

HARBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

- Held:** Council Chamber, Council Offices, Adam and Eve Street, Market Harborough, Leicestershire LE16 7AG
- On:** 29 June 2023 commencing at 18:30.
- Present:** Councillors Anderson, Asher, Johnson, Knowles (Chair), Rickman and Whelband
- Officers:** Liz Elliot – Interim Chief Executive, Ella Newman – Democratic Services Officer, Kathryn Parsons – Democratic Services Officer, Clare Pattinson – Interim Director of Law and Governance, Julie Young – Head of Legal Services.

1. INTRODUCTIONS

All Councillors present introduced themselves.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTES

Councillor King provided his apologies and Councillor Whelband substituted.

3. INVESTITURE OF CHAIRMAN AND DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

Councillor Knowles was nominated to be the Chairman of the Constitutional Review Committee by Councillor Asher and seconded by Councillor Anderson. The nomination was **CARRIED** and it was **RESOLVED that Councillor Knowles was appointed Chairman of the Constitutional Review Committee.**

4. DRAFT MINUTES CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW COMMITTEE ON 26 APRIL 2023

The Committee reviewed the minutes of the last meeting and noted that the following inaccuracies should be amended in the draft minutes:

- Councillor Simpson added as present.
- Take out Mrs in front of Johnson for Councillor Johnson.

It was **AGREED** that the minutes would be amended and

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Constitutional Review Committee held on 26 April 2023 be accepted as true and accurate record, subject to the agreed amendments.

5. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

6. UPDATE ON THE REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION

The Interim Director of Governance and Law introduced the report. It was explained that the Committee is responsible for overseeing the maintenance and development of the Council's Constitution. Governance improvement within the Council and the constitution has been a priority for the Council for the last year due to awareness of ambiguity in the current constitution. The formation of a new administration has provided an opportunity to pause and consider the development of governance and constitutional arrangements within the Council.

The Committee was invited to review its current terms of reference and consider what approach to take to the continuation of the review of the Council's constitution.

It was suggested that proposed amendments to the Constitution could be examined in sections, with each proposed section being provided to all Members of the Council to give them an opportunity to comment. There were several ways to do this as set out in the report's recommendations. The time scale would also need to be agreed to get through the required work and it would need to be decided how to communicate and engage with all Members about the changes.

Members were asked to note that the whole document, rather than sections would need to be taken to full Council and a deadline would need to be agreed.

Discussion took place around what was the most interactive, efficient and effective way for Members to ask questions and comment on amendments.

RESOLVED that:

- 1. A task and finish group of 7 members be created to ensure communication and discussion on constitutional changes could occur outside the formality of the Committee;**
- 2. Parts of the constitution would be shared, in turn, with Members and the opportunity to provide feedback via multiple routes given;**
- 3. An action and communication plan would be brought back to the Committee;**
- 4. Work would start on section one of the Constitution and it would be worked through section by section thereafter;**

7. ANY URGENT BUSINESS

There were no matters of urgent business.

The Meeting ended at 19.10