

A REVIEW BY THE CORPORATE SERVICES, COMMERCE & COMMUNITIES POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE: *DIGITAL BROADCASTING OF POLICY OVERVIEW, SCRUTINY & SELECT COMMITTEES*

Cabinet Member(s)	Councillor Jonathan Bianco
Cabinet Portfolio(s)	Finance, Property & Business Services
Officer Contact(s)	Mark Braddock, Chief Executive's Office
Papers with report	Review report from the Committee

HEADLINES

Summary	To receive the report from the Committee following their review on the digital broadcasting of Policy Overview, Scrutiny & Select Committees on YouTube, which recommends the broadcasting of such meetings going forward. This review was initiated following a motion to full Council seeking consideration of this.
Putting our Residents First	This report supports the following Council objectives of: <i>Our People</i> ; Broadcasting on YouTube strengthens transparency and existing Council consultation and engagement policies with residents.
Financial Cost	There are no financial implications associated with the Committee's review.
Relevant Policy Overview Committee	Corporate Services, Commerce & Communities
Relevant Ward(s)	All

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Cabinet:

1. Welcome and accept the recommendations from the Committee's review as set out below and approve them for implementation for the 2019/20 Municipal Year:

- A. That Cabinet notes the opportunity to raise the profile of the work the Policy Overview, Scrutiny and Select Committees, demonstrating the broader public engagement in Hillingdon's democratic process;
- B. That Cabinet approves the expansion of the current digital broadcasting service to all Policy Overview, Scrutiny and Select Committees, noting that this does not apply to any Panel established by a committee. Furthermore, that this commences, as soon as practicable after the start of the 2019/20 Municipal Year;
- C. That Cabinet notes the Committee's conclusion that the current camera configurations are deemed generally suitable for viewing and that Democratic Services will put in place suitable procedures regarding the attendance of witnesses;
- D. That Cabinet agrees that, going forward, such meetings are held in Committee Rooms 5&6 to negate the need for any additional infrastructure and to not incur any financial expense in broadcasting them.

Reasons for recommendation

To consider the Committee's review extending the broadcasting of official council meetings.

Alternative options considered / risk management

In respect of the Committee's review, the Cabinet could consider other options discounted by the Committee including to not broadcast any further meetings; to broadcast specific meetings only, or to trial broadcasting with one Committee and review viewer engagement.

Policy Overview Committee comments

As set out in the Committee's review report.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Since 2016, the broadcasting of council meetings on YouTube Live has secured a giant leap in the number of residents able to see how local decisions are made and how the Council governs. Meetings currently broadcast are: Full Council, Cabinet, Planning Committees and Licensing Sub-Committees.

Cabinet will recall that the full Council meeting on 22 November 2018 considered a motion submitted by Councillor Stuart Mathers. Following an amendment, it was resolved:

‘That this Council asks the Corporate Services, Commerce & Communities Policy and Overview Committee to look at the issues pertaining to adding the Executive Scrutiny and Policy Overview Committees to those already streamed live on our YouTube channel and to report their recommendations in due course to Cabinet for a final decision.’

The Committee’s review

At its following meeting on 8 January 2019, the Corporate Services, Commerce & Communities Policy Overview Committee initiated a review based on the Council motion and held a witness session on 5 February. During this session, the Committee gave highly positive feedback about the Council’s broadcasting arrangements, reviewed the latest upward viewer trends and sought comparisons with other public sector bodies. The Committee was pleased to conclude that Hillingdon was leading the way in this type of digital engagement across local government.

The Committee received a detailed options paper to enable them to fully consider the benefits or otherwise of expanding broadcasting to the policy overview, scrutiny and select committees. Members also took into account the viewer and practical factors, along with the technology and cost scenarios of any additional broadcasting. Finally, to gain a good understanding of the technology used itself, the Committee participated in the setting up and a live [internal] broadcast of their own meeting.

In conclusion, the Committee recommends that Cabinet expand broadcasting to all policy overview, scrutiny and select committees but that this would exclude any panels established, e.g. Corporate Parenting Panel. The Committee also recommends this be achieved at nil cost by using Committee Rooms 5 & 6 which are already set-up for live broadcasting. The Committee’s final report is enclosed for Cabinet to read in full.

Subject to Cabinet’s decision, Democratic Services have provisionally reserved Committee Rooms 5 & 6 for all such meetings during 2019/20, so broadcasting can commence during the new municipal year. Furthermore, Democratic Services will send suitable communications to petitioners and external witnesses before they attend meetings.

Financial Implications

There are no revenue costs associated with expanding live broadcasting because YouTube is free to use and current capability enables Democratic Services to stream up to 3 live council meetings simultaneously in the Council Chamber and Committee Rooms 5 & 6.

RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION

The benefit or impact upon Hillingdon residents, service users and communities?

Ensuring that any Hillingdon resident can choose to watch how local democracy works increases their understanding of, engagement with and the transparency of the Council. Broadcasting on the versatile and resilient global YouTube digital platform, enables residents to view meetings across all devices they may have, anywhere and at any time.

Consultation carried out or required

Consultation was carried out as part of the Committee's review.

CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance has reviewed the report and concurs with the Financial Implications set out above.

Legal

There are no legal impediments to the Council broadcasting further official meetings, except where they concern Part II or other confidential business. In respect of members of the public that may attend, speak or have their personal details broadcast during committee deliberations, this is covered under the "public task" requirement in the Data Protection Act 2018, which enables the Council to process personal data that supports and promotes the democratic process. Furthermore, members of the public attending to participate in a meeting are made aware of this prior to the meeting taking place and will be given the opportunity to raise any concerns with Council officers.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- [Minutes of the 5 February 2019 meeting](#)
- [Committee Detailed Options Report - 5 February 2019](#)