

CHILTERN DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the CONSTITUTION REVIEW COMMITTEE held on 25 JUNE 2014

PRESENT: Councillor N M Rose - Chairman
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Councillors: Miss P A Appleby
N L Brown
Mrs I A Darby
D W Phillips
M Stannard

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Councillors A J Garth,
D G Meacock and M Vivis

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor P Jones

9 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED:

That Councillor N M Rose be appointed Chairman of the Constitution Review Committee for the ensuing municipal year.

10 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED:

The Committee decided not to appoint a Vice Chairman

11 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 February 2014, copies of which had been previously circulated, were agreed by the Committee and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest

13 DRAFT CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION

The Chief Executive presented the report to the Committee which provided details of draft changes to the Constitution as a result of a previous report on options to streamline the workings of the Council in line with the work programme agreed by the Constitution Review Committee on 18 February 2014, specifically in relation to Overview and Scrutiny, and Policy Advisory

Groups (PAGs). Members were advised that there would be a further meeting of the Committee to consider suggested changes for full Council.

The key areas of focus in the report were:-

- Streamlining the workings of the Council
- Policy Advisory Groups (PAGs)
- Overview and Scrutiny
- Full Council
- Regulatory Committees
- Cycle of meetings
- Outside Body appointments

The Chief Executive presented the proposed changes to the Council's Constitution as detailed in paragraph 4 of the report.

Members were asked to consider the proposals contained in the report in respect of changes to the Constitution, as agreed previously by the Committee and to be presented to the next meeting of full Council on 22 July 2014. In addition members were asked to consider the need for further consideration in respect of a possible reduction of meetings, improvements to full Council meetings, a timetable and work programme for the committee and preparation of an 18 month meeting schedule once the structure of meetings was agreed.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services presented the appendices to the report which detailed the Terms of Reference for the proposed new committees, as follows:

- Audit and Standards Committee
- Appeals and Complaints Committee
- Governance and Electoral Arrangements Committee
- Joint Appointments and Personnel Committee
- Proposed Amendment to the Cabinet Procedure Rules for Policy Advisory Groups
- Services Overview Committee
- Resources Overview Committee

Members considered the proposed Terms of Reference in detail and identified key areas for further consideration. Members were undecided on the formation of one Joint Personnel Committee for both authorities and after discussion it was agreed that both South Bucks DC and Chiltern DC should retain a Personnel Committee for each authority but the members of each Personnel Committee be appointed to the JAIC, which would deal with all the human resources aspects related to the joint arrangements, so that there is consistency in approach between authorities but also that local authority specific issues can be considered by the relevant Council at their Personnel Committee.

Members considered the merger of the Audit and Standards Committees to form one Committee, which was agreed subject to a panel being formed if a specific standards issue arose. Members were advised that there is no longer a requirement for independent members on Standards Committee and that a Hearing Sub-Committee formed of 3 members from the Audit and Standards Committee would be established if required for the purpose of considering a Standards (Code of Conduct) issue, and this requirement was included in paragraph 3(o) of the Terms of Reference.

During consideration of the Governance and Electoral Arrangements Committee Terms of Reference members asked that paragraph 3.6, which related to personnel matters, be deleted due to the retention of a Personnel Committee. It was agreed that further discussion was required in relation to the Personnel Committee due to the need to change the Inter Agreement and also other residue arrangements to be clarified.

Members considered the suggestion to establish five Policy Advisory Groups (PAGs) which would be linked to each Cabinet Portfolio Holder and would be a sounding board for the Cabinet Member. Discussions ensued in relation to the role, membership, political balance and flexibility of PAGs. The Chief Executive advised that it may be helpful for officers to prepare a management protocol note for PAGs to clarify these areas and also to provide structure for the work of the PAGs.

The Committee agreed to adjourn the meeting to a future date to conclude their consideration of the report on draft changes to the constitution.

The meeting was adjourned at 6.30pm