

REPORT TO AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE

Date of Meeting: 17 July 2025

REPORT TO COUNCIL

Date of Meeting: 22 July 2025

Report of: Strategic Director People and Communities

Title: Amendments to Terms of Reference for the Joint Consultation and Negotiation Committee.

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Council

1. What is the report about?

1.1 This report sets out the amendments the Terms of Reference for the Joint Consultation and Negotiation Committee, which is attached as Appendix A.

2. Recommendations:

2.1 That Audit and Governance recommend, and Council approve the amendments to the Council's Constitution terms of reference for the Joint Consultation and Negotiation Committee.

2.2 That the Audit and Governance committee note the work undertaken to engage the unions to update the Terms of Reference.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

3.1 To ensure that that Terms of Reference for the Council's constituted committees remain up to date and matches the operational arrangements of the Council.

4. What are the resource implications including non financial resources.

4.1 There are none.

5. Section 151 Officer comments:

5.1 There are no financial implications for Council to consider contained within this report.

6. What are the legal aspects?

6.1 It is important to ensure that committee terms of reference are maintained and updated when required, particularly for Membership and officer titles to undertake the requirements of the Council.

7. Monitoring Officer's comments:

7.1 Where there are changes to the substance of the Terms of Reference of JCNC, then the approval of the recognised Trade Union should also be secured. This report confirms that the recognised Trade Union agrees to the changes.

8. Report details:

8.1 The current Industrial Relations (IR) Framework at Exeter City Council (ECC) has been reviewed with the aim of modernising and strengthening our approach, better enabling employees to fully understand and benefit from the policy, processes and procedures to engaging staff and their Union representatives in policy and organisational changes.

Part of the review included recommendations regarding the role, purpose and function of the existing JCNC in that it's updated to build greater clarity and to ensure transparency and consistency in how it operates across the Council. The terms of reference for the new JCNC found in Appendix A were agreed on the 12 March 2025 JCNC meeting following a period of consultation. These amendments now require approving at Council as it's considered a constitutional change.

The current terms of reference of the JCNC can be found in Appendix B. Members attention is drawn to the following changes:

- amendments to council officer membership reflecting the organisational restructure;
- streamlining of scope and purpose;
- amendment to frequency of committee meetings; and
- Chair and Vice Chair: positions are reversed annually between management and staff side.

Consultation and discussions on transitional arrangements have taken place with the UNISON Regional/Branch Office and can confirm they are fully supportive of the proposal and are willing to work with the ECC to implement the new arrangements.

9 How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?

It ensures that the Council is working as efficiently as possible.

10 What risks are there and how can they be reduced?

There are no risks associated with the proposals.

11 Equality Act 2010 (The Act)

11.1 Under the Act's Public Sector Equalities Duty, decision makers are required to consider the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct;
- advance equality by encouraging participation, removing disadvantage, taking account of disabilities and meeting people's needs; and
- foster good relations between people by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

11.2 In order to comply with the general duty authorities must assess the impact on equality of decisions, policies and practices. These duties do not prevent the authority from reducing services where necessary, but they offer a way of developing proposals that consider the impacts on all members of the community.

11.3 In making decisions the authority must take into account the potential impact of that decision in relation to age, disability, race/ethnicity (includes Gypsies and Travellers), sex and gender, gender identity, religion and belief, sexual orientation, pregnant women and new and breastfeeding mothers, marriage and civil partnership status in coming to a decision.

11.4 In recommending this proposal, there are no equalities impacts that are identified.

12 Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

12.1 No direct carbon/environmental impacts arising from the recommendations.

13 Are there any other options?

13.1 None

Strategic Director People and Communities, Jo Yelland

Author: Jo Yelland

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report: -

None

Contact for enquires:
Democratic Services (Committees)
Room 4.36
01392 265275