

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
PRIF WEITHREDWR  
Alison Ward, LLB**

**TORFAEN  
COUNTY  
BOROUGH**



**BWRDEISTREF  
SIROL  
TORFAEN**

Your ref/Eich cyf:

Our ref/Ein cyf: **AM/FO3**

Date/Dyddiad: **22 June 2009**

Please contact/Cysyllter â:

**Alyson Mountjoy**

Direct line/Llinell union:

**01495 766082**

Direct fax/Llinell ffacs:

**01495 766059**

**alyson.mountjoy@torfaen.gov.uk**

Mr Chris Harris  
11 The Square  
Upper Cwmbran  
Torfaen  
NP44 5EQ

Dear Mr Harris

### **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST**

Thank you for your email requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. I am now in a position to respond.


You requested '*copies (electronic preferably) or links to all relevant minutes of all meetings of the Members Constitution Working Party or Cabinet or any other committee/ group/working party.*'

The Members' Constitution Working Party does not have agendas or minutes. As a working party it is not a formal committee of the Council and therefore is not subject to the requirements of Public Access to Information under that legislation.

Minutes of all other committees are published on the Council's web site. Under Section 21 of the Act, we are not required to provide information in response to a request if it is already reasonably accessible to you. The information you requested is available on the Council's website ([www.torfaen.gov.uk](http://www.torfaen.gov.uk)). If you do not have access to the internet, you may be able to use facilities at your local public library, or you can request a paper copy by contacting me.

You have requested information relating to '*groups*'. I require further information in order to identify and locate the information that you have asked for. I will not be able to respond to this part of your request until you can clarify exactly what information you require. Please would you specify to which groups you were referring. Please note that information relating to party political communications in which Councillors discuss party political matters is not information relating to the functions of the Council and therefore not held for the purposes of the Freedom of information Act 2000.

You also requested '*working notes, letters and emails, in fact anything leading up to the preparation of the report to council at the annual meeting on the 19th of May*'

  
INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Civic Centre • Pont-y-pŵl • Torfaen • NP4 6YB • Tel: 01495 762200 • Fax: 01495 755513

Y Ganolfan Ddinesig • Pont-y-pŵl • Torfaen • NP4 6YB • Ffôn: 01495 762200 • Ffacs: 01495 755513

You are welcome to correspond in Welsh or English/Mae croeso i chi ysgrifennu yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg



headed "Agenda item 10 ESTABLISHMENT OF A POLICY CO-ORDINATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE." "

Please find attached copies of emails, comments on the draft report and notes. Some information has been redacted as it is not relevant to your request.

You stated "I would like to use this information to find out when this idea was first thought of and by whom, and the names of all councillors who agreed to it going before the Annual Meeting of Council and when this agreement was reached. "

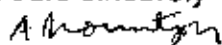
The minutes of the Council's Annual General Meeting are available on our website ([www.torfaen.gov.uk](http://www.torfaen.gov.uk)), which will indicate how many members supported the new committee. If more information is required you would need to specify exactly what information you are seeking.

If you have any queries about this letter or are unhappy about the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to make a complaint or request a review, please do not hesitate to contact me in writing.

If you are not content with the outcome of your complaint, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the Information Commissioner's Office (Wales) cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by this Council. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: The Information Commissioner's Office (Wales), Cambrian Buildings, Mount Stuart Square, Cardiff, CF10 5FL. Telephone 029 2044 8044 or Fax 029 2044 8045 or e-mail [Wales@ico.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Wales@ico.gsi.gov.uk).

This letter is available in large print, on audio cassette and in Braille and also in Welsh or any other Community Language. Please contact us for further details or if we can help in any way.

