

REPORT TO: Cabinet

5 June 2019

**LEAD CABINET
MEMBER** Leader of the Council

LEAD OFFICER: Executive Director

Re-appointment of Brexit Advisory Group

Purpose

1. This report invites Cabinet to re-appoint the Brexit Advisory Group in order that it may continue to advise the Cabinet on managing the impact of Brexit on the economy of South Cambridgeshire.
2. This is not a key decision.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that
 - (a) The Brexit Advisory Group be re-appointed in order to continue to advise the Cabinet on managing the impact of Brexit on the economy of South Cambridgeshire.
 - (b) Cabinet note that the terms of reference of the Brexit Advisory Group currently provide for it to comprise 5 Liberal Democrats, 2 Conservative and 1 Labour or Independent Member, together with the Leader of the Council as an additional member and 3 co-opted Members of Cambridge City Council.
 - (c) Cabinet appoints Members to serve on the Brexit Advisory Group (Nominations from Group Leaders have been sought).

Reasons for Recommendations

4. To enable Cabinet to appoint Members to the Brexit Advisory Group

Background

5. At its meeting held on 26 July 2018, Cabinet agreed to set up an 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.
6. Cabinet agreed that the Advisory Group should comprise 5 Liberal Democrats; 2 Conservative and 1 Labour or Independent Member, together with the Leader as an additional Member. Given the close relationship between the economies of South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City, it was also agreed that 3 Cambridge City Council Members should become co-opted members of the Group.
7. The following Members were appointed to serve upon the Group:-

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Councillors Philip Allen, Ruth Betson, Dr. Martin Cahn, Nigel Cathcart, Sue Ellington, Peter Fane, Geoff Harvey and Peter McDonald, together with Councillor Bridget Smith as Leader.

Cambridge City Council

Councillors Rod Cantrill, Martin Smart and Anna Smith

Councillor Geoff Harvey was elected as Chairman of the Advisory Group.

8. Cabinet agreed the Terms of Reference of the Group at its meeting held on 3 October 2018 (attached at Appendix A).

Considerations

9. The Advisory Group submitted its report and recommended priorities for action to the meeting of the Cabinet on 6 March 2019.
10. The terms of reference of the Advisory Group provided that the group would be time limited with four planned meetings in 2018/19. However the terms of reference recognised that the continuation of the group and its remit 2018/19 would be subject to approval by Cabinet, on the recommendation of the Chairman of the Advisory Group.

11. At the Annual Council meeting on 16 May 2019, Councillor Geoff Harvey, the Chairman of the Brexit Advisory Group, asked the following question:-

“South Cambridgeshire District Council, Cambridgeshire County Council and the Citizens Advice Bureau all have resources which can be targeted to support EU nationals in achieving settled status.

However, can the Cabinet initiate coordination and pooling of these resources and signposting within these organisations to support our valued EU nationals?”

12. The Leader of the Council expressed the view that the Brexit Advisory Group should be reconvened to consider how the Council could support its EU nationals. She noted that the Council had received circa £17k funding from the Government to enhance capacity and capability in preparation for Brexit related activities and that the Brexit Advisory Group could play an important role in determining how this Government funding should be allocated. A similar level of funding is expected for 2019/20.
13. It is therefore recommended that Cabinet should re-appoint the Brexit Advisory Group in order to consider use of the Government allocated funding and to continue to monitor and advise on management of the impact of Brexit on the economy of South Cambridgeshire.
14. Group Leaders have been asked to confirm their nominations to the Group and these will be reported to the meeting. However, at the time of writing, the Labour and Independent Groups have each nominated a Member to serve upon the Advisory Group. As indicated at paragraph 6 above, the current terms of reference provide for 1 Labour or 1 Independent Member to sit on the Group. This seat was filled by the Labour Group (Councillor Nigel Cathcart) during 2018/29.

15. Cambridge City Council has indicated that it has appointed Councillors Anna Smith, Haf Davies and Rod Cantrill as its representatives on the Advisory Group.

