

# Birmingham City Council

## Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee

26 January 2024



---

**Subject:** Terms of Reference for Scrutiny Task and Finish Group: Governance Stabilisation

**Report of:** Christian Scade, Head of Scrutiny and Committee Services

**Report author:** Fiona Bottrill, Senior Overview and Scrutiny Manager  
[fiona.bottrill@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:fiona.bottrill@birmingham.gov.uk)  
07395 884487

### 1 Purpose

- 1.1 Following agreement at the last meeting, this report sets out proposed terms of reference for the Governance Stabilisation Task and Finish Group.

### 2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Committee notes, and agrees, the Terms of Reference / Work Outline for the Governance Stabilisation Scrutiny Task and Finish Group set out in Appendix 1.

### 3 Background

- 3.1 The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) undertook an independent review of governance at Birmingham City Council from July to November 2023, which was presented to Cabinet in December 2023.
- 3.2 The purpose of the review was to assess key governance issues identified in various external reviews and judgements, the Council's response to them and to recommend actions to further improve governance at the Council.
- 3.3 The CfGS report identified a number of governance and cultural issues within the Council which need to be addressed. The Governance Stabilisation Plan (reported to Cabinet and set out at Appendix 2) contains recommendations and immediate actions to support the short-term stabilisation of governance at the Council over the next six months.
- 3.4 Actions for longer-term improvement will be incorporated into the Council's overall Improvement and Recovery Plan (IRP).

3.5 As set out in Appendix 1, the Task and Finish Group will be part of the assurance and monitoring arrangements and ensure that non-executive members are informed of the process as recommendations are implemented and advising of actions that need to be incorporated in the IRP.

#### **4 Any Finance Implications**

4.1 There are no immediate financial implications arising from the recommendations set out in this report.

#### **5 Any Legal Implications**

5.1 There are no immediate legal implications arising from the recommendations set out in this report.

#### **6 Any Equalities Implications**

6.1 The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

6.2 The protected characteristics and groups outlined in the Equality Act are Age; Disability; Gender Reassignment; Marriage and Civil Partnership; Pregnancy and Maternity; Race; Religion and Belief; Sex, and Sexual Orientation.

6.3 The Committee should ensure that it addresses these duties by considering them during work programme development, the scoping of work, evidence gathering and making recommendations. This should include considering how policy issues impact on different groups within the community, particularly those that share a relevant protected characteristic; whether the impact on particular groups is fair and proportionate; whether there is equality of access to services and fair representation of all groups within Birmingham; and whether any positive opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and/or good relations between people are being realised.

6.4 The Committee should ensure that equalities comments, and any recommendations, are based on evidence. This should include demographic and service level data and evidence of residents/service-users views gathered through consultation.

## **7 Appendices**

- Appendix 1: (Draft) Terms of Reference, Governance Stabilisation Scrutiny Task and Finish Group
- Appendix 2: Governance Stabilisation Plan

## **8 Background Papers**

- 8.1 [Birmingham City Council Constitution](#)
- 8.2 Birmingham City Council Overview and Scrutiny Framework
- 9.3 [Governance Review of Birmingham City Council by Centre for Governance and Scrutiny \(Cabinet Report, 12 December 2023\)](#)