

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 20TH OCTOBER, 2009

PRESENT: Councillor A Carter in the Chair

Councillors S Bentley, A Blackburn,
R Brett, E Nash (for P Gruen), J Procter,
N Taggart and K Wakefield

Apologies Councillors J Blake and P Gruen

27 Appeals against refusal of inspection of documents

There were no appeals against refusal of inspection of documents.

28 Exempt Information - possible exclusion of the press and public

There were no resolutions to exclude the public.

29 Late items

There were no late items added to the agenda.

30 Declaration of Interests

No declarations of interest were made either under this item or at any stage during the meeting.

31 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Blake and Gruen. Councillor Nash was in attendance as a substitute Member.

32 Minutes of the Previous Meeting - 1st October 2009

RESOLVED – Members resolved that the minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 1st October 2009 be approved as a correct record.

33 Executive Arrangements

The Principal Corporate Governance Officer presented a report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Corporate Governance) asking the Committee to make recommendations to full Council about changes to its executive arrangements, required by the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, and amendments required to the Constitution as a result of those changes.

Members particularly discussed:

- Transitional arrangements between the commencement of the new arrangements and the annual meeting;
- The appointment of a Deputy Leader, which it was confirmed would be made by the Leader;
- Their concern that under the new arrangements, full Council will not lawfully be able to preclude the Leader from carrying out executive functions him/herself, nor from delegating them to an individual Executive Member;
- Whether the Leader could be removed during their term. It was confirmed that full Council would be able to remove the Leader from office by resolution; and
- The potential impact of the longer term on the current leadership arrangements.

The Chair of the Committee agreed to write to the Secretary of State (in consultation with all group leaders), in order to convey Members' concerns in relation to the new arrangements outlined in bullet point 3 above.

RESOLVED – Members of the General Purposes Committee resolved to:

- (a) Recommend to full Council to resolve to adopt executive arrangements which:
 - (i) provide for the 'new-style' Leader and Cabinet form;
 - (ii) retain the current provision for the Council to remove the Leader by resolution;
 - (iii) retain the current allocation of 'local choice' functions between the Council and the executive; and
 - (iv) come into operation three days after the local elections in 2010;
- (b) In relation to transitional arrangements, recommend to full Council that the Leader in office at the time of the elections should remain in place until the annual meeting in 2010;
- (c) Recommend to full Council to approve the following amendments to the Constitution, with effect from three days after the local elections in 2010:
 - (i) the amendments to Article 7, set out in Appendix 1 to the report; and
 - (ii) the amendments to Council Procedure Rules 1.1 and 2.2, as set out in Appendix 2 to the report;
- (d) Recommend to Council to note:
 - (i) the amendments required to the Executive Procedure Rules, as set out in Appendix 3 to the report, and that the Assistant Chief Executive (Corporate Governance) proposes to use her delegated authority to approve the amendments with effect from three days after the local elections in 2010;
 - (ii) that the Assistant Chief Executive (Corporate Governance) under her delegated authority and in consultation with the Executive Member (Central and Corporate), proposes to approve any other necessary consequential amendments to the Constitution to give effect to the new executive arrangements, with effect from three days after the local elections in 2010; and

- (iii) that the Assistant Chief Executive (Corporate Governance) will publicise the new executive arrangements, in accordance with statutory requirements; and
- (e) Ask the Chair of the Committee to write to the Secretary of State to convey Members' concerns that under the new arrangements, full Council will not lawfully be able to preclude the Leader from carrying out executive functions him/herself, nor from delegating them to an individual Executive Member.