



Babergh District Council The Constitution

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Contents

[Summary and Explanation](#)

[Part 1: The Articles](#)

[Part 2: Responsibility of Functions](#)

[Part 3: Rules of Procedure](#)

[Part 4: Codes and Protocols](#)

SUMMARY AND EXPLANATION

Contents

<u>The Council's Constitution</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>What's In The Constitution?</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>How The Council Operates</u>	<u>5-6</u>
<u>How Other Decisions Are Made.....</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>Scrutiny</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>The Council's Staff</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>Citizens' Rights.....</u>	<u>7-8</u>

The Council's Constitution

The District Council has agreed a Constitution which sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people. Some of these processes are required by law, while others are a matter for the Council to choose.

The Constitution is divided into 4 Parts. Part 1 sets out the 15 Articles which form the basic rules governing the Council's business. Part 2 describes the various responsibilities for different functions and how decisions can be made under delegated authority. Part 3 sets out in detail the Council's procedure rules. Part 4 outlines the Codes of Conduct for Councillors and Officers.

The Constitution also contains links to other associated documents which sit outside of the Constitution but support how the Council operates.

1. WHAT'S IN THE CONSTITUTION?

[Article 1](#) of the Constitution commits the Council to provide a clear and accountable way of making decisions. Articles 2-15 explain the rights of citizens and how the key parts of the Council operate. These are:

[Article 2](#): Members of the Council (Councillors)

[Article 3](#): Citizens and the Council

[Article 4](#): The Full Council

[Article 5](#): Chairing the Council

[Article 6](#): Overview & Scrutiny Committee

[Article 7](#): The Cabinet

[Article 8](#): Regulatory Committees

[Article 9](#): The Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Standards Committee

[Article 10](#): Joint Arrangements

[Article 11](#): Officers

[Article 12](#): Decision Making

[Article 13](#): Finance, Contracts and Legal Matters

[Article 14](#): Review and Revision of the Constitution

[Article 15](#): Suspension interpretation and Publication of the Constitution

2. HOW THE COUNCIL OPERATES

The Council is currently composed of 43 Councillors elected every four years. Councillors are democratically accountable to residents of their Ward. The overriding duty of Councillors is to the whole community but they have a special duty to their Constituents including those who did not vote for them.

Councillors have agreed to follow a [Code of Conduct](#) to ensure high standards in the way they undertake their duties.

From May 2017 the Council has adopted the 'Leader and Cabinet' model of governance and decision making.

The Cabinet

The Cabinet makes most of the decisions about how the Council carries out its day to day business within the major policy framework and budget approved by the Council.

The Leader is elected every four years by a vote of all councillors and he or she appoints between two and nine other councillors, one of whom will also be the Deputy Leader, to sit on the Cabinet. These Cabinet members may be responsible for particular areas (known as portfolios) of the Council's work.

The Cabinet publishes a Forthcoming Decisions Plan that shows the 'key decisions' the Cabinet is going to take which will affect local communities or involve expenditure or savings over a certain level. The Forthcoming Decisions Plan also shows what decisions are intended to be taken in private and why. There is more detail of how the Cabinet works in Cabinet Procedure Rules in Part 2, Section 3 and the Access to Information Rules in Part 3

The Cabinet may also delegate its functions to officers or to any sub-committees established by it.

Formal Meetings of the Cabinet are open to the public except when exempt or confidential information is being discussed

Full Council

All Councillors meet together as the Full Council to take certain types of decision. These mainly concern the overarching policies of the Council and its budget. Council will also meet to consider other regulatory functions (e.g. Planning and Licensing) that only the Council are legally permitted to deal with.

The Council will determine the remit of the Committees of the Council, appoint Councillors to those Committees; and approve any discharge of Council functions by its staff.

Meetings of the Council are normally open to the public and are subject to [Procedure Rules](#) set out in part 3 of the Constitution.

Joint Working between Babergh and Mid Suffolk

Babergh District Council and Mid Suffolk District Council have decided that they will co-operate in order to provide services to their respective residents in the most cost effective way possible and have entered in to joint arrangements under the provisions of s101 of the Local Government Act 1972. The two Councils will work together side by side with fully integrated staff and some decisions are taken by joint committees in line with the procedures set out in this Constitution.

DRAFT

3. HOW OTHER DECISIONS ARE MADE

Regulatory Committees exercise a number of functions including making decisions on planning applications, licensing and most other regulatory business on behalf of the Council. These types of decision cannot be taken by the Cabinet but they can be delegated to officers.

Other advisory boards, groups or panels may be established and are able to make recommendations to these Committees or to the Cabinet but they cannot make decisions.

4. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee supports the development of policies and monitors the decision making of the Cabinet. It can “call in” a decision which has been made but not yet implemented, enabling further consideration of whether the decision is appropriate and has been taken based on all the relevant information.

Scrutiny also enables citizens to have a greater say in Council matters by holding public inquiries into matters of local concern. These can lead to reports and recommendations which advise the Cabinet and the Council on its policies, budget and service delivery.

Where any matter relates to both Babergh and Mid Suffolk, a Joint Scrutiny Committee may come together to consider the issues on behalf of both Councils.