Yours sincerely

  
**Alyson Mountjoy**

**DEMOCRACY AND SCRUTINY OFFICER**

Enc:

- Emails relating to preparation of the report 'Establishment of a Policy Co-Ordination and Development Committee';
- Drafts of the report 'Establishment of a Policy Co-Ordination and Development Committee' containing comments;
- Draft of the report containing 'Establishment of a Policy Co-Ordination and Development Committee' preliminary notes;

**Mountjoy Alyson**

**From:** Matthews Paul  
**Sent:** 11 May 2009 10:22  
**To:** Ward Alison (Chief Execs); Edmunds Richard; Gwinnell Richard; Monk Liz; Willis Lynda (Legal)  
**Subject:** Establishment of new Committee - Policy Co-ordination and Development  
**Importance:** High  
**Sensitivity:** Confidential

Dear all

I spent a little time with the Leader and Cllr Cunningham last week as they were working through their AGM preparations. One aspect of their preparation focussed on SRA's and their distribution. To cut a long story short they want to take advantage of the demise of one O&S Committee to create a new Committee (which I have entitled Policy Co-ordination and Development). They want this Committee formally recognised in the Constitution and they understand that the Membership will need to be politically balanced – their preference is a small committee (6 or 7 in number). They want the Chair to be paid an SRA (equivalent to an O&S Chair) but they do not want this Committee to be seen as an O&S Committee. They asked me to come up with a terms of reference.

So what does this mean:

- (i) The Leader wants the Committee listed as part of the AGM as a Committee that he nominates the Chair of. This suggests to me clearly that the Committee needs to be established and agreed by Council (and this needs a report) prior to a Chair being nominated. Even if both actions take place at the AGM the sequence on the agenda will be critical – is the Committee needs to be established earlier on the agenda than a Chair is nominated for it.
- (ii) The Terms of reference need to be something like:
  - a. A Committee charged with developing specific policy proposals for consideration by Cabinet
  - b. The work programme shaped by Committee Members but at the same time responsive to specific requests from the Cabinet
  - c. Items on the programme likely to be characterised as cross-cutting, long-standing and unresolved or presenting for urgent resolution
  - d. The nature of the item suggests that the work programme will consist of no more than 6 items in any given year.
  - e. Every piece of work concludes with a report to Cabinet with clear recommendations
- (iii) It feels like a Committee that would need the personal attention of someone at Eds level.

Ed,

Can I leave it to you to work out the report that needs to be written, the sequencing etc.

All

Clearly this is confidential at this point.

**[REDACTED]**

**[REDACTED]**

**Mountjoy Alyson**

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**From:** Williams Lynne  
**Sent:** 11 May 2009 15:14  
**To:** Matthews Paul; Willis Lynda (Legal); Edmunds Richard  
**Subject:** Council Report  
**Importance:** High  
**Sensitivity:** Confidential  
**Attachments:** Council Report - Establishment of a Policy Coordination and Development Committee1.doc.doc

All,

Please find attached my first attempt at the report for the establishment of a new committee. Please feel free to amend or rewrite.

Regards,  
Lynne

Lynne Williams  
Policy & Scrutiny Officer  
Telephone 01495 766228  
Email: [lynne.williams@torfaen.gov.uk](mailto:lynne.williams@torfaen.gov.uk)

COUNCIL  
19 MAY 2009

**ESTABLISHMENT OF A POLICY CO-ORDINATION AND DEVELOPMENT  
COMMITTEE**

*Report Submitted by: Councillor Bob Wellington (Leader)*

*Report Written by: Councillor Bob Wellington (Leader)*

**1. Area Affected**

1.1 Not applicable

**2. Purpose of Report**

2.1 To seek Council's agreement to establish a Policy Coordination and Development Committee as from 19 May 2009.

**3. Recommendation(s)**

3.1 It is recommended that Council agrees:

- A Policy Coordination and Development Committee of 6 (six) Elected Members is established as from 19 May 2009;
- The remit of the Committee is as set out in paragraph 5 below;
- The appointment of the Chair and other members of the Committee is made at this meeting and thereafter included in the agenda of the AGM of the Council;
- The Chair of the Committee is given a Special Responsibility Allowance; and
- The Constitution is amended to give effect to these recommendations.

**4. Background**

4.1 During the past year, it has become evident that there are a number of cross-cutting, long-standing and unresolved issues which would benefit from investigation by elected members.

4.2 The portfolios of the previous Overview and Scrutiny Committees have not allowed this cross cutting work to be undertaken and many issues have not received the level of attention they require.

