

Minutes of a meeting of the Constitution Committee held at County Hall, Glenfield on Tuesday, 21 January 2025.

PRESENT

Mrs D. Taylor CC (in the Chair)

Mr. L. Breckon JP CC
Mr. M. T. Mullaney CC
Mr J. Poland CC

Mrs P. Posnett MBE CC
Mr. R. J. Shepherd CC
Mrs. M. Wright CC

24. Minutes.

The minutes of the meeting held on 22nd November 2024 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

25. Question Time.

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 35.

26. Questions asked under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

27. Urgent Items.

The Chairman advised that there was one urgent item for consideration, a verbal report from the Director of Law and Governance regarding the proposed review of the Council's Constitution. This matter was urgent due to recent developments regarding the potential for local government reform which could impact on imminent plans to undertake this work.

28. Declarations of interest.

The Chairman invited members who wished to do so to declare any interest in respect of items on the agenda for the meeting.

No declarations were made.

29. Annual Governance Statement 2023-2024

The Committee considered a joint report of the Director of Corporate Resources and the Chief Executive, the purpose of which was to outline the background and approach taken to produce the County council's 2023-24 Annual Governance Statement (AGS) and to

present the final AGS for approval, prior to this being signed by the Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 6' is filed with these minutes.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Annual Governance Statement 2023-24 be approved;
- (b) That the Director of Corporate Resources be authorised to update the AGS as necessary to align with the finalised Statement of Accounts for the County Council and the Pension Fund (yet to be approved), noting that such changes will be reported to the Corporate Governance Committee and the Leader as appropriate.

30. Co-opted Members Protocols

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Executive, the purpose of which was to present two protocols for approval. The protocols set out the position in relation to co-opted members of overview and scrutiny committees (Appendix A) and to co-opted independent members of the Corporate Governance Committee (Appendix B). A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 7' is filed with these minutes.

RESOLVED:

That the protocols for co-opted members of overview and scrutiny committees and for co-opted independent members of the Corporate Governance Committee be approved.

31. Urgent Item - Review of the County Council's Constitution.

The Committee considered an urgent item from the Director of Law and Governance regarding the Committee's previous decision to establish a politically balanced task and finish group to undertake a full review of the County Council's Constitution. The matter was urgent due to recent developments regarding the potential for local government reform which could impact on the imminent establishment of this group and the work it undertook.

The Director informed the Committee that arising from the Government's English Devolution White Paper published on 16 December 2024, the County Council had submitted its request to the Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution to postpone the County Council elections from May 2025 to May 2026. Until the Government's response to this request was known it was not clear how this project might need to progress. It was therefore proposed that the establishment of the task and finish group be paused for the time being.

It was noted that the review of the Constitution would be a big piece of work that would take up significant resources which would not be a good use of officer time until the position regarding local government reform had been made clearer.

RESOLVED:

That the establishment of a politically balanced task and finish group to undertake a full review of the Constitution as agreed by the Committee at its meeting on 22 November 2024 be paused.

11.00 - 11.10 am
21 January 2025

CHAIRMAN