

COUNCIL
18th May, 2007

PRESENT – The Mayor; Councillors Armstrong, Baldwin, Barker, Burton, Chapman, Copeland, Coultas, Davies, Dixon, Dunstone, Francis, Freitag, Galletley, Harker, Hartley, I. Haszeldine, L. Haszeldine, Hughes, Jenkinson, B. Jones, Mrs. D. Jones, Lawton, Lewis, Lister, Long, D. A. Lyonette, J. M. Lyonette, Maddison, McEwan, Newell, Nutt, Regan, Richmond, Robson, Ruck, Mrs. Scott, Stenson, Swainston, Thistlethwaite, Walker, Wallis, Williams and York. (44)

APOLOGIES – Councillors Johnson, Lee, Nicholson, Roberts, A. J. Scott and Vasey. (6)

ABSENT – Councillors G. Cartwright, M. Cartwright and S. Jones. (3)

13. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

14. CONSTITUTION – The Director of Corporate Services submitted a report (previously circulated) requesting approval for changes to the format of the Constitution and to the specific changes detailed within the submitted report.

The submitted report outlined the proposed changes to the content of the Constitution and the changes to the format of the document.

RESOLVED – That the changes to the Constitution outlined in the submitted report be approved.

REASON - To ensure that the constitution is accessible, up to date and factually accurate.

15. REFERENDUM – The Director of Corporate Services submitted a report (previously circulated) requesting consideration to a programme of consultation in advance of the referendum for a directly Elected Mayor, and to consider draft proposals for new mayoral arrangements, which would form part of the consultation.

The submitted report outlined the key stages that the Council must follow before the referendum would take place on 27th September 2007, and the timetable for the consultation process. The report also detailed the arrangements for the referendum itself and the financial implications thereof.

Councillor Stenson moved an amendment but it was not seconded.

RESOLVED – (a) That the programme of consultation, as set out in Appendix 3 of the submitted report, be approved.

(b) That the budget of £170,000, for the Consultation, Awareness Raising and Conduct of the Referendum, assuming an all-postal ballot, be approved.

(c) That the draft proposals to be the subject of public consultation, set out in Appendix 5 of the submitted report, be approved.

(d) That the referendum be conducted using an all-postal ballot, until that option is removed by legislative change.

REASONS – (a) The Council is required to consult with the public prior to the referendum, and the programme follows the guidance for effective consultation.

(b) There is a requirement to carry out the consultation, raise public awareness and to conduct the referendum itself, but there is currently no budget allocation to support this.

(c) The Council is required to submit proposals to the Secretary of State prior to the referendum and to consult the public on draft proposals.

16. CODE OF CONDUCT – The Director of Corporate Services submitted a report (previously circulated) requesting approval of a revised Code of Conduct for Members, following a national change to the model Code of Conduct.

The submitted report summarised the changes in comparison to the existing Code of Conduct, highlighted new offences contained within the proposed Code of Conduct, outlined the recommendations of the Standards Board for England, and detailed Members' training requirements.

RESOLVED – (a) That the revised Code of Conduct, as attached at Appendix 1 of the submitted report, be adopted with effect from 18th May 2007.

(b) That at least one of the five training sessions which Members attend during this training year cover the provisions of the revised Code of Conduct.

REASONS – (a) The Council are required to adopt the revised Code of Conduct.

(b) All Members will require training on the revised Code of Conduct.

17. REGISTER OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS – The Director of Corporate Services submitted a report (previously circulated) requesting approval to the Register of Members' Interests being placed on the Council's website.

The submitted report outlined the current position, the reasons for openness and accountability in relation to public scrutiny regarding Members' personal interests, the benefits of an electronic register and security concerns. The submitted report also detailed the consultation exercise conducted with all Members and the results thereof.

RESOLVED – (a) That the Register of Members' Interests be included on the Council's website.

(b) That confidential entries be retained on the paper register, held by the Borough Solicitor.

REASONS – (a) To demonstrate transparency in the Council’s arrangements in accordance with the guidance made under the Local Government Act 2000.

(b) To ensure, where necessary, Members are not exposed to any risks as a result of the Members’ Register of Interests.