

COUNTY COUNCIL CONSTITUTION: SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT

To: County Council

Date: 17th May 2011

From: Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer

Electoral Division(s) All

Forward Plan Ref: N/A **Key Decision:** No

Purpose: To consider further revisions to the Council's Constitution in addition to those set out in the report circulated with the agenda for the Council meeting.

Recommendation: The Council is recommended to:

- (a) approve the revisions to the Council's Constitution as set out in the attached appendix
- (b) note the proposed changes designed to enable an immediate move to Overview and Scrutiny Committees, pending more detailed work to develop overview and scrutiny procedure rules
- (c) authorise the Scrutiny Management Group, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Monitoring Officer, to work up detailed operating principles to govern overview and scrutiny arrangements. Any additional constitutional changes will be submitted to a future Council meeting.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Article 16 of the Council's Constitution requires the Council's Monitoring Officer (the Local Government Shared Services Director: Legal) to keep the Constitution under review and to recommend changes to secure improvements.

2.0 CHANGES TO POLITICAL MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

2.1 The report circulated with the Council agenda included reference to the likelihood of additional changes to the Constitution being required as a result of discussions with the new Leader of the Council and as a consequence of planned changes to Cabinet portfolios. Details of additional changes are set out in Appendix 1.

2.2 In summary the changes, if approved, are designed to:

- Abolish Policy Development Groups with immediate effect.
- Introduce Overview and Scrutiny Committees.
- Amend the County Council procedure rules to introduce a single, time limited item for Members to ask questions of the Leader of the Council, Cabinet member, the Chairman of any Committee and/or representative on the Police and Fire Authority. This replaces the discussion on Cabinet 'information' items and Members' Oral Question Time.
- Allow the Leader of the Council and/or Cabinet member to convene ad hoc task and finish advisory groups.
- Change the process for securing changes to the advisory process.

For ease of reference the proposed changes to the Constitution are grouped under these broad headings.

2.3 It is proposed to introduce these changes as a matter of urgency so that the new arrangements can be introduced at the start of the new municipal year and adjusted to take account of new Cabinet portfolios and proposed working arrangements. However, the suggested changes to facilitate a move to overview and scrutiny arrangements are interim, pending more detailed work to develop new overview and scrutiny procedure rules. It is recommended that the Council authorises the Scrutiny Management Group, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Monitoring Officer, to work up detailed operating principles to govern future overview and scrutiny arrangements.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Source Documents	Location
Council Constitution	Room 114a, Shire Hall, Cambridge