

Report to COUNCIL

Districts and Lead Members – Changes to the Constitution

Portfolio Holder:

Cllr Chadderton, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods

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Reason for Decision

This paper sets out proposed constitutional amendment to realign the Council's Districts, and to update the role of the District Lead Member.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Council approves the changes to the Constitution proposed, comprising of:

- 1) Part 2, Article 10.1 – in order to recognise realignment of District geographies
- 2) Part 2, Article 10.2 / 10.3 – relating to the role of the District Lead Member

Districts and Lead Members – Changes to the Constitution

1 Background and Current Position

- 1.1 As part of the development of the new Place-Based Working model, Council and partner services are moving towards alignment of provision around a new set of five geographies. In order to facilitate this, some changes to the Council Constitution are needed.
- 1.2 The operating footprints of Council and many partner services within Oldham have been shifting over the last twelve months to align around five new geographies, in order to better join up services, and ensure residents are able to access the right support, at the right time, in the right place.
- 1.3 To best achieve this, the previous six District operational model is being replaced with a set of five geographies, which allow a coterminous approach with Health, Social Care, GMP and other partners. These geographies are:

District	Wards Covered
Central	Alexandra Coldhurst St Mary's
North	Crompton Royton North Royton South Shaw
East	Saddleworth North Saddleworth South Saddleworth West and Lees St James' Waterhead
South	Failsworth East Failsworth West Hollinwood Medlock Vale
West	Chadderton Central Chadderton North Chadderton South Werneth

- 1.4 A crucial part of the new operating model will be to create a model whereby Elected Members are able to influence local service provision, to effectively prioritise those

issues that most impact on local residents. To properly enable this, the Council's Constitution needs to be updated, in order to reflect the new operating boundaries. A proposed amendment is shown at Appendix 1.

- 1.5 Particularly critical in achieving this ambition will be the role of the Lead Elected Member within each District. This role will provide a key leadership function, liaising with, and representing the views of, all Elected Members within the District, and chairing the new governance body within the District, once established. Some amendments are therefore suggested to the Constitution in relation to the Lead Member role, and a proposed updated version is also shown at Appendix 1. For some areas it may be appropriate to have deputies albeit additional funding would not be assigned to this and a local arrangement will be put in place.

2 Options/Alternatives

- 2.1 Option 1 – Amend the Constitution as suggested

- 2.2 Option 2 – Do not amend the Constitution

3 Preferred Option

- 3.1 The preferred option is Option 1 – Amend the Constitution as suggested. This will ensure that our local democratic arrangements are fully aligned with the Place Based Working agenda, and that Members are most effectively able to work with services to achieve better outcomes for our communities.

4 Consultation

- 4.1 Consultation took place with Group Leaders on 28th June 2021.

5 Financial Implications

- 5.1 The preferred option outlined in 3.1 is a proposed Constitutional amendment to realign the Council's Districts from six to five and update the role of the District Lead Member.

There are currently seven District Leads with a combined allowance of £43,100;

Oldham East District	£7,182
Oldham West District	£6,286
Chadderton	£6,286
Saddleworth	£6,286
Failsworth & Hollinwood	£6,286
Royton	£5,387
Shaw & Crompton	£5,387
	<u>£43,100</u>

- 5.2 Moving to five leads may reduce the total allowances paid however this cannot be quantified at this stage as the revised roles would be subject to evaluation at the Independent Remuneration Panel.

(Nicola Harrop – Finance Manager)

6 **Legal Services Comments**

6.1 The proposals will require an amendment to the Constitution.

7. **Co-operative Agenda**

7.1 This change will support the co-operative agenda by more closely aligning Council and partner services to both each other and local communities. By creating a strengthened Lead Member role, Elected Members will be further supported in their role as local leaders, increasing their ability to achieve positive change for the communities they represent.

8 **Human Resources Comments**

8.1 None

9 **Risk Assessments**

9.1 N/A

10 **IT Implications**

10.1 None

11 **Property Implications**

11.1 None

12 **Procurement Implications**

12.1 None

13 **Environmental and Health & Safety Implications**

13.1 None

14 **Equality, community cohesion and crime implications**

14.1 None

15 **Implications for Children and Young People**

15.1 None

16 **Equality Impact Assessment Completed?**

16.1 No

17 **Key Decision**

17.1 No

18 **Key Decision Reference**

18.1 N/A

19 **Background Papers**

19.1 None

20 **Appendices**

20.1 Appendix 1 – proposed amended sections of Article 10

Appendix 1 - proposed revised version of Article 10

PART 2: ARTICLE 10 – DISTRICT WORKING

10.1 Districts

There are five Districts representing the different parts of the Borough as follows:-

District	Wards Covered
Central	Alexandra Coldhurst St Mary's
North	Crompton Royton North Royton South Shaw
East	Saddleworth North Saddleworth South Saddleworth West and Lees St James' Waterhead
South	Failsworth East Failsworth West Hollinwood Medlock Vale
West	Chadderton Central Chadderton North Chadderton South Werneth

10.2 District Leads

- 10.2.1 The role of the District Lead is to work closely with all elected members in their district to support them in their role as strong local leaders.
- 10.2.2 The District Lead also plays a vital role in championing the needs of the district. They provide leadership across the district and ensure parallels exist between corporate and local priorities, and also cross-partnership priorities
- 10.2.3 The role is a strategic position that requires vision and the ability to look beyond ward issues to those that affect the district as a whole. It is important that the District Lead is able to make decisions based on district priorities which may not always align fully with ward priorities.
- 10.2.4 The District Lead will also need to be able to apply a systems-thinking approach, in order to recognise and influence factors that impact on the capacity to deliver positive outcomes for the communities of Oldham.

10.3 Requirements of the District Lead

The District Lead is a Councillor who will -

- a) provide leadership within and beyond the district;
- b) support elected members in the district in their role as local leaders;
- c) engage with elected members across the district and encourage active contribution to district initiatives that take place;
- d) supported by the District Team, work with the Place Leadership Board to develop the District Plan, ensuring it reflects both local and corporate priorities, and builds towards a set of shared outcomes agreements with partners
- e) champion the district as a place and represent the district in any discussions and/or negotiations at a borough level;
- f) lead on any applications to the Local Improvement Fund.
- g) Chair the Place Leadership Board at a local level, and relevant working groups as appropriate;
- h) lead on the development of a district Community Engagement Strategy, ensuring all residents have an opportunity to contribute their ideas or concerns to the district;
- i) work as appropriate with the Place Leadership Board, Executive Management Team, District Coordinator and District Team to plan and deliver against locally agreed priorities;
- j) liaise and work with other District Leads as and when required to deliver against priorities that cross district boundaries;
- k) liaise with and respond to the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees as and when required;
- l) ensure that all actions and activities of the district are carried out in a socially inclusive way, in full acknowledgement and discharge of the equality legislation pertaining to all protected characteristics, and also legislation pertaining to the environment;
- m) work with appropriate Cabinet Member identify further opportunities for district working as appropriate;
- n) be the lead member in a district for corporate campaigns and ensure the involvement of Ward Members in supporting this activity.
- o) work, as appropriate, through formal and informal partnership with voluntary, private sector and other public sector interests to enhance the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the local community;
- p) support the development of a strong Voluntary, Community and Faith sector which can work with the District Team in improving the quality of life of local people and encouraging the active involvement of residents in this;
- q) promote the Voluntary, Community and Faith sector as a key driver of local productivity, recognising the contribution of this sector in improving the economy and enterprise of the district;
- r) champion events, festivals and celebrations across the district.
- s) provide leadership in building strong cohesive communities within and beyond the district; and
- t) promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination.