

PETERBOROUGH



**MINUTES OF THE RECONVENED CONSTITUTION AND ETHICS COMMITTEE
MEETING**

**HELD AT 6:00PM, ON
MONDAY, 15 AUGUST 2022
COUNCIL CHAMBER, PETERBOROUGH**

Present: Councillors Sandford (Chair), Jamil (Vice-Chair), Allen, Fitzgerald, Sainsbury, Simons and Alison Jones

Officers in Attendance: Dan Kalley, Senior Democratic Services Officer
Fiona McMillan, Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer
Rachel Edwards, Head of Constitutional Services

7. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence received.

8. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none received.

9. GOVERNANCE REVIEW

The Constitution and Ethics Committee received a report in relation to the Governance Review as detailed in the Improvement Plan agreed at Full Council in December 2021.

The Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer introduced the report and stated that the information was still correct as per the introduction at the meeting on 4 July 2022.

The Constitution and Ethics Committee debated the report and in summary the key points raised and responses to questions included:

- The Labour Group had a number of views within the group over what the best governance routes were. It was therefore the view of the group as a whole to recommend option 3 and have a full-scale review, this was also key to tie in the review on all out elections.
- The Liberal Democrats view was a commitment to having a committee system, similar to that at Cambridgeshire County Council. There was also an understanding that this would not be the most popular view across the authority, in light of that the group would also favour a full-scale review as per option 3. It was noted however that a hybrid system, similar to that which was proposed in 2015/16 would be favourable to the group. This would also mean support of option 2 if other agreed.
- It was agreed that is option 2 was put forward the working group would be made up of the whole membership of the Constitution and Ethics Committee.

- It was also noted that the working group could invite other smaller groups to meetings of the working group where appropriate and invite any external bodies or organisations that might assist the group.
- A proposal was made and seconded for option 3, which was for a full-scale review of the governance arrangements on a vote this was defeated.

The Constitution and Ethics Committee **RESOLVED** (3 for, 4 against) to go with Option 3 Carry out a full-scale governance review in line with guidance which would examine all the available options. not
LG/CfGS

The Constitution and Ethics Committee **RESOLVED** (5 for, 2 against) to:

1. note the options set out at paragraph 4.6 for taking forward a review of the Council's governance arrangements, as outlined in the Council's Improvement Plan agreed by Full Council in December 2021.
2. Agree to Option 2: A light-touch review of recommendations of the governance review carried out in 2015/16, which recommended a hybrid model of decision making with greater involvement of pre-decision scrutiny;
3. As Option 2 was preferred, to ask officers to bring a report back to the next committee outlining the terms of reference for a new member working group, consisting of the membership of the Constitution and Ethics Committee, to carry out a review of the previous governance review work focusing on a hybrid model of governance and bringing an updated proposal back to the formal Committee for consideration before recommending to Full Council.

10. DISPENSATIONS ISSUES

The Constitution and Ethics Committee considered and **RESOLVED** (Unanimous) to note that there had been no dispensations granted since the last meeting

11. UPDATE ON NATIONAL ISSUES

The Constitution and Ethics Committee considered and **RESOLVED** (Unanimous) to note that there had been no further updates since the last meeting.

12. CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS RECEIVED SINCE MARCH 2022

The Constitution and Ethics Committee received an update report on the code of conduct complaints received by the Monitoring Officer since the last meeting in March 2022.

The Constitution and Ethics Committee considered and **RESOLVED** (Unanimous) to note the report on complaints received/being handled by the Monitoring Officer since the Committee's last report in March 2022.

13. WORK PROGRAMME, FUTURE DATES AND MEMBER ISSUES

The Constitution and Ethics Committee received a report in relation to the Committee's Work Programme for the Municipal Year 2022/23.

The Senior Democratic Services Officer introduced the report. It was agreed that at the next meeting a terms of reference for the Governance Review Working Group would be brought to the Committee.

In addition, the Monitoring Officer agreed to ask Group Leaders for any areas where the Council could reasonably have Council Champions, ensuring that they were appropriate and did not conflict with areas currently being undertaken by individual Cabinet Members. If Council Champions were to be put forward it was also essential that the process for formalised and agreed at Annual Council meetings going forward.

The Constitution and Ethics Committee considered and **RESOLVED** (unanimous) to note the Committee's work programme as at 15 August 2022.

6:00pm – 6.35pm

Chairman