

REPORT TO: Cabinet
LEAD OFFICER: Executive Director

26 July 2018

Establishment of Brexit Advisory Group

Purpose

1. This report proposes the establishment of a cross party advisory group to review and advise the Leader and Cabinet on the potential impact of Brexit on South Cambridgeshire.
2. This is not a key decision.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that:-
 - (a) Cabinet establishes a time limited Advisory Group to review and report on the potential impacts of Brexit on South Cambridgeshire and to recommend actions to mitigate those impacts where relevant and appropriate.
 - (b) An advisory group comprising 5 Liberal Democrats; 2 Conservative and 1 Labour or Independent Member be established, together with the Leader as an additional Member and that the Chief Executive, after consultation with the Leader, be authorised to appoint Members on the basis of nominations from Group Leaders.
 - (c) Cabinet delegates responsibility for devising the terms of reference of the Advisory Group to the Group and that these be submitted back to the September Cabinet for ratification.
 - (d) Cabinet requests that the Advisory Group consider the involvement of City Council Members.
 - (e) That the Advisory Group operates on the basis of the procedures set out in Rule 4 of the Executive Procedure Rules.

Reasons for Recommendations

4. To enable a review of the impacts of the UK exiting the European Union (EU) for South Cambridgeshire to be undertaken with a view to providing recommendations for consideration by Cabinet of any actions which the Council can take to mitigate those impacts as the negotiations to exit the EU progress.

Executive Summary

5. On 23 June 2016, the UK voted to leave the European Union with 52% voting to leave and 48% voting to remain.

6. This report proposes establishing a time limited, cross party advisory group to look at the likely implications of the UK exiting the EU for the District. Additionally, given the interdependencies between the economies of South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City, the report also requests that the Advisory Group considers the involvement of Cambridge City Council Members.

Background

7. The negotiation process in respect of the UK leaving the EU continues to progress. Whilst it is difficult at this stage to predict with confidence what the implications for South Cambridgeshire will be, establishing a Brexit Advisory Group will assist the Council in understanding the potential impact and developing the Council's approach to respond to that impact. The Advisory Group would review and advise the Leader and Cabinet on the risks, challenges and opportunities presented by Brexit and to make recommendations on any actions the Council can take to mitigate the impacts, such as lobbying or undertaking local projects.

Considerations

8. Rule 4 of the Executive Procedure Rules provides for Cabinet to establish advisory groups to inform its decisions and assist in the discharge of its functions. The rule indicates that advisory groups should not normally exceed 9 elected members and that non-members of the Council may be co-opted. The relevant Portfolio Holder (Leader in this instance) shall be an additional member.
9. Advisory groups are not required to be politically balanced but it is recommended that the Brexit Advisory Group should be cross party in nature. It is suggested that the advisory group should comprise 5 nominations from the Liberal Democrat group, 2 from the Conservative group and 1 from the Independent or Labour Group together with the Leader as an additional Member. Additionally, given the close relationship between the economies of South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City, the Advisory Group may also wish to consider extending an invitation to Cambridge City Council Members to become co-opted members of the advisory group.
10. Rule 4 indicates that members should be appointed to advisory groups on the basis of their experience, knowledge and interest. It is therefore suggested that the Group Leaders should be canvassed to nominate appropriate members and that the Chief Executive, after consultation with the Group Leaders, should be authorised to appoint Members to the advisory group on the basis of the Group Leader's nominations.
11. The advisory group would not have decision making powers but would make recommendations to Cabinet. The advisory group would elect its own Chairman and Vice-Chairman at the first meeting. In accordance with Rule 4 of the Executive Procedure Rules, all Members of the Council should be entitled to attend (and with the agreement of the Chairman) to speak at meetings of the advisory group.

Options

12. Cabinet could determine not to establish an advisory group.

Implications

13. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered: -

Financial

14. There will be resource implications in providing support to the advisory group. A lead officer will need to be nominated to advise and provide professional support to the group. Secretariat support will need to be provided by Democratic Services staff. There will be minor financial implications associated with production of agenda packs for meetings and with Members' travelling allowances. The development of the terms of reference of the group will determine whether additional funding will be required for the payment of expenses to expert witnesses and/or for additional research work.

Effect on Strategic Aims

Aim (c) – Connected Communities

15. The above strategic aim provides that the Council's approach to growth will sustain prosperity. Areas of focus to support the aim include supporting existing businesses and working with local small and medium-sized enterprises to help them grow and expand and to enable South Cambridgeshire to continue to be a key location for new business investment. The proposed establishment of a Brexit Advisory Group will support the aim by enabling a review of the impacts of the UK exiting the EU on businesses and the local economy and considering actions the Council can take to mitigate those impacts.

Background Papers

Where [the Local Authorities \(Executive Arrangements\) \(Meetings and Access to Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) require documents to be open to inspection by members of the public, they must be available for inspection: -

- (a) at all reasonable hours at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council;
- (b) on the Council's website; and
- (c) in the case of documents to be available for inspection pursuant to regulation 15, on payment of a reasonable fee required by the Council by the person seeking to inspect the documents at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council.

None

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