

FEEDBACK FROM COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

To: Constitution and Ethics Committee

Date: 23rd June 2015

From: LGSS Director Law, Property and Governance

Electoral division(s): All

Purpose: To consider the introduction of a mechanism to enable Councillors who are representatives on outside bodies to report back to the relevant parent committee on any significant issues relating to those bodies.

Recommendation: The Committee is asked to:-

- 1. Endorse the proposal to include a standing item on the agenda of each Policy and Service Committee to facilitate reporting back by Councillor representatives on outside bodies.**
- 2. Recommend to full Council that Rule 5 (Order of Business) of Part 4.4 of the Constitution (Committee Procedure Rules) be amended as set out in Appendix A.**
- 3. Authorise the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chairman of the Constitution and Ethics Committee, to make any other minor or consequential amendments to the Constitution necessary for, or incidental to, the implementation of these proposals.**

<i>Officer contact:</i>		<i>Member contact</i>	
Name:	Quentin Baker	Name:	Cllr M Smith
Post:	Director of Law, Property & Governance and Monitoring Officer	Portfolio:	Chairwoman, Constitution and Ethics Committee
Email:	quentin.baker@cambridgeshire.gov.uk	Email:	mandysmith1235@btinternet.com
Tel:	01223 727961	Tel:	01954 230253

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. The Children and Young People Committee, at its meeting held on 19 May 2015, received feedback from a Councillor who served on an outside body. The Councillor was seeking to update the Committee on concerns expressed by that body. As a consequence of the report, the Committee queried the mechanism by which representatives on outside bodies could report back to the parent committee and suggested that a standing item should be included on each agenda to enable reporting back by representatives.

2. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

- 2.1. The Council appoints representatives to serve upon outside bodies. Appointments are currently split into three categories:
 - (a) Appointments reserved to the Council;
 - (b) Appointments to Internal Advisory Groups and Panels; and
 - (c) Appointments to Partnership Liaison and Advisory Groups.
- 2.2. Certain appointments are reserved to full Council (eg: Local Government Association; Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority etc). Other appointments are made by the relevant Policy and Service Committee. Appointments are generally made for a four year period to coincide with the term of the Council, although amendments may be made to appointments from time to time to reflect changes in committee membership etc.
- 2.3. The range of appointments vary in terms of the demands of the role and the expectations of the Council's representatives. Some Councillors may be appointed to roles as company directors, trustees, governors or members of a management committee which may carry personal responsibilities and liabilities. Other roles may require the Councillor to be a source of information and advice to the bodies concerned and to act as a link to the County Council.

3. REPORTING MECHANISM

- 3.1. At present there is no formal mechanism for representatives on outside bodies to report back to the Council on their work on the outside bodies.
- 3.2. Many local authorities have formal mechanisms requiring representatives upon outside bodies to provide feedback in respect of those bodies. For example, some authorities require representatives appointed to outside bodies to produce an annual written report on the activity of the body. However, the Committee may conclude that such an approach would be overly bureaucratic and cumbersome. Moreover, such an approach still would not facilitate reporting back on a time sensitive matter which the Committee needs to be aware of.
- 3.3. A simpler approach would be to adopt the proposal suggested by the Children and Young People Committee and to include a standing item on each Policy and Service Committee agenda to enable representatives of outside bodies to report back on any significant issues relating to that body which need to be drawn to the attention of the Committee.
- 3.4. There is already provision for reporting back from the Fire Authority, with reports being submitted to the Council in March and October. Thus, the Committee may

conclude that it is not necessary to include a standing item for reporting back on agendas for meetings of the Council.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1. Including a standard item on each agenda would enable Members to receive timely updates from representatives on outside bodies on any key issues/activities impacting on local people and on service delivery.
- 4.2. Given the community leadership role of local authorities and the increasing need to work in partnership with other bodies, formalising a reporting back process would also strengthen the Council's community leadership role.
- 4.3. In the event that the Committee supports this approach, it is recommended that Rule 5 of the Committee and Sub Committee Procedure Rules (Order of Business) be amended to include provision for reporting back by Councillors on outside bodies as indicated in Appendix A (amendment shown in underlined text).

Source Documents	Location
Constitution	http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/info/20050/council_structure/288/councils_constitution

PROCEDURE RULES FOR COMMITTEE AND SUB-COMMITTEE MEETINGS

1. INTRODUCTION

These rules are designed to ensure meetings run smoothly and are conducted properly. The rules apply to all Committees of the Council except for the following:

- Pension Fund Committee and Investment Sub-Committee and Pension Fund Board (special rules of procedure apply as shown in Annex 1)
- Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Board (Standing Order applies as shown in Annex 2)
- Joint Committees.

So far as the law allows any of these rules may be suspended at any meeting, either for the whole meeting or for a particular item on the agenda. In order to achieve this, a motion must be moved and seconded and a vote carried.

2. ARRANGEMENTS FOR MEETINGS

The agenda and papers for meetings must be available at least five clear working days before the meeting.

A special meeting is arranged if the chairman/woman of the relevant committee or any six of its members request such a meeting, or by the Monitoring Officer if he/she considers it necessary.

3. CHAIRMAN/WOMAN OF MEETING

The person presiding at the meeting may exercise any power or duty of the Chairman/woman.

If any issues arise at a meeting in relation to interpretation of the procedure rules, the Chairman/woman's decision will be final.

4. QUORUM

The quorum of a meeting will be one quarter of the whole number of voting members. During any meeting if the Chairman/woman counts the number of members present and declares there is not a quorum present, then the meeting will adjourn immediately. Remaining business will be considered at a time and date fixed by the Chairman/woman. If the Chairman/woman does not fix a date, the remaining business will be considered at the next ordinary meeting.

5. ORDER OF BUSINESS

The order of business will usually be:

- at the first meeting after the annual Council meeting, appointing or noting the appointment of the Chairman/woman and Vice-Chairman/woman of the committee
- the choice of a person to preside if the Chairman/woman and Vice-Chairman/woman are absent
- confirmation of the minutes of the last meeting of the committee
- apologies for absence, including reasons
- declarations of interest
- business outstanding from the last meeting
- reports for decision by committee
- items requested by a Councillor, which the relevant Executive/Corporate Director, after consultation with the committee spokesmen/women has agreed should be included on the agenda.
- reports back from Councillor representatives on outside bodies
- reports for information if updating, at the specific request of the Committee, progress of decisions previously agreed by a Committee.
- training plan including figures for attendance at each training session.
- agenda plan (if applicable).

6. OTHER POINTS REGARDING THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

At any time during the meeting the Chairman/woman can adjourn the meeting.

The order of business can be varied at the discretion of the Chairman/woman.

The minutes of ordinary meetings will not normally be confirmed at special meetings.

7. AGENDA ITEMS REQUESTED BY COUNCILLORS

Any Councillor who wishes an item relevant to the functions of a committee to be included on the agenda of that committee shall register a request with their spokesman/woman for that committee. The spokesman/woman shall refer the matter to the next available meeting of committee spokesmen/women. The relevant Executive/Corporate Director, after consultation with the committee spokesmen/women, shall be authorised to determine whether the item should be included on the agenda of the next available or a subsequent meeting. Where so approved, the Democratic Services Manager shall arrange for the item to be included on an agenda in accordance with the agreed timescale, subject to compliance with statutory notice requirements, and shall notify the Councillor who requested the item accordingly. Where the request is not approved, the Democratic Services Manager will arrange to inform the Councillor of the reasons why the Executive/Corporate Director, after consultation with the committee spokesmen/women, has decided not to include the item on an agenda of the committee.