ITEM 7(A)

Report – Policy and Resources Committee

Governance Efficiencies and Effectiveness: Scheme of Delegations to Officers

To be presented on Thursday, 23rd July 2026

To the Right Honourable The Lady Mayor, Aldermen and Commons of the City of London in Common Council assembled.

Summary

In response to the Governance Efficiencies and Effectiveness Review commissioned by your Policy & Resources Committee in February 2026, and a recent internal audit recommendation, this report invites the Honourable Court to consider the introduction of a structured framework for managing amendments to the Scheme of Delegations to Officers, thus addressing identified weaknesses in oversight and consistency.

This Framework (Appendix 1) seeks to triage change requests so that administrative and operational issues can be dealt with efficiently, whilst ensuring that more strategic changes, or changes that have impact on service delivery, continue to be scrutinised by the relevant Members, Committees and, where necessary, the full Court of Common Council.

Recommendations

The Court of Common Council is asked to approve the Framework for Managing Changes to the Scheme of Delegations to Officers at Appendix 1.

Main Report

Background

1. In February 2026, your Policy and Resources Committee approved a report commissioning a review into Governance Efficiencies and Effectiveness. In that report it was agreed a number of steps be taken over the course of the next three years to explore potential improvements in governance that will demonstrate greater value for money.

2. One ‘quick win’ identified by your Committee was to address weaknesses in the process for updating the Scheme of Delegations to Officers.

3. The Officer Scheme of Delegations a constitutional document that outlines which officers have the authority to make specific decisions. It empowers staff to handle day-to-day operational and executive functions efficiently without needing approval from elected Members, while ensuring decisions stay within the City Corporation’s legal boundaries and policy framework.

4. This decision was informed by the outcome of an internal audit on the Scheme of Delegations to Officers. The focus of the audit was to evaluate and identify opportunities to enhance the process for managing and updating the Scheme of Delegations; and its associated communication, training and awareness of responsibilities and authority. The insight report to this internal audit is available here.

Current Position

5. As part of the recent Member and officer surveys undertaken with respect to governance efficiencies and effectiveness, some respondents welcomed work done thus far on increased delegations to officers, but suggested that more could be done in this space to ensure Members are focussed on strategic matters whilst officers are able to deliver against the operational demands of the organisation.

6. A summary of the audit outcome was reported as follows: *"While there is a defined process for updating the Scheme, it is not effective in practice. This is largely due to the limited resources within the Town Clerk's department to oversee this. Resulting weaknesses include; inability to coordinate updates, limited scrutiny, challenge or impact assessment of proposed changes and inconsistent awareness at a senior leadership level as to the correct application of delegated authority."*

7. While changes to the Scheme are routinely processed, current arrangements do not consistently distinguish between minor and significant changes, lack a structured triage approach, provide varying levels of oversight depending on origin and do not always provide clear visibility of cumulative changes. This creates a risk of inadvertent expansion of delegated authority to officers, inconsistent application across departments and insufficient Member oversight of strategically significant changes.

8. Your Policy and Resources Committee accordingly approved a draft Framework for Managing Changes to the Scheme of Delegations to Officers for onward approval by the Court. The Framework is attached at Appendix 1. The proposed framework directly addresses identified audit weaknesses relating to coordination, scrutiny, and consistency in the application of delegated authority. If agreed, work on the efficacy of the document as a whole can continue more effectively, with Members engaged at an appropriate level on the most important and strategic elements of such a review, rather than on typographical or administrative corrections.

9. This report does not propose any changes to the delegations themselves. Any future requests will be managed in accordance with this Framework.

Corporate & Strategic Implications –

10. **Strategic implications** – The proposal addresses commitments contained within the agreed Action Plan developed in response to the Local Government Association's recent Peer Review, and helps to progress ambitions within the "Efficiency and Effectiveness" pillar of the broader transformation agenda, whilst also addressing locally important commitments such as addressing the recent Internal Audit outcome on the Scheme of Delegations to Officers.

11. **Financial implications** – There are no costs associated with the introduction of this framework and no other direct financial implications.
12. **Resource implications** – The Framework forms part of the Governance Efficiencies proposals which, if achieved, will collectively assist in the release of staff capacity. This released capacity should not only assist in the improvement of service delivery both locally within Governance & Member Services, but also across the organisation.
13. **Legal implications** – Any and all legal implications for changes to our governance framework will of course need to comply with the City Corporation's various associated statutory requirements.
14. **Risk implications** - Failure to progress any solutions resulting in the efficiency of decision-making risks the under delivery of our strategic objectives, with increased risk exposure on non-compliance. There may be reputational risks associated with any perceived lack of implementation following commitments to action in response to independent reviews and audits.
15. **Equalities implications** – the proposals within this report do not adversely impact or effect any group of people with protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010, or corporately recognised protected characteristics.
16. **Climate implications** – none at this time.
17. **Security implications** – none at this time.

Conclusion

18. The Framework, if approved, would enable more proportionate Member oversight of amendments to the Scheme whilst providing greater transparency and stronger accountability.
19. Its introduction, if approved, will address both the matter of delegations (as raised within the context of the Governance Efficiencies and Effectiveness work) and the findings of the recent internal audit, thus creating an environment for more efficient and effective decision-making for the organisation.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Draft Framework for Managing Changes to the Scheme of Delegations to Officers

All of which we submit to the judgement of this Honourable Court.

DATED this 9th day of July 2026.

SIGNED on behalf of the Committee.

Deputy Christopher Michael Hayward
Chairman, Policy and Resources Committee