5. THE COUNCIL'S STAFF

The Council has people working for it (called “officers” or “staff”) either as direct employees of the Council or available to it under the joint arrangements between Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils, made under s101 and 113 of the Local Government act 1972. Officers are responsible for the discharge of the Council's functions, to give advice, implement decisions and manage the day-to-day delivery of its services.

All officers are politically neutral in their work and do not vote on decisions made by the Council, Cabinet or any committees. Certain officers may, however, take decisions in their own right under delegated powers given to them by the Council or the Cabinet. A code of practice governs the relationships between officers and Councillors.

6. CITIZENS' RIGHTS

Citizens have a number of rights in their dealings with the Council; these are set out in more detail in [Article 3](#). Some of these are legal rights whilst others depend on the

Council's own processes. The local Citizen's Advice Bureau can advise on an individual's legal rights.

Where members of the public use specific Council services, for example as a Council tenant, they have additional rights. These are not covered in this Constitution.

Citizens have the right to:

- Vote at local elections if on the electoral roll.
- Have access to information in accordance with the law.
- Obtain a copy of the Constitution.
- Attend meetings of the Council, Cabinet and Committees except where confidential or exempt information is being considered.
- Have access to certain documents relating to matters on the Forthcoming Decisions Plan as well as reports and minutes of the Council, Cabinet or Committee meetings.
- Participate in questions by the public at Council and Cabinet meetings and contribute to investigations by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
- Complain to the Council in accordance with the [Complaints procedure](#).
- Complain to the Local Government Ombudsman if they think the Council has not followed its procedures properly. However, they should only do this after exhausting the Council's own complaint process.
- Complain to the Council's Monitoring Officer if they have evidence which they think shows that a Councillor has not followed the Council's Code of Conduct.
- Inspect the Council's accounts and make their views known to the external auditor.
- Citizens on the electoral roll for the area have the right to sign and submit petitions to the Council, in accordance with the Petitions Scheme.

PART 1

Articles of the Constitution

CONTENTS

ARTICLE 1 – THE CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE 2 – MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

ARTICLE 3 – CITIZENS AND THE COUNCIL.....

ARTICLE 4 – THE FULL COUNCIL.....

ARTICLE 5 – CHAIRING THE COUNCIL

ARTICLE 6 – THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY AND JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

ARTICLE 7 – THE CABINET

ARTICLE 8 - REGULATORY COMMITTEES.....

ARTICLE 9 - THE BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK JOINT STANDARDS
COMMITTEE.....

ARTICLE 10 - JOINT ARRANGEMENTS.....

ARTICLE 11 - OFFICERS.....

ARTICLE 12 - DECISION MAKING

ARTICLE 13 – FINANCE, CONTRACTS AND LEGAL MATTERS.....

ARTICLE 14 – REVIEW AND REVISION OF THE CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE 15 - SUSPENSION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE CONSTITUTION.....

ARTICLE 1 – THE CONSTITUTION

Powers of the Council

1.1 The Council will exercise all its powers and duties in accordance with the law and this Constitution.

The Constitution

1.2 This is the Constitution, and all its appendices, of Babergh District Council.

Purpose of the Constitution

1.3 The purpose of the Constitution is to:

- (a) enable the Council to provide clear leadership to the community in partnership with citizens, businesses and other organisations;
- (b) support the active involvement of citizens in the process of local authority decision-making;
- (c) help Councillors represent their constituents effectively;
- (d) enable decisions to be taken efficiently and effectively;
- (e) create a powerful and effective means of holding decision-makers to public account;
- (f) ensure that no one will review or scrutinise a decision in which they were directly involved;
- (g) ensure that those responsible for decision making are clearly identifiable to local people and that they explain the reasons for decisions; and
- (h) provide a means of improving the delivery of services to the community.

Interpretation and Review of the Constitution

1.4 Where the Constitution permits the Council to choose between different courses of action, the Council will always choose that option which it considers to be closest to the purposes stated above.

1.5 The Procedural Rules provide mechanisms for interpreting and operating the Constitution.

1.6 In the Constitution the words 'Cabinet' and 'Executive' may be used interchangeably.

- 1.7 The Council will monitor and evaluate the operation of the Constitution as set out in [Article 14](#).

DRAFT

ARTICLE 2 – MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Composition

- 2.1 The Council will comprise 43 Councillors. One or more Councillors will be elected by the voters of each ward in accordance with a scheme drawn up by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England and approved by the Secretary of State.

Election and Terms of Councillors

- 2.2 **Election and term.** The regular election of councillors will be held on the first Thursday in May every four years. The terms of office of councillors will start on the fourth day after being elected and will finish on the fourth day after the date of the next regular election with the exception of the Leader who will hold office in accordance with the statutory provisions until the next scheduled elections. Provisions for the resignation or removal of the Leader at other times are set out in Article 4.