4.3 On 31 March 2009, Council agreed to reduce the number of Overview and Scrutiny Committees at Annual Council from six to five - four based on the themes of the Corporate Plan and one looking at the Council's Resources and

Corporate Business. Whilst these Committees have revised portfolios, their remits will still prevent cross cutting issues being fully explored.

## **5. Issues and Findings**

- 5.1 It is proposed to create a new Policy Coordination and Development Committee to allow a small number of Members from across political parties to look at cross cutting issues aimed at improving the quality of life for local people.

It is proposed that:

- 5.1.1 The work of the Policy Coordination and Development Committee will focus on developing specific policy proposals for consideration by Cabinet.
- 5.1.2 The work programme will be shaped by the Committee Members, but at the same time be responsive to specific requests from the Cabinet.
- 5.1.3 Items on the programme are likely to be characterised as cross-cutting, long-standing and unresolved or presenting for urgent resolution.
- 5.1.4 The nature of the items will suggest the Committee's work programme should consist of no more than 6 items in any given year.
- 5.1.5 Every piece of work should conclude with a report to Cabinet with clear recommendations for consideration.
- 5.1.6 The Committee should consist of 6 (six) elected Members, which reflects the current composition of both the Pensions Committee and the Audit Committee.
- 5.1.7 The Committee should be subject to the rules of political balance.

If Council agrees the committee should be made up of six members, then the political balance would be 3 (three) Labour, ½ (half) People's Voice, ½ (half) Plaid Cymru, 1 (one) Conservative and 1 (one) Independent member.

If Council agrees another number, then officers will calculate the political balance according to the ratios determined at the Council's annual meeting and subsequently seek the names of members of the committee from the leaders of the political groups.

- 5.1.8 The Chairperson should be appointed with a Special Responsibility Allowance.
- 5.1.9 The Committee should be established from 19 May 2009 so the Chair can be elected during the AGM of the Council.
- 5.1.10 No member of the Cabinet should be a member of the Policy Coordination and Development Committee.
- 5.1.11 The Committee should be serviced by the Democratic Services Team.

## **6. Consultation**

- 6.1 The Members Constitution Working Party will be consulted on the proposed changes to the Constitution in relation to the establishment of this Committee.
- 6.2 The Chief Executive is aware of this proposal.

## **7. Implications**

- 7.1 The implications of accepting the recommendations of this report are set out below.

**Policy** – In agreeing this proposal, Council is agreeing to the constitutional changes necessary to enact them.

**Financial** – The reduction in the number of overview and scrutiny committees has released a special responsibility allowance, which will be used to appoint a Chair to the Policy Coordination and Development Committee.

**Communication** – These changes will need to be communicated across the organisation.

**Personnel** – There are no implications for staff.

**Social Inclusion and Equalities** – There are no implications.

**Decision-making** – The Policy Coordination and Development Committee will have no decision-making responsibilities. All recommendations made by this Committee will be considered by Cabinet.

## **8. Action to be taken following decision**

- 8.1 Following approval of the recommendations, the Policy Coordination and Development Committee will be established and the constitution amended to include an additional part devoted to the new Committee. The Chief Legal and Monitoring Officer will be required to bring forward necessary changes to the Constitution to enable the changes to happen.

## **9. Conclusion**

- 9.1 The existence of a small focused Committee will enable cross-cutting, long-standing and unresolved issues or items presenting for urgent resolution to be considered by members from across political parties.
- 9.2 This work, undertaken in an effective and timely manner, will lead to the Committee suggesting recommendations for consideration by Cabinet which will improve the lives of people living and working in the County Borough

## **10. Recommendation(s)**

- 10.1 It is recommended that Council agrees:

- A Policy Coordination and Development Committee of 6 (six) Elected Members is established as from 19 May 2009;
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- The appointment of the Chair and other members of the Committee is made at this meeting and thereafter included in the agenda of the AGM of the Council;
- The Chair of the Committee is given a Special Responsibility Allowance; and
- The Constitution is amended to give effect to these recommendations.

