

HARBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

Held at The Council Chamber, The Symington Building, Adam and Eve St,
Market Harborough On Wednesday 16th March 2023, commencing at 6.30pm

Present:

Councillors: Champion, Dann, King (Chairman), Knowles, Modha, and

Officers present: K. Parsons and C. Mason

Officers remote: L. Elliott, S. Hamilton, and B. Burt

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATIONS OF SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Mrs Simpson, there were no substitutions and the Monitoring Officer.

2. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS.

There were none.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Constitutional Review Committee meeting held on 25th January 2023 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

4. CORPORATE HEALTH CHECK

The Chief Executive Officer presented a verbal update, the purpose of which was to set out an initial evaluation of corporate governance within Harborough District Council, which had been undertaken between July 2022 and December 2022. The review was undertaken in order to identify areas of strength, share good practice across the authority and address apparent areas of weakness. The report had been commissioned following receipt of an internal audit report by the Audit and Standard Committee in March 2022, which identified a number of areas to be addressed.

The Constitutional Review Committee has access to a Teams channel where Claire has been posting updates, questionnaires, and documents related to the committee's work. The committee's goal is to rewrite the Constitution, remove any duplications, and make it more accessible. Claire is currently working on rewriting the Constitution in pieces and has provided a document on the Teams channel with notes on what needs to be updated and merged. The committee does not intend to bring one big Constitution to the annual council, but instead plans to hold a further constitutional review committee on April 26th. The goal is to make the Constitution as user-friendly and easy to understand as possible, especially for new members who may join the

Council after the upcoming election. The Constitution is the rule book by which the Council should be abiding. Any questions asked during the meeting will be noted but may not be able to be answered immediately.

Director of Governance Law and Interim Monitoring Officer is using a subset of the Constitution to clarify delegations of decision-making authority for officers and members of the council. They have created a template for officers to record delegated decisions, which is publicly accessible on the council's website under the Constitution section. This has improved transparency and understanding of the delegated decision-making process. The council is still working to improve public transparency and accessibility to information about decisions made.

The Director of Governance law and Interim Monitoring Officer is reviewing the current executive arrangements and proposing delegations to officers and portfolio holders, as well as proposing changes and a proposed time scale for meetings to be included in the annual council plan. She plans to consult with the executive and will bring her proposals to the cabinet for consideration before being reviewed by the wider membership. This is still a work in progress.

The Committee raised questions on the report and discussed the following points:-

- Are we sure that we will have all this work done by the end of April?

The update was noted by the committee.

5. ANY URGENT BUSINESS

There was none.

The Meeting closed at 18:50