
Review of the Constitution – On-Line Petitions

Report by the Head of Administration

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Members may recall that at their February meeting, the Council considered a Report of the meeting of the Corporate Governance Panel (Minute No. 56 (g) refers) in which the Panel recommended a series of changes to the Constitution to enable on-line petitions to be processed. The use of information and communications technology to promote the work of the Council originally arose from a study undertaken by a Working Group appointed by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Support).
- 1.2 Of the recommendations made by the Working Group, one relating to on-line petitions required changes to be made to the Council Procedure Rules (Standing Orders) contained in Part 4 of the Constitution (Page 164).
- 1.3 Council Procedure Rule 20.2 provides that “any motion to add to, vary or revoke the Council Rules of Procedure will, when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the Council”.
- 1.4 Therefore, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 20.2, the recommendation contained in Item No. 11 of the Report of the meeting of the Corporate Governance Panel, having been moved and seconded was adjourned, without discussion, to this meeting of the Council.
- 1.5 For completeness, the Council at their meeting on 20th February 2008 also endorsed a recommendation of the Cabinet that the constitutional changes necessary to enable the introduction of on-line petitions be approved.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Accordingly, the Council is recommended to approve the following changes to the Council’s Procedure Rules with effect from 14th May 2008 –

that in Part 4 of the Constitution the second and third paragraphs of 10A.4 be deleted to be replaced by:

“A written petition shall contain the name, address and signature of each person who signed it. The name and

address shall be in a legible format. An on-line petition shall contain the name and address of each person who is party to it. A petition shall indicate which one of the signatories is to present the petition.

The petition shall be sent to office of the Chief Executive who shall decide whether the petition concerns a matter on the Agenda for a full Council meeting and if it is not, it will be scheduled for inclusion on the Agenda for the next ordinary full Council meeting. A maximum of three petitions will be presented at any meeting.

If an on-line petition does not have the requisite number of signatories or the organiser is not prepared to present it to the Council, the petition shall be submitted for consideration to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel, subject to the petition containing the names and addresses of at least 10 persons who live or work or own property in the District.”

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Constitution.

Minutes of the Council meeting held on 20th February 2008.

Contact Officer: Christine Deller, Democratic Services Manager
☎ (01480) 388007