**For a copy of the background papers or for further information about this report, please telephone:**

**Cath Hillier (Leaders Personal Assistant); tel.01495 742577**

**Willis Lynda (Legal)**

---

**From:** Matthews Paul  
**Sent:** 11 May 2009 15:52  
**To:** Williams Lynne; Willis Lynda (Legal); Edmunds Richard  
**Subject:** RE: Council Report  
**Sensitivity:** Confidential

Looks good to me

---

**From:** Williams Lynne  
**Sent:** 11 May 2009 15:14  
**To:** Matthews Paul; Willis Lynda (Legal); Edmunds Richard  
**Subject:** Council Report  
**Importance:** High  
**Sensitivity:** Confidential

All,

Please find attached my first attempt at the report for the establishment of a new committee. Please feel free to amend or rewrite.

Regards,  
Lynne

Lynne Williams  
Policy & Scrutiny Officer  
Telephone 01495 766228  
Email: [lynne.williams@torfaen.gov.uk](mailto:lynne.williams@torfaen.gov.uk)

26/05/2009

**Mountjoy Alyson**

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**From:** Edmunds Richard  
**Sent:** 12 May 2009 06:55  
**To:** Hillier Cath  
**Subject:** QUICK CHAT WITH THE LEADER...  
**Importance:** High

Cath,

I need to grab 5 minutes with the Leader sometime today in order to run him through the report on the Policy Development and Coordination Committee ahead of dispatch for the AGM tomorrow.

Could you let me know what time would be suitable?

Kind regards

Ed

**Richard Edmunds**  
**HEAD OF STRATEGIC SERVICES**  
**TORFAEN COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**Tel : 01495 742545**  
**Mob: 07980 682032**

**Fax: 01495 766079**

Visit **[www.webster.uk.net](http://www.webster.uk.net)**

**Mountjoy Alyson**

---

**From:** Edmunds Richard  
**Sent:** 12 May 2009 08:00  
**To:** Hillier Cath  
**Subject:** REPORT FOR THE LEADER  
**Importance:** High  
**Sensitivity:** Private  
**Attachments:** Council Report - Establishment of a Policy Coordination and Development Committee1.doc.doc

Cath,

Report as discussed. Could you let the Leader have sight and let me know at Cabinet if he's comfortable with the content?

Many thanks

Ed

**Richard Edmunds**  
**HEAD OF STRATEGIC SERVICES**  
**TORFAEN COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**Tel : 01495 742545**  
**Mob: 07980 682032**

**Fax: 01495 766079**

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**COUNCIL**  
**19 MAY 2009**

**ESTABLISHMENT OF A POLICY CO-ORDINATION AND DEVELOPMENT  
COMMITTEE**

*Report Submitted by: Councillor Bob Wellington (Leader)*

*Report Written by: Councillor Bob Wellington (Leader)*

**1. Area Affected**

1.1 Not applicable

**2. Purpose of Report**

2.1 To seek Council's agreement to establish a Policy Coordination and Development Committee as from 19 May 2009.

**3. Recommendation(s)**

3.1 It is recommended that Council agrees:

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- The Constitution is amended to give effect to these recommendations.

**4. Background**

4.1 During the past year, it has become evident that there are a number of cross-cutting, long-standing and unresolved issues which would benefit from investigation by elected members.

4.2 The portfolios of the previous Overview and Scrutiny Committees have not allowed this cross cutting work to be undertaken and many issues have not received the level of attention they require.

4.3 On 31 March 2009, Council agreed to reduce the number of Overview and Scrutiny Committees at Annual Council from six to five - four based on the themes of the Corporate Plan and one looking at the Council's Resources and

Corporate Business. Whilst these Committees have revised portfolios, their remits will still prevent cross cutting issues being fully explored.

## **5. Issues and Findings**

5.1 It is proposed to create a new Policy Coordination and Development Committee to allow a small number of Members from across political parties to look at cross cutting issues aimed at improving the quality of life for local people.

It is proposed that:

5.1.1 The work of the Policy Coordination and Development Committee will focus on developing specific policy proposals for consideration by Cabinet.

5.1.2 The work programme will be shaped by the Committee Members, but at the same time be responsive to specific requests from the Cabinet.

5.1.3 Items on the programme are likely to be characterised as cross-cutting, long-standing and unresolved or presenting for urgent resolution.

5.1.4 The nature of the items will suggest the Committee's work programme should consist of no more than 6 items in any given year.