Roles and functions of all Councillors

2.3

(a) **Key roles.**

All Councillors will:

- (i) collectively be the ultimate policy-makers and carry out a number of strategic and corporate management functions;
- (ii) contribute to the good governance of the area and actively encourage community participation and citizen involvement in decision making;
- (iii) effectively represent the interests of their ward and of individual constituents;
- (iv) respond to constituents' enquiries and representations, fairly and impartially;
- (v) participate in the governance and management of the Council; and
- (vi) maintain the highest standards of conduct and ethics.

(b) **Rights and duties.**

- (i) Councillors will have such rights of access to such documents, information, land and buildings of the Council as are necessary for the proper discharge of their functions and in accordance with the law.
- (ii) Councillors will not make public information which is confidential or exempt without the consent of the Council or divulge information given in confidence to anyone other than a Councillor or staff entitled to know it.
- (iii) For these purposes, "confidential" and "exempt" information are defined in the Access to Information Rules in [Part 3](#) of this Constitution.

Conduct

- 2.4 Councillors will at all times observe the Members' Code of Conduct and the Protocol on Member/Officer Relations which are set out in [Part 4](#) of this Constitution.

Allowances

- 2.5 Councillors will be entitled to receive allowances in accordance with the [Members' Allowances Scheme](#) which is available on the Council's website.

DRAFT

ARTICLE 3 – CITIZENS AND THE COUNCIL

Citizens' rights

- 3.1 Citizens have the following rights. Their rights to information and to participate are explained in more detail in the Access to Information Rules in Part 3 of this Constitution:
- (a) **Voting and [Petitions](#).** Citizens on the electoral roll for the area have the right to vote and sign a petition to request a referendum for a governance model of an elected mayor.
 - (b) **Information.** Citizens have the right to:
 - (i) attend meetings of the Council and its Committees except where confidential or exempt information is likely to be disclosed, and the meeting is therefore held in private;
 - (ii) see reports and background papers, and any records of decisions made by the Council and the Cabinet; and
 - (iii) inspect the Council's accounts and make their views known to the external auditor.
 - (c) **Participation.** Citizens have the right to participate in the Council's question time and contribute to investigations by Scrutiny Committees. (Link to [Public Participation](#) at Council Meetings)
 - (d) **Complaints.** Citizens have the right to complain to:
 - (i) the Council under its complaints scheme;
 - (ii) the Ombudsman after exhausting the Council's own complaints scheme;

Citizens' responsibilities

- 3.2 Citizens must not be violent, abusive or threatening to Councillors or staff and must not wilfully harm things owned by the Council, Councillors or staff.

ARTICLE 4 – THE FULL COUNCIL

4.1 The Full Council (the meeting to which all Councillors are summonsed) is responsible for approving the budget and policy framework, and any other matters which only Full Council can decide. This article defines those functions that are reserved for decision by Full Council, which are as follows:

- (a) Adopting or amending the Constitution;
- (b) Approving or amending the policy framework as set out below;
- (c) Electing the Leader of the Council;
- (d) Receiving any resignation by the Leader of the Council;
- (e) Removal of the Leader of the Council;
- (f) Adopting the Members Allowance Scheme;
- (g) Appointing to outside bodies unless the main purpose of the body relates to executive functions or where the Council has delegated the power to appoint to an officer;
- (h) Approving the terms of reference of its committees (but not any Cabinet committees);
- (i) Determining the political balance of the Council and the allocation of seats on its committees;
- (j) Changing the name of its area;
- (k) Making, amending or revoking bylaws or opposing the making of local legislation or personal bills;
- (l) Approving the appointment or dismissal of the Statutory Officers;
- (m) All local choice functions set out in Part 2 of this Constitution.

4.2 Policy Framework

- (a) The policy framework includes the following plans and strategies:-
 - (i) The Joint Strategic Plan;
 - (ii) The Local Plan;
 - (iii) Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy;
 - (iv) Enforcement Policy;
 - (v) Asset & Investment Strategy
 - (vi) Statement of Licensing Policy under Licensing Act 2003;
 - (vii) Statement of Principles under Gambling Act 2005;
 - (viii) Health and Wellbeing Strategy;
 - (ix) Pay Policy Statement.
- (b) Those other plans and strategies which the Council has determined should be adopted by the Council as part of the policy framework.

4.3 Budget

Full Council is responsible for determining and setting the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and Annual Budget.

4.4 Housing Land Transfer

Housing Land Transfer means the approval or adoption of applications (whether

in draft form or not) to the Secretary of State for approval of a programme of disposal of 500 or more properties to a person under the Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993 or to dispose of land used for residential purposes where approval is required under sections 32 or 43 of the Housing Act 1985 and others required by law.

