

Civic Matrix – Recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee



Lichfield
District Council

Date: 30/07/2024
Agenda item: 7
Contact: Chair of Overview & Scrutiny
Tel number:
Email:
Key decision? NO
Local ward members N/A

CABINET

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 Following the work of the Overview & Scrutiny (O&S) Civic Matrix Task Group, the following changes to the existing Civic Matrix have been suggested by the parent O&S committee to Cabinet for consideration.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That having reviewed the recommended changes to the current Civic Matrix - as proposed by Overview & Scrutiny - Cabinet agree to the following recommendations proposed by the committee:
- A points-based system for determining events to replace the existing matrix.
 - The following points system: 1=Low priority; 3=Medium priority; 5=High priority.
 - The threshold for acceptance of invitations to be set at 5 points.
 - An event that scores 4 points will be decided at the discretion of the Chair and the Civic Officer – the Chair should then record their justification as to why they believe the event that scored 4 to be an acceptable event to attend.
 - That use of the car is appropriate for an event scoring 4 or higher but should not be permitted for an event scoring 3 or lower.
 - That no determination of events required input from the Leader or Chief Executive as exists in the current matrix.
 - That the most appropriate Civic Head should attend functions.
 - To amalgamate the Chair and Vice-Chair's budgets.
 - To have a budget for clothing, with a maximum appropriate level to be set by Cabinet. The suggested limit proposed by O&S was £200.

3. Background

- 3.1 On 14th September 2023, Overview & Scrutiny reviewed the Civic Matrix function and agreed that the matrix was not working effectively in its current form. Members suggested a “points” system instead and established a task and finish group to examine further how this may work. Minutes are included at **Appendix A**.
- 3.2 The task group met on 05th March 2024 and produced the following outcomes:

- Members unanimously agreed that a points-based system for determining events was preferable to the existing matrix.
- Members suggested that the most appropriate Civic Head should attend functions.
- The number of criteria to determine invitations were reduced. Some of these were recommended to be merged due to overlap with each other.
- Members agreed on the following points system: 1=Low priority; 3=Medium priority; 5=High priority.
- Members set the threshold for acceptance of invitations at 5 points.
- Members recommended that if an event scores 4 points, this will be decided at the discretion of the Chair and the Civic Officer – the Chair should then record their justification as to why they believe the event that scored 4 to be an acceptable event to attend.
- Members were content that there was no score where determination of events required input from the Leader or Chief Executive.
- Members agreed use of the car was appropriate for an event scoring 4 or higher but should not be permitted for an event scoring 3 or lower.
- Members agreed that it was appropriate to amalgamate the Chair and Vice-Chair’s budgets.
- Members concluded it was appropriate to have a budget for clothing, though they believed that there should be a maximum appropriate level set.

Notes of the task group are included at **Appendix B**.

- 3.3 On 03rd April 2024, Overview & Scrutiny reviewed the work of the task and finish group. Minutes included at **Appendix C**. Overview & Scrutiny recommended the changes proposed by the task group to Cabinet.
- 3.4 The changes proposed relate only to the function of the existing civic matrix in determining what events the Chair and Vice-Chair may attend. It does not make a judgement or recommendation on the value of the civic function itself.

Alternative options	Cabinet may choose to reject the suggestions of Overview & Scrutiny committee. Cabinet may choose an alternative method to the civic matrix.
Consultation	Consultation has taken place with the Overview & Scrutiny Committee. The task & finish group also sought input of the Civic & Executive Support Officer as well as the written views of all serving former Chairs.
Financial implications	The Task Group agreed that it was appropriate to amalgamate the Chair and Vice-Chair’s budgets. Members concluded it was appropriate to have a budget for clothing, though they believed that there should be a maximum appropriate level set. A limit of £200 was suggested. Any additional financial implications resulting from the recommended changes will be managed within existing approved revenue budgets.
Approved by Section 151 Officer	Yes
Legal implications	N/A
Approved by Monitoring Officer	Yes/no*

Contribution to Lichfield District 2050	N/A
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Data assessment	N/A
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Equality, diversity and human rights implications	N/A
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EIA logged by Equalities Officer	Yes/no* Equalities Officer confirmed not required.
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Crime & safety Issues	N/A
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Environmental impact (including climate change and biodiversity)	N/A
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Crime & safety Issues	N/A
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GDPR / privacy impact assessment	N/A
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	Risk description & risk owner	Original score (RYG)	How we manage it	New score (RYG)
A	Overspending on the Civic Function budget by attending too many events	Likelihood: Yellow Impact: Yellow Score: Yellow	Regular budget meetings with Chair/Vice Chair to monitor spend and forward plan	Likelihood: Green Impact: Green Score: Green
B	Chair/Vice Chair attending events that add limited value to the Council and/or District as a whole	Likelihood: Yellow Impact: Yellow Score: Yellow	By implementing either a scoring system or guidance to assist decision-making process	Likelihood: Green Impact: Green Score: Green

Background documents	Minutes of O&S - 14th September 2023 Notes of the Civic Matrix Task group – 5th March 2024 Minutes of O&S - 03rd April 2024
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Relevant web links	
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