

**Council meeting 26 July 2022**  
**Administration Motion: Cllr Barry Rawlings**

**Barnet's Governance Arrangements**

**Council notes that:**

In May 2014 the Council changed its governance arrangements in accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 which permitted local authorities to move away from the Cabinet system (introduced by the Local Government Act 2000) and back to a Committee System.

Council notes that the Committee System has been in operation in Barnet for eight years, and that delivering the new administration's significant transformation and change programme will require more regular, timely and efficient decision-making which may not be well-served by an old-style traditional Committee System where there can be long periods between Committee cycles.

**Council therefore believes:**

It is a good time to review the Council's current governance arrangements to assess whether they are fit for purpose to deliver the new administration's agenda in the context of its manifesto pledge to ensure decision-making is more transparent, efficient and accountable.

**Council therefore resolves:**

To note that the Localism Act 2011 includes provisions for local authorities to make a change to their governance arrangements and resolves to call upon the Constitution and General Purposes Committee to consider a review of the Council's Governance arrangements with a view to work up proposals for a new structure to include the possibility of:

1. Moving to a Cabinet system to ensure speed of decision-making, and clear accountability for decisions,
2. Putting in place arrangements for a robust Overview and Scrutiny function to ensure involvement by a wider range of cross-party members in development of policy, for example through task and finish groups, as well as pre and post decision scrutiny,
3. Strengthening opportunities for public participation.

Council also calls upon the Constitution and General Purposes Committee to consider a review of arrangements for all other committees, boards and panels to ensure that they are fit for purpose in any revised governance structure.

Council agrees that, at a time of budgetary restraint, any changes must seek to be cost neutral.

Council believes that a members' working group should be set up to facilitate the working up of any new proposals.

Council asks the Constitution and General Purposes Committee and officers to bring forward proposals to enable approval of any change to commence operationally from the Annual Council meeting in May 2023, if possible within the tight timescale.