

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2014/2015 REPORT NO. **224**

MEETING TITLE AND DATE:
Cabinet – 29 April 2015

REPORT OF:
Director of Finance,
Resources & Customer
Services

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Agenda – Part: 1

Item: 15

**Subject: Associate Cabinet Members
Update**

**Wards: All
Non key**

**Cabinet Members consulted: Cllr D Taylor,
Cllr A Georgiou**

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Following the election of a new administration in May 2014, Council in June 2014 approved a number of changes to the political management structure of the authority. This included the establishment of innovative, spatially focused Associate Cabinet Member (ACM) posts.
- 1.2 The update and recommendations set out in this report reflect the progress made in establishing these new roles and include the second work programme updates from each of the 3 new ACMs.
- 1.3 It is anticipated that further update reports to Cabinet will be made in October 2015 and April 2016 with a formal evaluation of the new ACM roles and their impact to commence in January 2016 with a report coming to Cabinet with recommendations in April 2016 alongside the April 2016 ACM updates.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the progress made in exercising the new roles of the Associate Cabinet Members and the updates provided through the work programme outcomes/ summaries of activities up to March 2015 are noted.
- 2.2 That a further outcomes updates are presented to Cabinet in October 2015 and April 2016 as specified in Council Report (No.1 - June 2014) that established the roles.
- 2.3 That a formal evaluation of the impact of the Associate Cabinet Member role is to be commenced in January 2016 and a report with recommendations will come to Cabinet in April 2016.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Establishing the roles of Associate Cabinet Members

3.1.1 Report No.1 agreed by full Council in June 2014 included the creation of 3 new Associate Cabinet Member roles that would be responsible for providing strategic support to the delivery of Council objectives and enhance member involvement in strategic decision making.

3.1.2 It was further agreed that the discharge of these roles would be supported by the allocation of a Special Responsibilities Allowance (SRA) and be proportionate to the anticipated strategic impact the roles would provide. The payment of these SRAs is cost neutral and the Council agreed not to expand the SRA or other allowances envelope to ensure that the added value was gained from existing financial resources.

3.2 The agreed role of the Associate Cabinet Members

3.2.1 A detailed specification relating to the role of the new Associate Cabinet Members was agreed. It was recognised that this was a new and innovative approach for the Council that could add value to the delivery of strategic objectives and also provide development opportunities for Members who were not in Cabinet.

3.2.2 The ACMs were appointed at the Annual Council from the majority party, with a ward councillor from each of the three geographical areas (as described below). The ACMs are invited to attend Cabinet meetings, but they are not executive members, nor do they have voting rights. This adapts an approach to extend involvement and enhance cross cutting activity that has been implemented by other local authorities. ACMs can act as Council spokespersons and be quoted or featured in publicity where it relates to their responsibility on the Council. They can also be asked questions at Council meetings.

3.3 Coverage - spatial area

3.3.1 The ACMs are responsible for geographically defined areas that reflect a strategically relevant spatial approach. This established geographically bound areas designated as Enfield North, Enfield South East and Enfield West.

3.3.2 Each of these spatial areas has active area based regeneration partnerships (Area Partnership Boards) to be chaired by the relevant ACMs. The transformation of these areas will be critical

to the long term achievement of the Council's strategic objectives and form a crucial element of the new ACM remit.

A map showing the agreed areas can be found at Appendix 1.

3.4 Main duties

The role of ACMs was agreed by Cabinet on 12 August 2014. A summary of the duties is as follows:

- Chairing Area Based Partnerships and (non-voting) membership of Enfield Strategic Partnership
- Provide a focal point for members' issues within their geographical split and include these issues in regular reports into Cabinet/Council
- Develop a portfolio of work (work programme) that reflects the character of the area being championed including coordination of cross-ward issues
- Promote the new approach to ward level engagement by members
- Liaison with planning activity in the area being championed
- Encourage and facilitate liaison with other spatial work being delivered by partner statutory agencies

3.5 Evaluation of Impact of ACMs at 18 months

It was agreed that, due to the innovative nature of the proposal, a full evaluation of the impact made by implementing the ACM approach is carried out after 18 months and presented to Cabinet (April 2016).

