

<b>Report to Accountability Board</b>	<b>Forward Plan reference number:</b> N/A
<b>Date of Accountability Board Meeting: 10<sup>th</sup> June 2016</b>	
<b>Title of report: Public Question Policy</b>	
<b>Report by:</b> Kim Mayo, Principal Solicitor and Interim Deputy Monitoring Officer	
<b>Enquiries to :</b> kim.mayo@essex.gov.uk	

## **1. Purpose of report**

- 1.1 To approve the process through which the Accountability Board will receive and consider questions from members of the public on an item on the Agenda for that meeting

## **2. Recommendations**

The Board is asked to:

- 2.1 **Approve** the Policy for Public Questions to the Accountability Board attached at Appendix A

## **3 Background**

- 3.1 The Accountability Board was established on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2015 as a joint committee in accordance with the provisions contained in sections 101 and 102 of the local Government Act 1972, and the Local Authorities (Arrangements for the Discharge of Functions)(England) Regulations 2012.
- 3.2 Accordingly, the Accountability Board is considered a committee of its respective partner authorities, and therefore required to ensure that it adheres to the obligations set out within the full range of Local Authority legislation.
- 3.3 Part of those obligations is to ensure access to members of the public to all meetings of the Accountability Board. This includes access to the agenda and reports (unless Schedule 12A Access to Information: exempt Information, applies), but also allows for members of the public to attend the meetings as an observer, and to put questions to members. This is not a new concept, and is one that all partner authorities adhere to in respect of their own Cabinet, Council and Committee meetings.
- 3.4 A short guidance is necessary in order to ensure that members of the public are aware of the provisions applicable to the Accountability Board meetings and assist the administration of the meetings moving forward. Accordingly Appendix A sets out the process to be followed where a member of the public wishes to ask a question of the Accountability Board in respect of an item on the Agenda, and sets out the process by which a response will be provided.

- 3.5 This policy will be placed on the SELEP website, and on the Accountable Body's website so as to ensure that any member of the public is aware of the process to be followed.

#### **4. Financial Implications**

- 4.1 None.

#### **5 Legal Implications**

- 5.1 None

#### **6 Staffing and other resource implications**

- 6.1 None.

#### **7 Equality and Diversity implications**

- 7.1 None.

#### **8 List of Appendices**

- 8.1 Public Questions Policy

(available at [www.essex.gov.uk](http://www.essex.gov.uk) if not circulated with this report)

#### **9 List of Background Papers**

- 9.1 None

(Any request for any background papers listed here should be made to the person named at the front of the report who will be able to help with any enquiries)

<b>Role</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Accountable Body sign off</b>	
Kim Mayo	02/06/16
On behalf of Margaret Lee	