

HAVANT BOROUGH COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Governance & Audit Committee held on 24 April 2017

Present

Councillor Smith K (Chairman)

Councillors Davis, Lenaghan, Sceal and Wade

86 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Rees.

87 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

88 Review of the Constitution

The Committee considered reports from the Budget Scrutiny and Policy Development Panel and the Monitoring Officer recommending changes to the Constitution. The Scrutiny Lead for the Budget Scrutiny and Policy Development Panel was invited to join the discussion for this item and answer member's questions in relation to the Panel's report.

The Committee were informed that the Constitution had been reviewed concurrently by the Budget Scrutiny and Policy Development Panel and an officer team. The Panel's review had considered the articles and standing orders and made amendments to ensure these remained clear, effective and fit for purpose. The officers review had amended the format of the Constitution and streamlined the document, putting all policies and procedures not required to be included in the Constitution into an online 'Policy Hub', for ease of reference.

During the course of the debate, the Monitoring Officer advised that the term 'significant' in the criteria for a key decision remain undefined. This would allow Cabinet to continue to make decisions within the budget and policy frameworks set by Full Council, while necessary safeguards such as Legal and Financial sign-off from key officers remained in place.

RECOMMENDED that Council;

- a) Agree to the changes to the Constitution as recommended by the Monitoring Officer together with the amendments proposed by the Budget Scrutiny and Policy Development Panel as set out in Appendix B of the report;

- b) Require all members to read Part 3 of the Constitution and sign a declaration to this effect each municipal year; and
- c) Require all members of a committee, board or sub committee to read the terms of reference of each committee, board or sub committee to which they are appointed and sign a declaration to that effect.

89 Changes to the Councillor Code of Conduct

The Committee considered a report from the Monitoring Officer recommending changes to the Councillor's Code of Conduct.

The report detailed further recommended changes to the Code, which included the allowance for firmer sanctions on Councillors who fail to comply with the Code and clearer guidance on disclosable pecuniary interests.

RECOMMENDED to Council that it adopts the Councillor Code of Conduct as submitted.

The meeting commenced at 5.00 pm and concluded at 5.40 pm