



CAI.50 15/16

Challenge and
Improvement Committee

5th April 2016

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Subject: Reconfiguration of the Council Chamber

Report by:

Monitoring Officer
Alan Robinson

Contact Officer:

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Purpose / Summary:

At the request of C&I Committee, this report presents the findings of the feedback from Members of Council on all three options for the Reconfiguration of the Council Chamber.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That Members make recommendations to the forthcoming meeting of Council to adopt a new configuration for Council meetings.

IMPLICATIONS

Legal: None

Financial : FIN REF 10/17
A £2000 pressure had been identified for undertaking modifications to the chamber to accommodate a horse shoe layout.

Staffing :None

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights : None

Risk Assessment :None

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities :None

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:
220216 – C&I Committee Report on Update from Democracy Working Group
Minutes of the meeting of C&I Committee on 22nd February

Call in and Urgency:

Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

Yes

No

Key Decision:

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes

No

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Following much debate at the Member Forum (which comprises a cross section of all political groups) the Democracy Working Group (DWG) took on the task of reconfiguring the Council Chamber to deliver a better opportunity for debate and to aid the Democratic process.
 - 1.2 A full options appraisal was completed, and trial layouts undertaken at meetings of Council in November and January. Feedback was sought from Members and analysed by the DWG.
 - 1.3 At its previous meeting, the Challenge and Improvement (C&I) Committee considered an update from the DWG, and as part of that report, proposals were made to adopt a new configuration of the Council Chamber.
 - 1.4 C&I discussed the item of business as follows (abridged for the purpose of relevance to this report):
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64 DEMOCRACY WORKING GROUP UPDATE REPORT (CAI.42 15/16)

Consideration was given to a report which provided Members with an update on the work of the Democracy Working Group, including reporting on the recent chamber reconfiguration trials (Section 4 of the report).

Debate ensued and referring to the data contained in Section 4.9 of the report, Members commented that there did not appear to be an overwhelming preference. This was confirmed. It was therefore suggested that prior to making any recommendation to Full Council on a revised configuration, particularly in view of the associated costs, Members' views first be sought on the traditional layout and then the results from all three configurations be considered again by the Committee at its next meeting.

On that basis it was **RESOLVED** that:

- (c) prior to making any recommendation to Full Council on a revised configuration for the Council Chamber, the results from all three configurations (including the traditional layout) be considered again by the Committee at its next meeting;
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- 1.5 Therefore, the traditional layout for Council was put in place for Members at Budget Council on 3rd March 16, and feedback was sought for comparison with data already collected.

2. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 For the purpose of this report, retaining the original layout is referred to as Option 3.

- 2.2 On 3rd March, the Council Chamber was set up as per Appendix C at the end of this report. Options 1 and 2 are also appended as Appendix A and B respectively.
- 2.3 Seating plans remained the same as agreed at the commencement of the Civic Year.
- 2.4 Initial comments from Members included the following issues:
- Preference for Option 1
 - Option 3 creates a feeling of isolation due to restricted view of other members
 - A wish to see Members when they are speaking;
 - Preference for a horseshoe shape;
 - Option 3 allows movement for members during meetings without disturbing others;
 - Options 1 and 2 support debate;
 - Individual Member requirements;
 - Investigation required to find a solution where Members can see as many Members as possible (in the round);
 - Option 3 seemed less cramped; and
 - Inclusivity driven layout required.
- 2.5 The scoring received still showed a strong indication that Members preferred Option 1 (15th November) to both the Option 2 (25th January) and the original layout (5th March).

AVERAGE SCORES			
	OPTION 1	OPTION 2	OPTION 3
Appropriate for purpose	7.3	5.0	6.2
Aids Debate / Democracy	7.0	5.3	5.4
Comfortable / Accessible	6.9	6.2	6.1
Ease of viewing presentations	7.5	4.4	6.7
Percentage of Cllrs preferring Option	63%	52%	32%

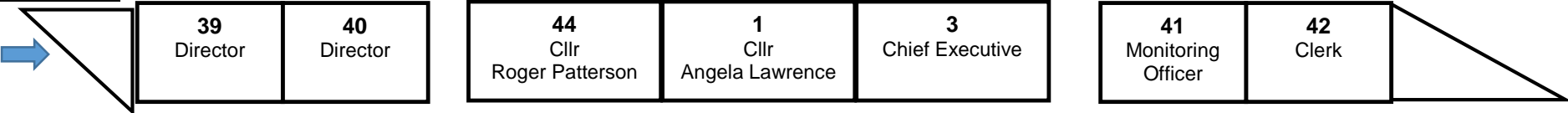
3. RECCOMENDATIONS FROM THE DWG

- 3.1 The DWG, at their meeting on 16th March considered each comment made, and the scores received and favoured recommendation of Option 1 for adoption.