5.1.5 Every piece of work should conclude with a report to Cabinet with clear recommendations for consideration.

5.1.6 The Committee should consist of 6 (six) elected Members, which reflects the current composition of both the Pensions Committee and the Audit Committee.

5.1.7 The Committee should be subject to the rules of political balance.

If Council agrees the committee should be made up of six members, then the political balance would be 3 (three) Labour, ½ (half) People's Voice, ½ (half) Plaid Cymru, 1 (one) Conservative and 1 (one) Independent member.

If Council agrees another number, then officers will calculate the political balance according to the ratios determined at the Council's annual meeting and subsequently seek the names of members of the committee from the leaders of the political groups.

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5.1.9 The Committee should be established from 19 May 2009 so the Chair can be elected during the AGM of the Council.

5.1.10 No member of the Cabinet should be a member of the Policy Coordination and Development Committee.

5.1.11 The Committee should be serviced by the Democratic Services Team.

## **6. Consultation**

- 6.1 The Members Constitution Working Party will be consulted on the proposed changes to the Constitution in relation to the establishment of this Committee.
- 6.2 The Chief Executive is aware of this proposal.

## **7. Implications**

- 7.1 The implications of accepting the recommendations of this report are set out below.

**Policy** – In agreeing this proposal, Council is agreeing to the constitutional changes necessary to enact them.

**Financial** – The reduction in the number of overview and scrutiny committees has released a special responsibility allowance, which will be used to appoint a Chair to the Policy Coordination and Development Committee.

**Communication** – These changes will need to be communicated across the organisation.

**Personnel** – There are no implications for staff.

**Social Inclusion and Equalities** – There are no implications.

**Decision-making** – The Policy Coordination and Development Committee will have no decision-making responsibilities. All recommendations made by this Committee will be considered by Cabinet.

## **8. Action to be taken following decision**

- 8.1 Following approval of the recommendations, the Policy Coordination and Development Committee will be established and the constitution amended to include an additional part devoted to the new Committee. The Chief Legal and Monitoring Officer will be required to bring forward necessary changes to the Constitution to enable the changes to happen.

## **9. Conclusion**

- 9.1 The existence of a small focused Committee will enable cross-cutting, long-standing and unresolved issues or items presenting for urgent resolution to be considered by members from across political parties.
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**For a copy of the background papers or for further information about this report, please telephone:**

**Cath Hillier (Leaders Personal Assistant); tel.01495 742577**

**Mountjoy Alyson**

---

**From:** Hillier Cath  
**Sent:** 12 May 2009 09:52  
**To:** Edmunds Richard  
**Subject:** RE: AMENDED REPORT  
**Attachments:** CouncilReport-EstablishmentPolicyCoordination&DevCommittee-RGW-2 doc (2).doc

My pleasure

**Catherine Hillier**  
**SENIOR ASSISTANT TO THE LEADER**  
Torfaen County Borough Council  
Civic Centre  
PONTYPOOL  
NP4 6YB  
Tel: 01495 742575  
Fax: 01495 766390  
Email: [cath.hillier@torfaen.gov.uk](mailto:cath.hillier@torfaen.gov.uk)

---

**From:** Edmunds Richard  
**Sent:** 12 May 2009 09:50  
**To:** Hillier Cath  
**Subject:** AMENDED REPORT

Cath,

Any chance you could forward me the amended report? I have a tiny bit more tweaking to do!

Ed

**Richard Edmunds**  
**HEAD OF STRATEGIC SERVICES**  
**TORFAEN COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
Tel : 01495 742545  
Mob: 07980 682032

Fax: 01495 766079

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COUNCIL  
19 MAY 2009

**ESTABLISHMENT OF A POLICY CO-ORDINATION AND DEVELOPMENT  
COMMITTEE**

*Report Submitted by: Councillor Bob Wellington (Leader)*

*Report Written by: Councillor Bob Wellington (Leader)*

**1. Area Affected**

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2.1 To seek Council's agreement to establish a Policy Coordination and Development Committee as from 19 May 2009.