4.5 **Functions of the Council**

The remit of the Council is based on the division of functions as contained in the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) England Regulations 2000 (as amended). Reference to any Statutes referred to in this article shall include any amendment or re-enactment of the Statute. Full details of the Council's Functions are to be found in [Part 2](#) of the Constitution

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ARTICLE 5 – CHAIRING THE COUNCIL

Role and Function of the Chairman

- 5.1 The Chairman and Vice-Chairman will be elected by the Council annually but neither shall be a member of the Cabinet. The Chairman will have the following roles and responsibilities:
- (a) the Chairman of the Council will be impartial and not act in a party political way when carrying out that role particularly when exercising a casting vote in the event of deadlock at a Council meeting;
 - (b) to uphold and promote the purposes of the Constitution, and to interpret the Constitution when necessary;
 - (c) to preside over meetings of the Council so that its business can be carried out efficiently and with regard to the rights of Councillors and the interests of the community;
 - (d) to ensure that the Council meeting is a forum for the debate of matters of concern to the local community;
 - (e) to promote public involvement in the Council's activities;
 - (f) to be the conscience of the Council;
 - (g) to attend such civic and ceremonial functions as the Council and he/she determines appropriate; and

ARTICLE 6 – The CABINET

Role

- 6.1 The Leader and Cabinet will carry out all of the Council's executive functions and those which are not the responsibility of any other part of the Council, whether by law or under this constitution.

Form and Composition

- 6.2.1 The Cabinet will be chaired by the Leader. It will comprise the Leader and no fewer than two and up to nine other Councillors appointed to the Cabinet by the Leader, one of whom shall be designated Deputy Leader.
- 6.2.2 The Leader may assign specific responsibilities to one or more members of their Cabinet. Where they do so these Cabinet Members will be known as Portfolio Holders.
- 6.2.3 Only Councillors shall be appointed to the Cabinet. There shall be no co-optees, no deputies and no substitutes for Cabinet members.
- 6.2.4 The Leader and Cabinet Members must not be members of any Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
- 6.2.5 The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council must not be members of the Cabinet.

The Leader

- 6.3.1 The Leader will be a Councillor elected to the position by the Council at its first annual meeting following the district's local government elections. The Leader will hold office until
- a) The next post-election annual meeting of the Council; or
 - b) He/she resigns from the office of Leader; or
 - c) He/she is removed from office by ordinary resolution on notice of the Council; or
 - d) He/she is no longer a councillor.
- 6.3.2 When a vacancy arises in the office of the Leader, the Council shall fill the vacancy at the next ordinary meeting of the Council, or at a special or extraordinary meeting summoned for the purpose; or, if the vacancy occurs as a result of the removal of the Leader by resolution of the Council, at the meeting at which that resolution was passed or a subsequent meeting. The Councillor appointed to fill the vacancy shall hold office for the remainder of the original term, subject to the rules on earlier termination in 6.3.1 above.
- 6.3.3 The Leader shall appoint another member of the Cabinet as Deputy Leader to act when the Leader is unable to act or the office of Leader is vacant. The Leader may, if he or she thinks fit, remove the Deputy Leader from office. Where there is

a vacancy in the office of Deputy Leader, the Leader must appoint another person to be Deputy Leader. Unless he or she is removed by the Leader, resigns as Deputy Leader or ceases to be a member of the Council, the Deputy Leader shall hold office until the end of the Leader's term of office.

6.3.4 The Leader remains a member of the Council during his or her term of office as Leader and any enactment that provides for him or her to retire earlier as a councillor does not apply.

Other Cabinet Members and Portfolio Holders

6.4.1 The Leader will usually announce the Cabinet Members, Portfolio Holders and the general scope of each portfolio at the annual meeting of the Council. Re-appointments, appointments and the removal of Portfolio Holders announced in this way will take immediate effect. If the announcement is not made at the annual meeting, the Leader will give written notice to the Monitoring Officer of the Portfolio Holders as soon as practicable after the annual meeting and the re-appointments, appointments and removals made in this way will take effect two working days after receipt of the notice by the Monitoring Officer.

6.4.2 The Leader may also appoint (or reshuffle) Portfolio Holders to fill any vacancy or increase the size of the Cabinet (up to the maximum number set out in 6.2.1 above) by giving written notice to the Monitoring Officer. These appointments shall take effect two working days after receipt of the notice by the Monitoring Officer. The Leader may also change the scope of any portfolio by giving notice to the Monitoring Officer and to the portfolio holders affected by any changes.

6.4.3 Portfolio Holders shall hold office until:-

- a) they resign from office; or
- b) they are no longer Councillors; or
- c) they are removed by means of the Leader's notification at or as soon as practicable after the next annual meeting; or
- d) they are removed from office by the Leader giving written notice of the removal to the Monitoring Officer. The removal will take effect two working days after receipt of the notice by the Monitoring Officer.

6.4.4 The Leader may delegate executive powers directly to an individual Portfolio Holder rather than such decisions being made by Cabinet. Any granting or removal of such delegated authority to a Portfolio Holder will only take effect once written notice has been provided to the Monitoring Officer.

6.4.5 If for any reason the Leader is unable to act or the office of Leader is vacant, and the Deputy Leader is unable to act or the office of Deputy Leader is vacant, the Cabinet must act in the Leader's place or must arrange for a Cabinet Member to act in his/her place.

Functions of the Cabinet

6.5.1 The Cabinet has the following functions:-

- a) to make 'key decisions' as defined in [Article 12.7](#) and published in the Forthcoming Decisions Plan;
- b) to formulate the budget and policy framework for submission to Council in accordance with the budget and policy framework procedure rules in Part 4 of the constitution;
- c) to implement the approved budget and policy framework;
- d) to determine recommendations and other matters referred to it by committees, sub-committees or Council;
- e) to carry out all of the functions which by law the Cabinet must carry out or has chosen to carry out and which have not been delegated elsewhere.