3.6 Second ACM reporting milestone – April 2015

3.6.1 In keeping with the specification set out in the Council Report of June 2014, it was agreed that ACM work programmes would be reported on bi-yearly to Cabinet to coincide with operational year at mid-point and year end. This April 2015 ACM update report reflects activities taking place since the first reporting milestone (December 2014 to March 2015).

3.6.2 The attachments appended to this report contain a narrative update focused on areas of strategic activity engaged in by each of the 3 ACMs. The next ACM update report will come forward in October 2015 to reflect activities during the first 6 months of the operational year (April 2015 to September 2015).

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 The option to continue with the present arrangements were considered but discounted on the grounds that they would not meet the new democratic imperative being sought by the administration and would fail to prepare the Council for future challenges arising from significant future budgetary pressures and changes to wider Government Policy.

5. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 To note the first work programme updates as presented
- 5.2 To agree that further updates come forward in October 2015 and April 2016 with a formal evaluation to be carried out in January 2016 that will report back into Cabinet by April 2016.

6. COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE, RESOURCES AND CUSTOMER SERVICES AND OTHER DEPARTMENTS

6.1 Financial Implications

The activities within this report are contained within existing resources

6.2 Legal Implications

The recommendations in the report are in accordance with various powers of the Local Authority.

Section 9C of the Local Government Act 2000 (LGA 2000), as amended by the Localism Act 2011, provides that the number of members of a local authority executive may not exceed 10. The recommendations in this report are in accordance with this provision as the associate cabinet members will not be executive members or have voting rights and will not have any powers to make decisions.

Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 states that political proportionality should be considered when allocating seats for bodies and committees. The recommendations in this report are in accordance with this power.

6.3 Property Implications

There are no direct property implications.

Where the ACMs become involved in issues that may affect the Councils property portfolio (redevelopment, acquisitions, disposals changes in occupation etc.) then it is anticipated that they will involve the Strategic Property Services team in considering the implications at that time.

7. KEY RISKS

These proposals have been designed to enhance Members representational roles, provide the basis for enhanced Member engagement at Ward level and to reflect the need of the Council to make substantial savings over the next 4 years in response to significant budgetary constraints.

Key risks associated with the approach include:

- the need to ensure sufficient Member capacity to carry out their new roles (ACMs and wider changes to Member engagement vehicles). This has been mitigated through the development of guidance and toolkit that provides Members with a clear and concise supporting resource to help them fulfil their duties. A highly limited amount of officer support is also in place to assist with basic requirements.
- That robust evaluation of new scrutiny arrangements and the impact of ACMs has been commenced.
- That robust performance management and risk management techniques will be applied to the new ways of working to ensure they remain on track and that improvement planning is enabled should it be required.

All of the above risks will be managed on behalf of the Council by the relevant officers who will report to their DMTs on a regular basis in addition to the presentation of an evaluation report in 2016. The aspects of appropriate new working outlined in the report will also form part of a relevant risk register that will be refreshed regularly.

8. IMPACT ON COUNCIL PRIORITIES

8.1 Fairness for All

The impact on Fairness for All will be positive as the changes proposed will provide fresh impetus for Members to interact with their communities, will provide greater transparency in how the Council does its business and will increase accountability to local people.