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- 5.1.8 The Chairperson should be appointed with a Special Responsibility Allowance.
- 5.1.9 The Committee should be established from 19 May 2009 so the Chair can be appointed during the AGM of the Council.
- 5.1.10 No member of the Cabinet should be a member of the Policy Coordination and Development Committee.
- 5.1.11 The Committee should be serviced by the Leader Officer Scrutiny & Support.

## **6. Consultation**

- 6.1 The Members Constitution Working Party will be consulted on the proposed changes to the Constitution in relation to the establishment of this Committee.
- 6.2 The Chief Executive is aware of this proposal.

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**Cath Hillier (Leaders Personal Assistant); tel.01495 742577**

**Mountjoy Alyson**

---

**From:** Willis Lynda (Legal)  
**Sent:** 12 May 2009 13:59  
**To:** Edmunds Richard; Matthews Paul  
**Cc:** Williams Lynne  
**Subject:** RE: Establishment of a Policy Coordination and Development Committee  
**Sensitivity:** Private  
**Attachments:** Council Report - Establishment of a Policy Coordination and Development Committee1.doc..doc

Both

Just small changes on the process to change the constitution which makes it clear that I can do it with the Constitution WP and avoid any further report to council for this. It will need to be politically balanced. Appointment will be by Council as with other committees.  
Lynda

---

**From:** Edmunds Richard  
**Sent:** 12 May 2009 13:36  
**To:** Willis Lynda (Legal); Matthews Paul  
**Cc:** Williams Lynne  
**Subject:** Establishment of a Policy Coordination and Development Committee  
**Importance:** High  
**Sensitivity:** Private

Lynda/Paul,

As promised, please find attached the amended report now inclusive of the changes administered by the Leader (tracked). The detail of what has been removed from the original report is captured in the commentary on the right hand side of the document.

Can you confirm that you are comfortable with the revisions? The most notable for me is the change from 'elected' to 'appointed' in para 5.1.9 (as per our earlier conversation) and whether this supports a change in the Leaders plans for the process of putting a Chair in place!!

I would be grateful for a swift response - i will need to get this back to the Leader if we need to change any of the wording materially.

Kind Regards

Ed

COUNCIL  
19 MAY 2009

**ESTABLISHMENT OF A POLICY CO-ORDINATION AND DEVELOPMENT  
COMMITTEE**

*Report Submitted by: Councillor Bob Wellington (Leader)*  
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5.1 It is proposed to create a new Policy Coordination and Development Committee to allow a small number of Members from across political parties to look at cross cutting issues aimed at improving the quality of life for local people.

It is proposed that:

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<#>The portfolios of the previous Overview and Scrutiny Committees have not allowed this cross cutting work to be undertaken and many issues have not received the level of attention they require. ¶  
¶  
<#>On 31 March 2009, Council agreed to reduce the number of Overview and Scrutiny Committees at Annual Council from six to five - four based on the themes of the Corporate Plan and one looking at the Council's Resources and Corporate Business. Whilst these Committees have revised portfolios, their remits will still prevent cross cutting issues being fully explored.¶

5.1.1 The work of the Policy Coordination and Development Committee will focus on developing specific policy proposals for consideration by Cabinet.

5.1.2 The work programme will be shaped by the Cabinet.

5.1.3 Items on the programme are likely to be characterised as cross-cutting, long-standing and unresolved or presenting for urgent resolution.

5.1.4 The nature of the items will suggest the Committee's work programme should consist of no more than 6 items in any given year.

5.1.5 Every piece of work should conclude with a report to Cabinet with clear recommendations for consideration.

5.1.6 The Committee should consist of 6 (six) elected Members, which reflects the current composition of both the Pensions Committee and the Audit Committee.

5.1.7 The Committee will be subject to the rules of political balance.

5.1.8 The Chairperson should be appointed with a Special Responsibility Allowance.

5.1.9 The Committee should be established from 19 May 2009 so the Chair can be appointed during the AGM of the Council.

5.1.10 No member of the Cabinet should be a member of the Policy Coordination and Development Committee.

5.1.11 The Committee should be serviced by appropriate senior support from within the Strategic Services Unit.

## 6. Consultation

6.1 The Members Constitution Working Party will be consulted on the proposed changes to the Constitution in relation to the establishment of this Committee.

