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## **Tees Valley Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Cavendish House, Teesdale Business Park, Stockton-On-Tees, TS17 6QY  
Wednesday, 15th September, 2021 at 10:00 am.**

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**Present:**

Cllr Stephenson (Chair) (Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council)  
Cllr Hobson (Vice Chair) (Middlesbrough Council)  
Cllr Barlow (Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council)  
Cllr Harker (Darlington Borough Council)  
Cllr Harrison (Hartlepool Borough Council)  
Cllr Hobson (Middlesbrough Council)  
Cllr Jones (Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council)  
Cllr Renton (Darlington Borough Council)  
Cllr Riordan (Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council)  
Cllr Smith (Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council)  
Cllr Wells (Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council)

**Officers:**

Julie Gilhespie - Group Chief Executive  
Peter Judge - Group Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer)  
Sharon Jones - Governance & Scrutiny Officer

**Also in attendance:****Apologies for absence:**

Cllr Brenda Loynes (Hartlepool Borough Council)

### **1       Declarations of interest**

None

### **2       Election of Chair & Vice Chair**

Nominations were taken for Chair of the Committee.

Cllr John Hobson was nominated, and this nomination was seconded.

Cllr Sandra Smith was nominated, and this nomination was seconded.

A secret ballot was proposed by Cllr Stephenson and agreed. The ballot took place. Cllr Hobson received 6 votes. Cllr Smith received 5 votes.

Nominations were taken for Vice Chair. Cllr Sandra Smith was nominated and seconded. There were no other nominations.

Resolved that Cllr John Hobson is nominated as Chair of the Committee and Cllr Sandra Smith as Vice Chair. Nominations will be taken to Cabinet for final ratification.

The meeting was chaired from this point by Cllr Hobson.

### **3 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11th March were agreed as a true record.

### **4 Overview & Scrutiny Committees - Statutory Powers/Legislation**

A paper was circulated detailing the Statutory Powers of the Committee and the legislation that defines these powers.

The Monitoring Officer confirmed that the Leaders of each Local Authority, as Cabinet Members, are the Members of the Combined Authority. Overview & Scrutiny Members have been nominated by their own Authority to scrutinise the decisions that Combined Authority makes. The statutory powers referred to in the circulated report relate to this committee and its members.

Members raised concerns that they are not being given access to information that they would be given access to within their own Local Authority. The Monitoring Officer advised he has not turned down any requests for information from the Committee since his appointment 12 months ago.

Members also questioned why the Chair and Vice Chair of this Committee are asked to leave Cabinet meetings when a confidential item is for discussion. Members were advised that the legislation covering Overview and Scrutiny Committees relates to rights to documents and not access to attend meetings. It is at the discretion of the Chair and members of Cabinet whether Members of Overview & Scrutiny can remain in the room for confidential discussions. Cllr Stephenson, as outgoing Chair, questioned why LEP Members are able to stay for confidential discussion, but elected members are requested to leave. Further clarification as to who can remain during confidential discussions at Cabinet meetings will be sought.

The Monitoring Officer clarified that this Committee has the right to scrutinise any investment, and the monitoring of that investment, by the Combined Authority but the remit stops at decisions of the Combined Authority and does not extend to the decisions made by the Airport itself. Therefore, if it is the Airport Board making a decision then that is not within the remit of this Committee to scrutinise.

The Committee was advised that the legislation governing the Committee is set by Parliament, supplemented by guidance also from Government. The Combined Authority Constitution is overseen by Cabinet and the Monitoring Officer and reviewed annually. The most recent review has been completed and, all but one change, agreed by Cabinet. Provisions relating to Overview & Scrutiny have not been changed in the latest review. Members were advised that should they wish to propose amendments to the Constitution then they can put forward a proposal for this to be considered.

Members agreed to schedule an informal, members only, meeting to look at work planning for the Committee for the forthcoming year and agree key lines of enquiry and scope of information required. This will then allow for formal

requests for information to be made and responded to accordingly.

Resolved that: the detail of the report is noted, and an informal meeting of Members be arranged for work planning purposes.

## **5 Meetings & Forward Plan**

Resolved that the Forward Plan for the Committee is noted.

The next meeting is scheduled for 14th October 2021.