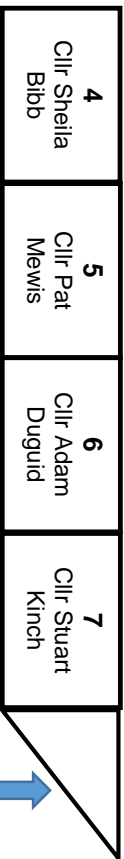
- 3.2 Seating arrangements for any agreed option will be discussed and agreed by group leaders, and the appendices do not reflect a definitive seating plan, but a configuration only.
- 3.3 C&I Committee should be mindful that each option presented also has a cost implication of £1200 - £1900, to move floor boxes and relocate the drinks machine. Therefore a £2000 pressure has been identified to undertake this unbudgeted work.
- 3.4 The Committee are asked to reflect on the findings of the DWG and make recommendations, where appropriate, to Council for the adoption of a new layout from Annual Council on 9th May.

APPENDIX A – Option 1

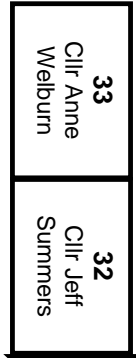
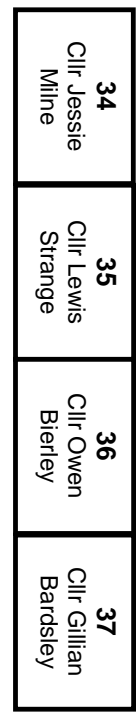
38
Director



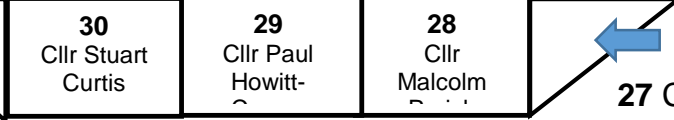
43
Officer



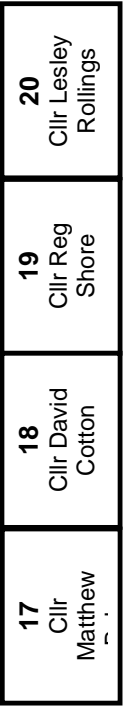
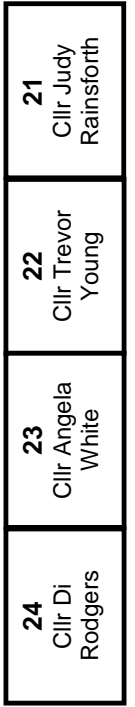
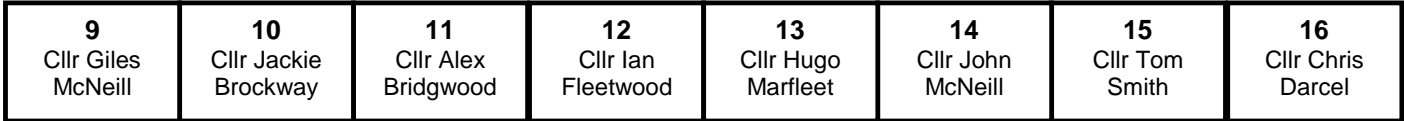
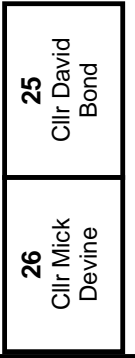
8 Cllr
Steve
England



31 Cllr
Tom
Reqis



27 Cllr
Richard
Oaks



APPENDIX B – Option 2

CRF

DOO

Roger Patterson	Angela Lawrence	CEX
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Officer	Director	Director	Director	Clerk	MO
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W-ZZOO

W-ZZOO

Alex Bridgwood	Adam Duguid	Pat Mewis	Malcolm Parish	Steve England	Ian Fleetwood	Gill Bardsley	Lewis Strange
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Giles McNeill	Jeff Summers	Anne Welburn	Tom Regis	Stuart Curtis	Owen Bierley
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David Cotton	Reg Shore	Lesley Rollings	Richard Oaks	David Bond	Mick Devine
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Di Rodgers	Angela White	Matthew Boles	Judy Rainsford	Trevor Young	Chris Darcel	Jackie Brockway	Hugo Marfleet
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P-CB-L-C

P-CB-L-C

Stuart Kinch	Sheila Bibb	Jessie Milne	Paul H-Cowan	John McNeill	Thomas Smith
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DOO

■ Conservative
 ■ Lib Dems

■ Labour
 ■ Independent

Council Chamber Layout

Officers 45	Chaplain 44
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2	1	3
Vice-Chairman Roger Patterson	Chairman Angela Lawrence	Chief Executive

Officer	Officer 42	Officer	Officer 40
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15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4
Hugo Marfleet	John McNeill	Paul H-Cowan	Steve England	Pat Mewis	Sheila Bibb	Di Rodgers	Chris Darcel	David Bond	Michael Devine	Richard Oaks	

16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Thomas Smith	Jackie Brockway	Malcolm Parish	Adam Duguid	Stuart Kinch	Jessie Milne	Ian Fleetwood	Alex Bridgwood	Matthew Boles	Judy Rainsforth	Trevor Young	

39	38	37	36	35	34	33	32	31	30	29	28
Lewis Strange	Gillian Bardsley	Owen Bierley	Tom Regis	Stuart Curtis	Anne Welburn	Jeff Summers	Giles McNeill	Lesley Rollings	Reg Shore	David Cotton	Angela White