6.5.2 The Cabinet may carry out its functions:-

- a) itself;
- b) by delegating power to an officer, who shall exercise that power in accordance with the scheme of delegation to officers contained in [Part 2](#) of the constitution;
- c) by delegating power to a joint committee or another local authority.

Meetings of the Cabinet

6.6 The Cabinet will hold public meetings as frequently as is required for the effective discharge of its functions on dates and at times agreed by the Leader. Meetings will be conducted in accordance with the Cabinet Procedure Rules set out in [Part 4](#) of the constitution.

ARTICLE 7 – OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Introduction

- 7.1.1 Effective overview and scrutiny is essential to enhance the accountability and transparency of the decision-making process. The Council has appointed its own Overview & Scrutiny Committee to discharge the functions conferred by section 9F of the Local Government Act 2000 and any regulations made thereunder.
- 7.1.2 In accordance with section 9FA of the above Act they may appoint one or more sub-committees to carry out any of their functions. They will seek to improve the delivery of policies and services by:
- (a) holding the Cabinet to account for its actions;
 - (b) advising on the development and implementation of new policy and corporate projects;
 - (c) testing whether existing policies and practices are effective and efficient and suggesting how they might be improved; and
 - (d) ensuring the rigour and objectivity of performance management and service reviews;
 - (e) overseeing the performance of services by considering a range of information such as performance indicators, inspection reports and action plan monitoring.

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee

- 7.2.1 The Council will appoint an Overview & Scrutiny Committee of up to 8 members, or as many as Council determines from time to time, and it will be politically balanced. No member of the Cabinet may be a member of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
- 7.7.2 The Council has also agreed to periodically meet as a Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Scrutiny Committee in order to scrutinise matters which affect both councils.
- 7.2.3 The Terms of Reference, Procedural Rules and Call-In provisions of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee are set out in [Part 2](#) of this Constitution.

ARTICLE 8 – COMMITTEES

Regulatory and other Committees

- 8.1 The Council will appoint Committees set out in [Part 2](#) of this Constitution to discharge the functions described in their Terms of Reference.
- 8.2 The Council has Regulatory Committees which deal with Planning related and Licensing related matters. These are quasi-judicial functions.

The Council has other committees to discharge its functions. The Constitution in [Part 2](#) describes these functions and the Terms of Reference of these Committees.

ARTICLE 9 – THE BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK JOINT STANDARDS COMMITTEES

- 9.1 In accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 the Council has adopted a Code of Conduct for Members together with arrangements for dealing with any complaint of a breach of the Code including the appointment of an Independent Person.
- 9.2 The Code of Conduct for Members is set out in [Part 4](#) of this Constitution.
- 9.3 Babergh, Mid Suffolk and Suffolk County Council have agreed to establish a Committee known as the Suffolk Joint Standards Board.
- 9.4 The Membership and Terms of Reference are set out in [Part 2](#) of this Constitution.

ARTICLE 10 - JOINT ARRANGEMENTS and WORKING GROUPS

Arrangements to promote well-being

- 10.1 The Council, in order to promote the economic, social or environmental well-being of its area, may:
- (a) enter into arrangements or agreements with any person or body;
 - (b) co-operate with, or facilitate or co-ordinate the activities of, any person or body; and
 - (c) exercise on behalf of that person or body any functions of that person or body.

Subject in all cases to compliance with any relevant statutory provisions.

Joint arrangements

- 10.2.1 The Council may establish or continue to operate joint arrangements with one or more Local Authorities and/or their executives to exercise functions in any of the participating authorities, or advise the Council. Such arrangements may involve the appointment of a joint Committee with these other Local Authorities.
- 10.2.2 The Cabinet may establish joint arrangements with one or more local authorities to exercise functions which are executive functions. Such arrangements may involve the appointment of joint committees with such other local authorities.
- 10.2.3 Except as set out in 10.2.4 below, the Cabinet may only appoint Cabinet Members to a joint committee and those Members need not reflect the political balance of the Council as a whole.
- 10.2.4 The Cabinet may appoint Members to a joint committee from outside the Cabinet in any of the following cases:-
- a) Where the joint committee has functions for only part of the area of the Council, and that area is smaller than two-fifths of the Council by area or population. In such cases, the Cabinet may appoint to the joint committee any Councillor who is a Member for a Ward which is wholly or partly contained within that part of the area of the Council;
 - b) The joint committee is discharging a function in relation to five or more authorities;
 - c) The function which the joint committee is discharging is one which is required by statute to be discharged by a joint committee;
 - d) The political balance requirements do not apply to such appointments.

10.2.5 Details of any joint arrangements including any delegations to joint Committees will be found in the Council's scheme of delegations in [Part 2](#) of this Constitution.

Access to information

10.3.1 The Access to Information Rules in [Part 3](#) of this Constitution apply.

10.3.2 If all the members of a joint committee are members of the Cabinet in each of the participating authorities then the Access to Information regime of the joint committee will be the same as that applied to executives.

