

## Agenda item 9

# Council Issues

### 1. Dates of forthcoming Council meetings

- 1.1 The dates of the future meetings of Council were agreed at the meeting held in October 2022, to be on Tuesday 12 December 2023 and Tuesday 13 February 2024.
- 1.2 The meetings of the Council are normally held at County Hall in the Council Chamber and commence at 10:00am.
- 1.3 It is necessary to schedule further forthcoming Council meetings. The proposed dates are Tuesday 14 May 2024, Tuesday 9 July 2024, Tuesday 15 October 2024, Tuesday 10 December 2024 and Thursday 13 February 2025.

#### Recommendation:

- 1 That the dates of Council meetings scheduled for Tuesday 12 December 2023 and Tuesday 13 February 2024 remain unchanged.
- 2 That future Council meetings be scheduled on Tuesday 14 May 2024, Tuesday 9 July 2024, Tuesday 15 October 2024, Tuesday 10 December 2024 and Thursday 13 February 2025.

### 2. Review of the Constitution

- 2.1 Although the Council regularly reflects on its constitution and makes changes and improvements to meet its changing needs, a full review has not taken place since 2011/12.
- 2.2 It was felt that it would be useful for a significant review to take place, to make sure that the constitution is the most up to date and reflects current practice and understanding.
- 2.3 During the summer this review of the constitution has been undertaken. The aim has not been to make substantive changes from current practice but to make it clearer, to accord more closely with the law and to avoid the same issue being dealt with in multiple locations in the document using slightly different wording. The proposed replacement document is on the Council's website with the papers for this meeting and has been circulated to all members of the Council with the Council summons.

#### Examples

- 2.6 As an example of the updating, the call in procedure has been moved from one paragraph in the Scrutiny Procedure Rules into a whole new part 18. This will make it easier to find. The call in procedure has been written to make it clearer for everyone to follow and expressly states that the call-in period ends at 5pm on the third working day, which is the process which is how the current rules have been applied since the last review.

### **Change to budget speeches**

- 2.7 It is proposed to change the entitlement to some of the longer speeches at budget council. Previously right to longer speeches was given to the leader of opposition groups moving an amendment and to Cabinet but this right could not be exercised by anyone else if the person with the right was absent or not moving an amendment. Therefore we have proposed a change to the constitution to enable flexibility so that opposition group leaders and cabinet members can nominate someone else to have the longer speech in their place.

### **Protocol on Member/Officer Relations**

- 2.8 This protocol currently forms part 25 of the constitution. It is currently subject of a separate review involving senior officers and members and will be brought back to a future council meeting once the review is complete. Therefore the current protocol at part 25 will remain unchanged pending that review.

### **Recommendation:**

Adopt the revised constitution in the form circulated to members and placed on the Council website with the exception of part 25 (protocol for member and officer relations) which remains unchanged and that the revised constitution takes effect on Wednesday 18 October 2023.

## **3. Change to Pay Policy Statement**

- 3.1 The pay policy statement is approved with the budget in February every year. It is required to contain any policies we have about bonuses and performance related pay for Chief Officers. At present it says:

‘The pay of Chief Officers does not currently include a performance related element. Any change to this would result in a change to the pay policy statement’.

- 3.2 This gives less flexibility for Chief Officers than for other employees where exceptional payments may be awarded for particular work. The pay policy statement means there is currently no possibility of this performance being financially recognised.
- 3.3 It is therefore proposed that we amend the pay policy statement to allow such payments to be made on a one off basis, with all and any payments being approved by the politically balanced Senior Management Employment Committee. This will allow proper scrutiny by elected members to ensure that payments are fair and justified. Councillors would have full control of such payments

### **Recommendation:**

That the Pay Policy Statement for 2023/24 be amended with immediate effect as follows:

Replace:

'The pay of Chief Officers does not currently include a performance related element. Any change to this would result in a change to the pay policy statement'

with:

'The pay of Chief Officers does not routinely include a performance related element, but, exceptionally, one off payments may be authorised by the Senior Management Employment Committee, every such payment being the subject of individual authorisation by the Committee.'