Options

16. Cabinet could agree to re-establish the advisory group as recommended or decide not to do so, but re-establishing the group will enable a steer to be given to officers with regard to the allocation of the new Government funding.

Implications

17. 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

As indicated above, in February 2019, South Cambridgeshire District Council received £17,484 of funding from Government. The Government's expectation is that "the funding will only be used to enhance capacity and capability within local authorities in preparation for EU Exit related activities". There will be a further £17,484 in 2019/20.

Effect on Corporate Priority Areas

Priority area – Growing local businesses and economies

18. The Brexit Advisory Group supports the above aim by reviewing how the Council can support local businesses and economies to survive and grow during the Brexit process.

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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Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Brexit Advisory Group

Terms of Reference

The decision to establish a Brexit Advisory Group was taken at South Cambridgeshire District Council's Cabinet meeting on 26th July 2018. Cambridge City Council passed a motion in support of its involvement in the Group on 19th July 2018.

Remit

The Group will seek to:

- Understand what Brexit would mean for the economies of Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire.
- Assess potential risks, challenges and opportunities for local businesses, key business sectors and the 'Cambridge' brand.
- Develop and recommend actions to address the risks to sustainable social and economic wellbeing identified by the Group.
- Identify the most effective methods of representing Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire's economic interests to the Combined Authority, UK Government and the EU during a Brexit process.
- Identify any other opportunities for ensuring that (a) the area's needs are reflected in developing local and national policy and (b) that local businesses benefit fully from any replacement funding schemes that the UK may develop/participate in post Brexit.
- Examine and make recommendations to plan and mitigate against the adverse affects of Brexit on South Cambridgeshire District Council and other local authorities in the Greater Cambridge area.
- Disseminate the outcomes of the Advisory Group to increase awareness and understanding.

Membership

The Advisory Group will comprise:

- Nine South Cambridgeshire Members (five Liberal Democrats; two Conservative and one Labour or Independent Member, together with the Leader of the Council).
- Three co-opted Members from Cambridge City Council.

Officers from the Planning team as appropriate – the Head of Planning and Economic Development, Strategy and Economy Manager and Economic Development Officer will be in attendance to advise the Group.

The Executive may co-opt non-members of the Council on the recommendation of the Advisory Group.

Any Member who is unable to attend a particular meeting may appoint a substitute from the same political group. Substitutions must be notified to Democratic Services before the meeting starts.

The Advisory Group will elect a Chairman and optionally, Vice-Chairman at the first meeting.

Attendance at meetings

All members of the Council may attend and (with the agreement of the Chairman) speak at Advisory Group meetings. The Chairman may invite any other person or body to attend a meeting of the Group to inform discussion on any matter within its terms of reference.

Specialists and representatives from local business will be invited to attend specific meetings to provide information on the potential implications of Brexit.

Meetings of the Advisory Group will not be open to members of the public.

Timescale

The Advisory Group will be time limited with meetings taking place during October/November/December 2018 to allow recommendations from the Group to feed into the Councils' budget planning processes.

It is expected that there will be four meetings in total, each lasting for approximately 2 hours 30 mins. Additional meetings may be convened within the existing timescale, with the agreement of the Chairman, to facilitate completion of the work of the Advisory Group.

The continuation of the Group and its remit beyond the December timescale may be approved by Cabinet on the recommendation of the Chairman of the Advisory Group.

Authority and Purpose

The Group's purpose is to advise without any decision making powers. Any recommendations arising from the work of the Group will be referred by report to the Leader and Cabinet (South Cambridgeshire) and to their appropriate equivalents (Cambridge) on the issues that would be presented by Brexit and to make recommendations on any actions the councils can take to mitigate the impacts, such as lobbying or undertaking local projects.

Administration

The Group will be administered by the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service. Secretariat support will be provided by Democratic Services at South Cambridgeshire.

Notes of the meeting will be produced and sent to all members of the Advisory Group.