6.2 The Chief Executive is aware of this proposal.

## 7. Implications

7.1 The implications of accepting the recommendations of this report are set out below.

**Policy** – In agreeing this proposal, Council is agreeing to the constitutional changes necessary to enact them.

**Financial** – The reduction in the number of overview and scrutiny committees has released a special responsibility allowance, which will be used to appoint a Chair to the Policy Coordination and Development Committee.

**Deleted:** Committee Members, but at the same time be responsive to specific requests from the

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**Deleted:** If Council agrees the committee should be made up of six members, then the political balance would be 3 (three) Labour, 1/2 (half) People's Voice, 1/2 (half) Plaid Cymru, 1 (one) Conservative and 1 (one) Independent member. ¶  
¶ If Council agrees another number, then officers will calculate the political balance according to the ratios determined at the Council's annual meeting and subsequently seek the names of members of the committee from the leaders of the political groups. ¶

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Communication – These changes will need to be communicated across the organisation.

Personnel – There are no implications for staff.

Social Inclusion and Equalities – There are no implications.

Decision-making – The Policy Coordination and Development Committee will have no decision-making responsibilities. All recommendations made by this Committee will be considered by Cabinet.

## 8. Action to be taken following decision

8.1 Following approval of the recommendations, the Policy Coordination and Development Committee will be established and the constitution amended to include reference to the new Committee. The Chief Legal and Monitoring Officer will make suitable amendments to the Constitution in consultation with the Member Constitution Working Party.

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## 9. Conclusion

9.1 The existence of a small focused Committee will enable cross-cutting, long-standing and unresolved issues or items presenting for urgent resolution to be considered by members from across political parties.

9.2 This work, undertaken in an effective and timely manner, will lead to the Committee suggesting recommendations for consideration by Cabinet which will improve the lives of people living and working in the County Borough

## 10. Recommendation(s)

10.1 It is recommended that Council agrees:

- A Policy Coordination and Development Committee of 6 (six) Elected Members is established as from 19 May 2009;
- The remit of the Committee is as set out in paragraph 5 below;
- The appointment of the Chair and other members of the Committee is made at this meeting and thereafter included in the agenda of the AGM of the Council;
- The Chair of the Committee is given a Special Responsibility Allowance; and
- The Constitution is amended to give effect to these recommendations.

**For a copy of the background papers or for further information about this report, please telephone:**

**Cath Hillier (Leaders Personal Assistant); tel.01495 742577**

COUNCIL  
19 MAY 2009

**ESTABLISHMENT OF A POLICY CO-ORDINATION AND DEVELOPMENT  
COMMITTEE**

*Report Submitted by: Councillor Bob Wellington (Leader)*

*Report Written by: Councillor Bob Wellington (Leader)*

**1. Area Affected**

1.1 Not applicable

**2. Purpose of Report**

2.1 To seek Council's agreement to establish a Policy Coordination and Development Committee as from 19 May 2009.

**3. Recommendation(s)**

3.1 It is recommended that Council agrees:

- A Policy Coordination and Development Committee of 6 (six) Elected Members is established as from 19 May 2009;
- The remit of the Committee is as set out in paragraph 5 below;
- The appointment of the Chair and other members of the Committee is made at this meeting and thereafter included in the agenda of the AGM of the Council;
- The Chair of the Committee is given a Special Responsibility Allowance; and
- The Constitution is amended to give effect to these recommendations.

**4. Background**

4.1 During the past year, it has become evident that there are a number of cross-cutting, long-standing and unresolved issues which would benefit from investigation by elected members. [Such as??]

4.2 The portfolios of the previous Overview and Scrutiny Committees have not allowed this cross cutting work to be undertaken and many issues have not received the level of attention they require. [We removed the Scrutiny coordinating committee so not clear what the rationale is to have these issues outside the Scrutiny role?]

4.3 On 31 March 2009, Council agreed to reduce the number of Overview and Scrutiny Committees at Annual Council from six to five - four based on the

themes of the Corporate Plan and one looking at the Council's Resources and Corporate Business. Whilst these Committees have revised portfolios, their remits will still prevent cross cutting issues being fully explored.

