

## REPORT TO SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE – 15 JUNE 2022

### FUTURE MEETING ARRANGEMENTS

#### 1 Executive Summary/Recommendations

1.1 On 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2021 the Council agreed to introduce a Choice Based Blended Model of Fully Virtual and Hybrid Meetings, which incorporates the principle that meeting groups should be able to choose how they want to meet. Work is currently ongoing to develop an options appraisal for upgrading Council venues to provide a high quality hybrid experience. In the meantime this report asks the Committee to confirm preferred arrangements for meetings for 2022/2023, having regard to existing limitations including availability of audio visual equipment and staffing resources.

#### 1.2 The Committee is recommended to:

1.2.1 **Note the options for fully virtual and hybrid meetings of the Committee as outlined in section 3 of this report; and**

1.2.2 **Agree the preferred arrangements for the meetings listed in Appendix 1 to this report.**

#### 2 Decision Making Route

2.1 Full Council agreed to adopt a Choice Based Blended Model of Fully Virtual and Hybrid Meetings at its meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2021. The principles of the Choice Based Blended Model provide that meeting groups should be given the choice of whether they want to meet on a fully virtual or hybrid basis.

2.2. On 28 April 2022 Full Council agreed to instruct an options appraisal for the upgrading of audio and visual equipment in Council venues to facilitate a high quality hybrid experience. In the meantime it was agreed that meeting groups would be asked to confirm their preferred meeting arrangements, having regard to the audio visual provision in existing venues.

#### 3 Discussion

3.1 The list of Committee meetings for 2022/2023 forms **Appendix 1** to this report. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Committee met regularly in person in Committee Room 5, Woodhill House.

3.2 Since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Committee has met on a fully virtual basis. Following the decision of Full Council on 23 September 2021 the hybrid meetings were held in Committee Room 5 for some Policy Committees and Audit Committee. Feedback from recent meetings has been positive

following work carried out to the microphones in the room, in terms of the audio and visual quality for both in person and virtual attendees.

3.3 The options for meeting arrangements for this Committee are:-

- (i) *Fully Virtual* – meetings would take place on the Microsoft Teams platform with all attending virtually and the meeting livestreamed to ensure public access.
- (ii) *Hybrid* – meetings would take place in Committee Room 5, with a mixture of in person attendees and virtual attendees using the Microsoft Teams platform. The meeting would be livestreamed where possible.

3.4. The Committee may also choose to encourage in person attendance for specified meetings, however in line with the principles agreed by Full Council in terms of the Choice Based Blended Model a virtual option must always be available at the meeting venue for those Members or officers who wish to attend virtually.

#### 4 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

4.1 The facilitation of Committee meetings helps the Council deliver all six Strategic Priorities and the underlying principle of right people, right places, right time.

4.2 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendations are agreed.

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Financial			x
Staffing	x		
Equalities and Fairer Duty Scotland	x		
Children and Young People's Rights and Wellbeing			x
Climate Change and Sustainability	x		
Health and Wellbeing	x		
Town Centre First	x		

4.3 There are staffing implications in the provision of hybrid meetings, as additional Committee staff are required in order to facilitate the meeting. The impact on resources is being closely monitored.

4.4 The integrated impact assessment previously carried out and reported to Full Council on [23 September 2021](#) (Item 13) remains relevant and there have been no material changes since that date. There is a positive impact on the protected groups Disability and Pregnancy and Maternity in ensuring there is an option for virtual attendance at meetings.

4.5 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level: ACORP004 – Business and Organisational Transformation ACORP006 – Reputational Management ACORP009 – Operational Risk Management (including health and safety).

## **5 Scheme of Governance**

5.1 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and their comments are incorporated within the report. They are satisfied that the report complies with the [Scheme of Governance](#) and relevant legislation.

5.2 The Committee is able to consider and take a decision on this item in terms of of the [List of Committee Powers in Part 2A](#) of the Scheme of Governance as it relates to the approval of meeting arrangements for the Committee in order to deliver the functions delegated to it.

**Ritchie Johnson**  
**Director of Business Services**

Report prepared by Ruth O'Hare, Legal Services Manager  
Date: 27 May 2022

### **List of Appendices:**

Appendix 1 – List of Meetings 2022/2023

## **Appendix 1 - Future Meetings of Sustainability Committee**

14 September, 2022 at 10.15 a.m.

30 November, 2022, at 10.15 a.m.

23 February, 2023, at 10.15 a.m.