10.3.3 If the joint committee contains members who are not on the Cabinet in any participating authority then the Access to Information Rules in Part VA of the Local Government Act 1972 shall apply.

Delegation to and from other local authorities

10.4.1 The Council may delegate non-executive functions to another local authority or in certain circumstance to the executive of another authority.

10.4.2 The Cabinet may delegate executive functions to another local authority or the executive of another local authority in certain circumstances.

10.4.3 The decision whether or not to accept such a delegation from another Local Authority shall be reserved to the full Council.

Contracting out

10.5 The Council (in respect of functions which are not the responsibility of the Cabinet) and the Cabinet (in respect of executive functions) may contract out to another body or organisation functions which may be exercised by an officer and which are subject to an order under section 70 of the Deregulation and Contracting Out Act 1994, or under contracting arrangements where the contractor acts as the Council's agent under usual contracting principles, provided there is no delegation of the Council's discretionary decision making.

ARTICLE 11 - OFFICERS

Management Structure

- (a) **General.** The Council may engage such staff (referred to as officers) as it considers necessary to carry out its functions.
- (b) **Chief Officers.** The Council will engage persons for the following posts, who will be designated as statutory chief officers and will have the functions described in [Part 2](#).
- (i) *Head of Paid Service*
 - (ii) *Monitoring Officer*
 - (iii) *Chief Finance Officer*

Such appointments will be undertaken on behalf of the Council

Proper Officers

11.1 The Council will appoint "proper officers" as required by legislation. [Part 2](#) of the Council's Constitution contains a list of the Proper Officers appointed.

Management Scheme of Officer Delegation

11.2 The Council's Monitoring Officer will keep an appropriate up to date Management Scheme of Officer Delegation including keeping copies of authorisations granted to all other officers who have been authorised to act under another officer's delegated powers.

11.3 Any officer referred to by his/her title/post throughout this Constitution will automatically succeed his/her successor in title/post.

Pay Policy Statement

11.4 The Council is required by the Localism Act 2011 to annually approve and publish a pay policy statement that sets out:

- (a) the remuneration of its chief officers
- (b) the remuneration of its lowest paid employees, and
- (c) the relationship between –
 - (i) the remuneration of its chief officers and
 - (ii) the remuneration of its employers who are not chief officers.

Article 12 - PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

12.1 All decisions of the Authority, including the Council, its Committees, the Cabinet and those operating under delegated powers shall have regard to the following principles of good practice:

- (a) consideration of options, where relevant;
- (b) having regard to due consultation;
- (c) consideration of professional advice from officers;
- (d) clarity of aims and desired outcomes;
- (e) the action proposed being proportionate to the desired outcome;
- (f) having respect and regard for human rights;
- (g) presumption of openness;
- (h) only relevant matters taken into account;
- (i) due weight to all material considerations; and
- (j) proper procedures being followed;
- (k) the law.

Responsibility for decision-making

12.2.1 The separation of powers between the Council and the Cabinet is fundamental to the operation of Executive arrangements.

12.2.2 Government regulations set out the decisions which the Council must make itself or that it can delegate to Committees or Officers. Any other decisions are for the Cabinet to take. These arrangements shall be reflected in the arrangements set out in [Part 2](#) of this Constitution.

Delegation

12.3.1 Unless the Council specifically allocates that function to the Cabinet as a whole:

- (a) the Leader or the Cabinet can delegate any Executive Functions to a Cabinet Committee, a Cabinet Portfolio Holder or to an officer;
- (b) a Cabinet Committee may delegate to an officer;
- (c) a Cabinet member may delegate to an officer.

12.3.2 The Council may delegate many, but not all, of its functions to a Committee, Sub-Committee or an Officer. Unless there is any legal provision to the contrary, a Committee may delegate to a Sub-Committee or an Officer and a Sub-Committee may delegate to an Officer.

12.3.3 Where functions have been delegated:

- (a) this shall not prevent the body or person making the delegation from exercising that function; nor

- (b) prevent the person or body authorised to exercise that function from referring it to the delegator or other person or body with the required authority for a decision.

Natural justice/human rights etc

12.4 Any decision maker acting as a tribunal or in a quasi-judicial manner or determining/considering (other than for the purposes of giving advice) the civil rights and obligations or the criminal responsibility of any person, will follow a proper procedure which accords with the requirements of natural justice and the right to a fair trial contained in Article 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

RECORDS OF DECISIONS

Minutes

12.5 As soon as is reasonably practicable after a meeting, whether held in public or private, the Proper Officer shall ensure that a written record is produced in respect of every decision made at that meeting.

