

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

NOTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 15 NOVEMBER 2023

Present:

Councillor Kevin Gillott (Chair) (in the Chair)
Councillor Helen Wetherall (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Pat Kerry
Councillor Kathy Rouse

Councillor Fran Petersen

Also Present:

S Sternberg Assistant Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer
A Maher Governance Manager
A Bond Governance Officer

STA/ Apologies for Absence

23/2

3-24 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C Cupit and P Antcliff.

STA/ Review of the Constitution - Stage One - TO FOLLOW

24/2

3-24 Committee were presented with a working document that highlighted typographical changes that had been made to the Council's Constitution and asked to address and raise any further inconsistencies and incorrections within the document.

Committee discussed a number of areas for potential for review. In particular they discussed the procedure rules for meetings of Full Council. Members considered that these meetings should be constrained by a time limit which could be extended by a vote of Council when required. Members also suggested that a clear definition of the public and who could submit questions to Council should be included as well as a defined limit on the length of questions that could be submitted by both Members and the public.

Committee considered motions that could be submitted to meetings of Council and were of the opinion that the procedure rules should be more clear on what motions would be permitted, this should include reasons that a motion would not be considered by Council, such as when the motion was required to be considered by the relevant Scrutiny Committee prior to being brought to a meeting of Council. Members were also of the opinion that when a Member seconds a motion, they should not be able to reserve their right to speak until the end of the debate.

Members raised concerns around the vote to set the budget. They considered that by law, they were required to approve the precept Council Tax Levels but it was possible for Members of Council to vote this down. The Monitoring Officer informed Committee that Members could be made aware of the legal consequence of voting down the precept Council Tax Levels.

Committee also drew attention to the Appointments Committee, they understood that it was required to follow political proportionality rules but considered that it would be worthwhile for other Members to be able to meet with potential candidates in a less formal setting.

Committee heard that the LGA had published a new model code and that it would be best practice to compare this with the Council's for any inconsistencies.

Members of the Standards Committee would be sent a copy of the Council's Constitution working document so that they would be able to recommend any further typographical changes.

It was agreed that any further corrections would be raised and discussed at a meeting of Standards Committee to be held in the new year.