growth Scrutiny is Cllr Phil Smith. As it is proposed that he moves to Customer Services Scrutiny Committee it will be necessary for the Council to appoint a new Vice Chair.

2. Details of Proposal or Information

2.1 It is proposed as follow:

- Cllr Phil Smith to move from Local Growth Scrutiny Committee to Customer Services Scrutiny Committee;
- Cllr Janet Tait to move from Local Growth Scrutiny Committee to Climate Change Scrutiny Committee;
- Cllr Jane Yates to move from Customer Services Scrutiny Committee to Local Growth Scrutiny Committee;
- Cllr Jeanne Raspin to move from Climate Change Scrutiny Committee to Local Growth Scrutiny Committee.

2.2 Cllr Deborah Watson will also need to move from Local Growth Scrutiny Committee. A proposal for which committee Cllr Watson will move to will be presented at the meeting.

2.3 Nominations for the position of the Vice Chair of Local Growth Scrutiny Committee. The members of the Local Growth Scrutiny Committee following the proposed changes will be- Cllr Tom Kirkham (Chair), Cllr Jane Yates, Cllr Jeanne Raspin, Cllr Mark Hinman, Cllr Duncan Haywood, Cllr Will Fletcher

3. Reasons for Recommendation

3.1 The need for changes has arisen due to the appointment of Junior Executive Members and Dragonfly Directors.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

4.1 Not to make the changes. This is likely to result in conflicts of interests which would mean that a conflicted councillor could not affectively contribute to the work of the scrutiny committee.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. That Council agrees to the proposed changes to the Scrutiny Committees' membership.
2. That Council appoint a Vice Chair of the Local Growth Committee.

IMPLICATIONS:

Finance and Risk: Yes No

Details:

There are no financial or risk implications arising from this report.

On behalf of the Section 151 Officer

Legal (including Data Protection): Yes No

Details:

There are no specific legal implication however the proposals would represent good governance.

On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

Environment: Yes No

Please identify (if applicable) how this proposal/report will help the Authority meet its carbon neutral target or enhance the environment. Please speak to the Climate Change lead officer for further advice.

Details:

There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

Staffing: Yes No

Details:

There are no human resource issues implications arising from this report.

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

DECISION INFORMATION

<p>Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:</p> <p>Revenue - £75,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £150,000 <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i></p>	No
<p>Is the decision subject to Call-In? <i>(Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</i></p>	No

District Wards Significantly Affected	None directly
<p>Consultation: Leader / Deputy Leader <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Executive <input type="checkbox"/> SLT <input type="checkbox"/> Relevant Service Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Members <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/></p>	Details:

Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy and Environment.

DOCUMENT INFORMATION	
Appendix No	Title
1	
2	
3	

<p>Background Papers <i>(These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Executive you must provide copies of the background papers).</i></p>
None