Form of minutes

- 12.6
- (a) The name of each Councillor present shall be recorded in the minutes.
 - (b) Decisions taken at a meeting may, unless there is exceptional urgency, only be taken on the basis of a written report, setting out key legal, financial, service and corporate implications.
 - (c) Minutes of meetings shall comprise:
 - (i) a record of any conflict of interest declared by any member of the decision-making body which made the decision;
 - (ii) a note of any relevant dispensation granted by the Audit & Standards Committee;
 - (iii) a record of a Councillor's vote where so requested under the Procedure Rules;
 - (iv) the decisions taken, either in full or by reference to a full recommendation in another document;
 - (v) a reference to the report or other documentation upon which the decisions of the meeting were taken;
 - (vi) a record of any advice or information which is relevant to the decision taken;
 - (vii) in the case of an Overview & Scrutiny Committee, a summary of such evidence presented to it as is necessary for the effective undertaking of the Committee's work;
 - (viii) any other matter required under this Constitution to be included.

TYPES OF DECISION

Officer Decisions

12.7 Officer decisions taken under the scheme of officer delegations shall be recorded in accordance with the provisions in [Part 2](#) of the Constitution.

Decisions reserved to full Council.

12.8 A list of the Council (that is, non-Executive) functions is set out in [Part 2](#) of the Constitution. The functions reserved to Council can be delegated to Council Committees or to officers but they cannot be delegated to the Cabinet

Key Decisions

12.7.1 A 'key decision' is an Executive decision which is likely to:

- (a) result in the Council spending, or saving a significant amount compared with the Budget for the service or function the decision relates to; or
- (b) have a 'significant' effect on communities living or working in an area made up of two or more wards.

12.7.2 When assessing whether or not a decision is a key decision Councillors must consider all the circumstances of the case. However, a decision which results in a significant amount spent or saved will generally be considered to be a key decision if:

- (a) the amount spent is £150,000 or more of revenue or capital expenditure;
- (b) savings of £150,000 or more per annum;
- (c) where a decision makes a commitment for spending over a period of time, it is the total commitment that must be considered to see if it is a key decision.

12.7.3 A key decision which is considered to have a 'significant' effect on communities should usually be of a strategic rather than operational nature and have an outcome which will have an effect upon a significant number of people living or working in the area and impact upon:

- (a) the amenity of the community or;
- (b) quality of service provided by the Council.

Decision making by full Council

12.8 The Council will follow the Council's Procedure Rules set out in [Part 3](#), Section 3 of this Constitution when considering any decision.

Decision making by the Cabinet

12.9 The Executive will follow the Cabinet Procedure Rules set out in [Part 3](#), Section 3 of this Constitution when considering any decision.

Decision making by other committees and sub-committees

12.10 Committees and sub committees will follow those parts of the Council procedures rules set out in [Part 3](#), Section 3 as applicable to them

ARTICLE 13 – FINANCE, CONTRACTS AND LEGAL MATTERS

Financial management

13.1 The management of the Council's financial affairs will be conducted in accordance with the financial rules set out in [Part 3](#) of this Constitution.

Contracts

13.2 Every contract made by the Council will comply with Contract Standing Orders set out in [Part 3](#) of this Constitution.

Legal proceedings

13.3 The Assistant Director Law and Governance is authorised to institute, defend or participate in any legal proceedings in any case (and to appoint anyone qualified to act in legal proceedings or to instruct counsel) where such action is necessary to give effect to decisions of the Council or in any case where the Assistant Director of Law and Governance considers that such action is necessary to protect the Council's interests.

Authentication of documents

13.4 Where any document is necessary to any legal procedure or proceedings on behalf of the Council, it will be signed by the Assistant Director of Law and Governance or other person authorised by him/her, unless any enactment otherwise authorises or requires, or the Council has given requisite authority to some other person.

Common Seal of the Council

13.5 The Common Seal of the Council will be kept in a safe place in the custody of the Monitoring Officer. A decision of the Council, or of any part of it, will be sufficient authority for sealing any document necessary to give effect to the decision. The Common Seal will be affixed to those documents which in the opinion of the Assistant Director Law and Governance should be sealed. The affixing of the Common Seal will be attested by the Assistant Director Law and Governance or some other person authorised by him/her. A record of every sealing must be made and consecutively numbered in a register maintained by the Assistant Director Law and Governance or some other person authorised by him/her.

ARTICLE 14 – REVIEW AND REVISION OF THE CONSTITUTION

Duty to Monitor and Review the Constitution

- 14.1 The Monitoring Officer will monitor and review the operation of the Constitution to ensure that the aims and principles of the Constitution are given full effect and to bring forward any recommendations that are necessary.
- 14.2 The Chief Finance Officer shall be responsible for keeping under review the Financial Regulations set out in the Constitution and shall make any necessary amendments and revisions as are required from time to time. If revisions are made they should be reported to Council for approval.

Changes to the Constitution

- 14.3 Changes to the Constitution shall only be approved at a meeting of the Council after consideration of the proposal by the Monitoring Officer unless in the reasonable opinion of the Monitoring Officer a change is:
- (a) a legislative requirement
 - (b) a minor variation which is of a non-substantive nature.
 - (c) required to be made to remove any inconsistency or ambiguity; or
 - (d) required to be made so as to put into effect any decision of the Council or its Committees or to implement any decision of the Leader in relation to the delegation of executive functions to any officers,
- in which case the Monitoring Officer may make such a change and publicise such changes on the council's website.
- 14.4 Any such change made by the Monitoring Officer shall come into force with immediate effect but shall be referred to full Council as soon as is reasonably possible and shall continue to have effect only if full Council agree.
- 14.5 Other changes to the Constitution shall come into effect at such a date as the Council may stipulate.
- 14.6 The Council should review the Constitution at least annually

ARTICLE 15 – SUSPENSION OF THE CONSTITUTION, INTERPRETATION AND PUBLICATION

Suspension of the Constitution

15.1 (a) **Limit to suspension.** The Articles of this Constitution may not be suspended. The Rules specified below may be suspended by the full Council to the extent permitted within those Rules and the law.

