

## **Report of the General Purposes Committee held on 14 September 2023**

**Present:** Councillor David Boothroyd (Chair), Ellie Ormsby, Aicha Less and Mark Shearer

### **Policy and Scrutiny Review**

- (a) The Committee considered the independent review that had taken place into policy and scrutiny at Westminster by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny ("CfGS"). It was recognised that it had been instigated to ensure the function met the high expectations of the Council, local communities and partners by providing the most effective and impactful scrutiny function possible. It was noted how the Scrutiny Commission agreed to establish a Task Group to work through each recommendation and following consensus the preferred option was now before the Committee.
- (b) Members were interested to learn how it had been recommended that the Policy and Scrutiny Committees be restructured and constituted based on strategic themes, which were important to the organisation and prioritised by scrutiny members. It was explained that this would represent a move away from the existing practice of constituting Committees solely in opposition to Cabinet Member portfolios. It was explained that this had caused committees to try to performance manage Cabinet Members and the Committee considered how it was felt this had led to a lack of focus with committees trying to do too much across sometime disparate portfolios of work. Instead, the Committee considered how the new thematic approach would allow scrutiny to take a more strategic approach to its work, focusing in on areas of major policy or service priority/change with a view to making impact through meaningful and timely recommendations to decision makers.
- (c) The Committee discussed the replacement of the existing Policy and Scrutiny Committee structure with a revised Policy and Scrutiny Committee structure and noted that if approved the new structure would take effect from 27 September 2023.

### **Recommendation:**

That Full Council be recommended to approve:

- 1) The replacement of the existing Policy and Scrutiny Committee structure with a revised Policy and Scrutiny Committee structure as summarised in the report, and for this new structure to take effect from 27 September 2023, following the current round of committee meetings;
- 2) A revised Chapter 4 ("Policy and Scrutiny") of the Council's Constitution as set out at Appendix A of the report, including revised terms of reference for Policy and Scrutiny Committees, including the North West London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and

- 3) The delegation of authority to the Monitoring Officer to make other minor amendments to provisions in the Constitution consistent with the contents of this report.

David Boothroyd, Chair

### **Background Papers**

Appendix 1 - Report to General Purposes Committee (14.09.23).