## 5. Issues and Findings

- 5.1 It is proposed to create a new Policy Coordination and Development Committee in an advisory role to allow a small number of Members from across political parties to look at cross cutting issues aimed at improving the quality of life for local people.

It is proposed that:

- 5.1.1 The work of the Policy Coordination and Development Committee will focus on developing specific policy proposals for consideration by Cabinet in the exercise of executive functions. [How will this sit with the Member Policy Development forum?]

- 5.1.2 The work programme will be primarily shaped by the Committee Members, but at the same time be responsive to specific requests from the Cabinet. [You need to establish some priority?]

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- 5.1.3 Items on the programme are likely to be characterised as cross-cutting, long-standing and unresolved or presenting for urgent resolution. Though the fact it still has to be presented to cabinet will slow it down – and presumably cabinet can reject its proposals?

- 5.1.4 The nature of the items will suggest the Committee's work programme should consist of no more than 6 items in any given year.

- 5.1.5 Every piece of work should conclude with a report to Cabinet with clear recommendations for consideration.

- 5.1.6 The Committee should consist of 6 (six) elected Members, which reflects the current composition of both the Pensions Committee and the Audit Committee.

- 5.1.7 The Committee will be subject to the rules of political balance.

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If Council agrees the committee should be made up of six members, then the political balance is likely to be 3 (three) Labour, 1 (one) Conservative, 1 (one) Independent Group and one member either from Plaid Cymru OR People's Voice Torfaen.

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If Council agrees another number, then officers will calculate the political balance according to the ratios determined at the Council's annual meeting and subsequently seek the names of members of the committee from the leaders of the political groups.

- 5.1.8 The Chairperson should be appointed with a Special Responsibility Allowance.

5.1.9 The Committee should be established from 19 May 2009 so the Chair can be elected during the AGM of the Council.

5.1.10 No member of the Cabinet should be a member of the Policy Coordination and Development Committee.

5.1.11 The Committee should be serviced by the Democratic Services Team.

## 6. Consultation

6.1 The Members Constitution Working Party will be consulted on the proposed changes to the Constitution in relation to the establishment of this Committee. But haven't been consulted on the establishment of it – which cuts across the remit of the WP which is being changed at Council on 14 May.

6.2 The Chief Executive is aware of this proposal.

## 7. Implications

7.1 The implications of accepting the recommendations of this report are set out below.

**Policy** – In agreeing this proposal, Council is agreeing to the constitutional changes necessary to enact them.

**Financial** – The reduction in the number of overview and scrutiny committees has released a special responsibility allowance, which will be used to appoint a Chair to the Policy Coordination and Development Committee.

**Communication** – These changes will need to be communicated across the organisation.

**Personnel** – There are no implications for staff.

**Social Inclusion and Equalities** – There are no implications.

**Decision-making** – The Policy Coordination and Development Committee will be an advisory committee with no decision-making powers. All recommendations made by this Committee will be considered by Cabinet. What about powers such as those that scrutiny have eg may require members and officers to attend before it to answer questions and may invite other members to attend meetings of the committee.

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## 8. Action to be taken following decision

8.1 Following approval of the recommendations, the Policy Coordination and Development Committee will be established and the constitution amended to include reference to the new Committee. The Chief Legal and Monitoring Officer will make the necessary amendments to the constitution in consultation with the Members Constitution Working Party.

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## **9. Conclusion**

- 9.1 The existence of a small focused Committee will enable cross-cutting, long-standing and unresolved issues or items presenting for urgent resolution to be considered by members from across political parties.
- 9.2 This work, undertaken in an effective and timely manner, will lead to the Committee suggesting recommendations for consideration by Cabinet which will improve the lives of people living and working in the County Borough

## **10. Recommendation(s)**

10.1 It is recommended that Council agrees:

- A Policy Coordination and Development Committee of 6 (six) Elected Members is established as from 19 May 2009;
- The remit of the Committee is as set out in paragraph 5 below;
- The appointment of the Chair and other members of the Committee is made at this meeting and thereafter included in the agenda of the AGM of the Council;
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- The Constitution is amended to give effect to these recommendations.

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