

COUNCIL 20 FEBRUARY 2024

AGENDA ITEM 17 – CONSTITUTION REVIEW WORKING PARTY REPORT

MOTION

At the conclusion of the review, the Constitutional Review Working Party recommends to the Council to:

- (i) approve the annotated version of Council Procedure rules attached as Appendix 1 confirming:
 - that non-gender specific language should be used throughout the Constitution and specifically, that the preferred title should be 'Chair' rather than Chairman;
 - the deletion of paragraph 24.2.4.4 (ref: 4(21)) requiring one day's notice for the appointment of substitutes to Planning Committee;
 - amend paragraph 13.1.2 (ref: 4(14)), specifically to remove the Chairman of Council from the process to assess Questions from Members;
 - that a point of clarification must be confined to same material part of a previous speech by him/her in meeting taking place (ref: paragraph 17.1 (ref: 4 (16)));
- (ii) approve changes to the Constitution of the Council's Audit Committee as set out In Appendix 1 and the 'modus operandi', specifically:
 - the appointment of one lay member without voting rights to the Committee;
 - clarification on the attendance of officers at Audit Committee, specifically, and in addition to the lead officer, report author and those required by the Constitution to attend in addition, an appropriate officer can be instructed to attend, by Committee resolution, in relation to a specified current or future agenda item;
- (iii) amend the guidance to members in relation to the submission of written questions to officers, specifically to request that written questions to officers be provided at least two working days in advance of a meeting;
- (iv) amend the financial regulations (ref: Part 4 paragraph 6.2 p 4(30)), specifically to read:

"Scene Setting
The Finance & Assets Committee will receive a report to its September meeting, updating Committee with changes since the budget was approved in February and providing initial indications of how the future year's budget will be constructed in advance of this being formally considered by Committee the following January. The Director, Finance will further share this report with all members of the Council."
- (v) approve changes to the Contract Procedure Rules (ref: Part 4 paragraph 3.1.6 p.4 (75)), specifically to add contracts for agency staff as exempt;

- (vi) approve changes to the Responsibility of Functions of the Constitution, in relation to Operational Services and Finance & Assets Committee, specifically:
 - ICT service plans and associated policy matters (ref: Part 3 section b(i) p3 (6-13) be transferred from Operational Services to Finance & Assets Committee;
 - Council's Environment Plan and all climate change/natural environment strategic matters be transferred from Operational Services to Finance & Assets Committee (ref: Part 3);
- (vii) approve addendum to the Delegation to Officers in relation to Finance & Assets Committee (ref: Part 3 Section B (ii)), specifically:

Grants	
Determination of all grant requests under established grant schemes up to £50,000	Director, Community

- (viii) approve amendments (tracked below) to the Delegation of Officers in relation to Finance & Assets Committee (ref: Part 3 Section B (ii), specifically, ~~as set out in Appendix 2;~~

To write off NNDR debt not exceeding £10,000 (Ref: Part 3 (ii) p 3(20))	Head of ARP or Operations Managers Head of NNDR, Recovery and Enforcement or Head of Benefits and Council Tax Billing With ARP, Operations Managers Recovery Managers write off debts below £1500 and Recovery Team Managers Revenues and NNDR Team Leaders or Senior Recovery Officer to write-off debts below £100 £150 .
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To write off Council Tax and Housing Benefit overpayments debt not exceeding £5000.	Head of ARP or Operations Managers Head of NNDR, Recovery and Enforcement or Head of Benefits and Council Tax Billing With ARP, Operations Managers Recovery Managers write off debts below £1500 and Recovery Team Managers Revenues and NNDR Team Leaders or Senior Recovery Officer to write-off debts below £100 £150 .
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To write off any individual debt which does not exceed £1000 £3000, after consultation with the Director, Legal, after ensuring that all action for recovery has been taken.	Director, Finance
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- (ix) adopt the LGA Model Code of Conduct, together with a blanket policy to withhold the home address of Councillors, with Members having to 'opt in' to publish.

Proposer: Councillor Anna Bailey

Seconder: Councillor Julia Huffer