

Decision Report – Leader Decision

Forward Plan Reference: N/A

Decision Date – 15 June 2023

Key Decision – no



Leader’s appointment of the Executive – change to Lead Member title

Lead Member(s): Cllr Bill Revans – Leader of the Council

Lead Officer: David Clark – Monitoring Officer

Author: Mike Bryant – Service Manager, Democratic Services

Contact Details: democraticservices@somerset.gov.uk / 01823 357628

1. Summary / Background

- 1.1 A number of appointments to key roles within the Council and to outside bodies are reserved to the Leader of the Council. Full Council at its annual meeting on 25 May 2022 appointed Cllr Bill Revans as the Leader of the Council. The Leader of the Council has authority to agree Executive appointments alongside a number of other key elected member appointments which form part of the executive functions of the Council.
- 1.2 The Leader took a decision on 23 May 2023 confirming Executive Member portfolios and appointing to Lead Member roles.
- 1.3 This decision specifically amends the title of one of the Lead Member roles to better reflect the responsibilities of the post – the Lead Member for Economy, Planning and Assets will be changed to the Lead Member for Economic Development, Planning and Assets.

The portfolio and allocation of responsibilities to the role will remain unchanged and Cllr Ros Wyke will remain as post holder:

Lead Member for the following executive areas of responsibility and these services under the responsibility of the Executive Director for Resources and Corporate Services and the Executive Director of Climate and Place:

- *Strategic Asset Management*
- *Economy, Employment and Planning*

To be accountable for policy development and the financial and operational performance of services within their area of responsibility, including meeting the requirements of the Council Plan and the Medium-Term Financial Plan.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Deputy Leader of the Council is recommended to:

- 1. Approve the amendment to the Lead Member role title to Lead Member for Economic Development, Planning and Assets with immediate effect**
- 2. Note that Cllr Ros Wyke will remain as the Lead Member for Economic Development, Planning and Assets and that the portfolio for the role remains unchanged**

3. Reasons for recommendations

3.1 Somerset Council operates a Leader and Executive model of governance, under which the majority of functions that the Council undertakes are now the responsibility of a small number of councillors operating as an 'Executive'. The Leader has responsibility for agreeing the executive arrangements.

3.2 Councillor Bill Revans was appointed as the Leader of the Council on 25 May 2022.

Executive Membership and Executive Lead Member Roles and Responsibilities

3.3 The Leader of the Council can appoint up to 9 other members to be members (known as Lead Members with specific areas of responsibility) of the Executive. The Leader also appoints the Deputy Leader of the Council.

3.4 The Leader of the Council has appointed a 10-member Executive. For clarity the Executive roles are:

- Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Governance and Communications
- Deputy Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Resources and Performance
- Lead Member for Children, Families and Education
- Lead Member for Adult Social Care
- Lead Member for Transport and Digital
- Lead Member for Public Health, Equalities and Diversity
- Lead Member for Transformation and Human Resources
- Lead Member for Environment and Climate Change
- Lead Member for Economic Development, Planning and Assets
- Lead Member for Communities, Housing and Culture

3.5 In the event that a Lead Member is unable to discharge his/her specific decision making functions for any reason (e.g. illness or holiday), the Leader (or in the Leader's absence or his/her inability to act – the Deputy Leader) may discharge those functions or decisions.

4. Other Options Considered

4.1 None considered, these proposals reflect the Leader of the Council's wishes.

5. Links to Council Plan and Medium-Term Financial Plan

5.1 These recommendations seek to enable good and effective management of the council's business and ultimately good outcomes for citizens and service users. These arrangements are intended to enhance the Council's ability to effectively pursue its vision as set out in the Council Plan. The Executive arrangements of the Council are key elements within the Council's Constitution which is the key governance document of the Council and facilitates delivery of the Council Plan.

6. Consultation and co-production

6.1 This proposal has been discussed with all members of the Executive and the Monitoring Officer has been informed.

7. Financial and Risk Implications

7.1 This decision has no financial impact and there are no risk implications to be considered.

8. Legal and HR Implications

8.1 Under the Local Government Act 2000 and Local Government and Public Involvement Act 2007, the Leader of the Council may appoint the Deputy Leader and an Executive of his choosing, set the Executive portfolios and decide how executive functions are to be discharged. The size of the Executive (including the Leader of the Council) can be between 3 and 10 members of the Council.

Under Section 9P of the Local Government Act 2000, the Council is required to prepare and keep up to date a Constitution containing the standing orders of the Council and such other information as is required or desirable.

Legislation sets out those functions of the new Council which must not be the responsibility of the Executive and those functions which authorities may decide either to give to the Executive or not – these are referred to as “local choice functions”, other functions are, by default, the responsibility of the Executive. All non-executive functions are for the Council to approve, whereas all executive functions are for the Leader of the Council to approve.

8.2 There are no direct HR implications resulting from this decision.

9. Other Implications

9.1 **Equalities Implications** - The Council's duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 is to have "due regard" to the matters set out in relation to equalities when considering and making decisions on the provision of services. Members must consider the effect that implementing a particular policy will have in relation to equality before making a decision. It is highlighted that the proportion of women in Lead Member and Associate Lead Member roles has increased to 55% compared to 45% for the 2017-2022 former Cabinet. No specific implications have been identified. An Equalities Impact Assessment is not considered necessary for this decision as there are no direct impacts.

9.2 **Community Safety, Climate Change & Sustainability, Health & Safety, Health & Well-Being and Social Value Implications** - There are no direct Community Safety implications resulting from this decision.

10. Scrutiny comments / recommendations:

10.1 The proposed decision has not been considered by a Scrutiny Committee.

11. Background Papers

- Council's Constitution
- Leader of Council – Appointment of Executive May 2023
- Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000