

**Notes of the Constitution/Committee Membership Amendment Task & Finish Group
held on 3rd July 2018 at 1.00pm in the Members Room**

Members Present: Mr T Dignum (Chairman), Mrs E Lintill, Mrs T Tull, Mrs J Kilby, Mr A Moss and Mr A Shaxson

Officers: Mr N Bennett and Miss S Hurr

1. Apologies

1.1 No apologies, all present.

2. Terms of Reference

2.1 The constitution was recently reviewed in detail, therefore only a 'light-touch' is required on this occasion. The primary aim is to assess the practical power to amend the constitution as delegated to officers which has not been considered for twenty years. All members agreed the constitution needs to be balanced, to ensure members are afforded an appropriate opportunity for engagement without being over-burdened.

2.2 Mr Dignum confirmed the second meeting of the group would consider reviewing individual topics and the third meeting would conclude the work.

2.3 All members agreed the Terms of Reference.

3. Works Programme

3.1 The diversity and range of work is currently considered as limited, but also reliant on members input.

3.2 With regards to the delegation structure, officer's jobs titles have changed but noted, not at a 'root and branch' level.

3.3 All members agreed the Works Programme.

4. Committee Make-up

4.1 The existing number of members sitting on individual committees were reviewed. Following consideration of the workloads of each committee, and impact of their decisions, member numbers were agreed:

Name of Committee	Existing Numbers	Agreed Numbers
CGAC	10	8
Investigation & Disciplinary	5	5
Standards	7	7
Overview & Scrutiny	15	11
Licensing	15	10
Planning	15	13
	Total	54

- 4.2 54 slots would provide 1.2 opportunities for individual members to sit on a committee when taking into consideration the requirements for cabinet members to sit on committees, and therefore seven members would be required to seat on two key committees. Further involvement is also provided by opportunities for members to sit on panels.
- 4.3 It was agreed that these allocations would be reviewed in twelve months-time or sooner if required.

A Briefing Note regarding the Council's Constitution relating to agenda items 5 and 6 written by Monitoring Officer Nick Bennett, was circulated prior to the meeting.

5. **Delegation Structure**

- 5.1 Delegation is usually to a named individual post-holder or a Director and it was noted that only members can make substantial/significant decisions.
- 5.2 Mr Bennett currently makes approximately seven to eight minor changes to the constitution each month, with all updated information held and reported on 'Modern.Gov'.
- 5.3 **Action:** Mr Bennett to report all changes to Overview & Scrutiny Committee, annually.
- 5.4 All members agreed to continue with delegating matters to individual officers and 'classes of officers'.
- 5.6 **Action:** Mr Bennett to provide a definition of a 'Senior Officer'.

6. **Incidental Constitutional Changes**

- 6.1 The S.151 officer role provides a 'check and balance' regarding how money is spent, and in their absence a proportion of this responsibility falls to their deputy officer. It was agreed that this should be reworded to allow the deputy officer 'to delegate in all financial matters without exception'.
- 6.2 Concerns about members leaving debates for periods of time and the potential impact of missing crucial information on taking decisions and voting, was discussed. All members agreed that this issue should be covered both in Chairman training and Induction training.
- 6.3 With regards to Neighbourhood Planning, all members agreed the consultation process should advance in a shorter timeframe and therefore rather than proposals returning to committee for 'consultation', the words are amended to state the committee would be 'informed'.
- 6.4 Further questions were asked regarding the definition and use of 'motions' and 'counter-motions'. **Action:** Mr Bennett to review the appropriate legislation and provide an explanation for the next meeting.

7. **Dates of Future Meetings:** Thursday 19th July 2018 at 12.00 noon
Friday 11th September 2018 at 2.00pm

As noted above, it was suggested that the group could meet in twelve months-time, and could do so on an annual basis.

Meeting closed at 3.10pm