8.2 Growth and Sustainability

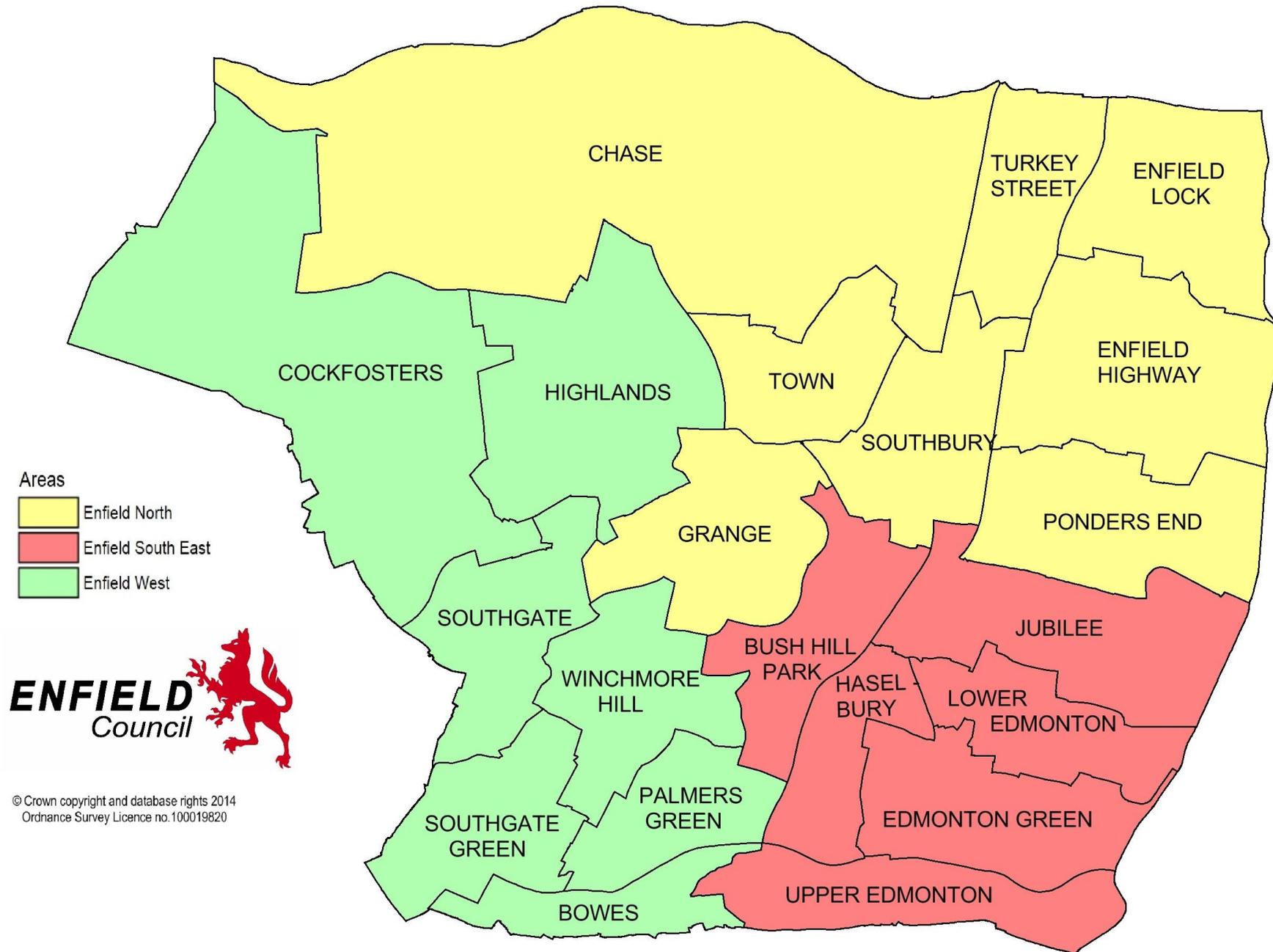
The role of the ACM will impact positively on Growth and Sustainability by helping the Council focus more strategically on cross cutting issues and develop more inclusive solutions. They also encourage wider participation in issues that affect Growth and Sustainability in Enfield by linking Members more directly to area based transformation in some of our most deprived areas. The new structures themselves will generate greater levels of sustainability as they are better designed to meet future demands facing the Council.

8.3 Strong Communities

The proposals support the creation and maintenance of strong communities by placing Members closer to their communities and by enabling a more joined up and comprehensive approach to delivering services to local people.

Background Papers

None



Appendix 1: Map illustrating areas of spatial responsibility for Associate Cabinet Members (ACMs)

