

Review of the Council's Constitution

1. Purpose

To advise the Standards Committee of the Council's decisions on the review of the constitution following the detailed work carried out by the Focus Group on the Review of the Constitution (Focus Group) on the Committee's behalf.

2. Background

A report on the outcome of the review of the constitution and a recommended revised draft constitution was considered by the Standards Committee at a special meeting on 26 October 2010 convened for that purpose. At that meeting, the Committee considered the outcome of the review carried out by the Focus Group and agreed a number of issues for onward recommendation to Council.

A report incorporating the Committee's recommendation was considered by Council at its meeting on 9 November 2010. The report was presented to Council by Mrs McCord as Chairman of the Committee and the Focus Group and is attached as background information. To save paper, the appendices referred to in the report have not been included in this agenda as they were previously circulated to members of the Committee via the Council Summons. The papers can also be accessed on the following link:

<http://cms.wiltshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=130&MId=943&Ver=4>

3. Outcome of the Review

In considering the report and the recommended revised draft constitution, Council resolved as follows:

- (a) To adopt the recommendations of the Standards Committee dated 26 October 2010 (as set out in the report) with the exception of (iii) relating to the Media Relations Protocol.
- (b) To ask the Monitoring Officer, after consultation with the Focus Group on the Review of the Constitution and the Service Director, Policy and Communications, to prepare and approve a revised Media Relations Protocol, which takes account of the proposed

new Local Authority Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity, due to come into effect on 1 January 2011.

- (c) To ask the Monitoring Officer to approve the 'Guidance on Amendments to Motions' following consultation with the Focus Group on the Review of the Constitution for inclusion as an appendix to Part 4 of the Constitution – Rules of Procedure – Council.
- (d) In relation to the issue of Cabinet Member response times, to include the following as a third bullet point under paragraph 6.8 of Part 12 – Role and Responsibilities of Councillors, applying the provision to all Councillors:

'To acknowledge any enquiries normally within four working days of receipt, and provide a substantive response, where required, within ten working days, if possible.'

- (e) To agree that the Constitution as revised should come into effect on 1 December 2010 in order to allow time for the document to be updated and formatted and for the changes to be communicated to all concerned.

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Appendix – Report to Council dated 9 November 2010