(b) **Procedure to suspend.** A motion to suspend any rules will not be moved without notice unless at least one half of the whole number of councillors are present. The extent and duration of suspension will be proportionate to the result to be achieved, taking account of the purposes of the Constitution set out in Article 1.

Interpretation

15.2 The ruling of the chairman of council as to the construction or application of this Constitution or as to any proceedings of the Council shall not be challenged at any meeting of the Council. Such interpretation will have regard to the purposes of this Constitution contained in Article 1.

Publication

15.3 (a) The Monitoring Officer will give details of the website address for this Constitution to each member of the authority upon delivery to him/her of that individual's declaration of acceptance of office on the member first being elected to the Council and will provide a hard copy if so request by the elected member.

(b) The Monitoring Officer will ensure that copies are available for inspection at council offices, libraries and other appropriate locations, and can be purchased by members of the local press and the public on payment of a reasonable fee.

(c) The Monitoring Officer will ensure that the summary of the Constitution is made widely available within the area and is updated as necessary.

PART 2

Responsibility of Functions

Contents

<u>POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE COUNCIL AND ITS COMMITTEES</u>	
<u>CABINET</u>	
<u>PLANNING COMMITTEE</u>	
<u>THE BABERGH AND MID-SUFFOLK JOINT STANDARDS BOARD.....</u>	
<u>JOINT AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE.....</u>	
<u>BABERGH AUDIT COMMITTEE</u>	
<u>JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u>	
<u>OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u>	
<u>JOINT APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE</u>	
<u>JOINT HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE</u>	
<u>JOINT STAFF CONSULTATION COMMITTEE.....</u>	
<u>REGULATORY COMMITTEE</u>	
<u>LICENSING ACT 2003 COMMITTEE</u>	
<u>LICENSING ACT 2003: SCHEME OF DELEGATIONS.....</u>	
<u>GAMBLING ACT 2005: SCHEME OF DELEGATIONS.....</u>	
<u>BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK JOINT HOUSING BOARD</u>	
<u>DELEGATIONS TO OFFICERS.....</u>	
<u>GENERAL DELEGATIONS</u>	

POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE COUNCIL, THE CABINET AND COMMITTEES

THE COUNCIL

- 1.1 The procedure for conducting the Council meeting is contained within [Part 3](#).
- 1.2 The Council decides the overall objectives, major policies and financial strategies of the Council. It also considers recommendations from the Scrutiny Committees on issues of significance.
- 1.3 The Local Government Act 2000 and associated regulations divide local authority functions between those which:
 - (a) cannot be the responsibility of an Authority's executive;
 - (b) may be the responsibility of an Authority's executive (local choice); and
 - (c) are to be the responsibility of an Authority's executive.

The Act also provides that a limited number of functions must be discharged by the full Council.

- 1.4 Executive functions of the Cabinet may be discharged by the Cabinet or by a Committee or Sub-Committee of the Cabinet, Officers of the Authority and/or by the Cabinet of other authorities under Joint Arrangements or by the Full Council.
- 1.5 Functions of the Council, not being those which have to be discharged by the full Council, may be discharged by Committees, Sub-Committees and Officers of an Authority or by the Cabinet of another authority or Joint Committees formed with other authorities.
- 1.6 Delegations allocated to Officers have therefore to be expressed as being 'Executive Functions' or 'Non-Executive Functions'
- 1.7 Those that are either Executive or Non-Executive are powers that cannot be categorised as either 'Executive' or 'Non-Executive' without knowing the nature of the action to which the power relates in any particular case and so have to be described in this way. Such powers are incidental to the discharge of a function or are purely administrative delegations.
- 1.8 Non-Executive functions are specified in Schedules 1 and 2 of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 and all consequential Amendment Regulations.
- 1.9 Any function that is not therefore specified is assumed to be an executive function.
- 1.10 The Scheme of Delegated Powers to Officers is approved as part of the Council's Constitution. Additional delegated powers are also granted by virtue of Contract Standing Orders and Financial regulations. Delegations in

respect of Cabinet functions are made by the Leader who may amend or vary such delegations upon giving notice to the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Executive and the relevant officers.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR LOCAL CHOICE FUNCTIONS

1.11 The table below sets out the Council's decisions on who will be responsible for functions where there is a choice whether these are functions of Council or Cabinet in accordance with the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended). These functions may also be delegated to officers as set out in the Scheme of Delegation to Officers.

Local Choice Function	Responsibility
Any function under a local Act	Cabinet
The determination of an appeal against any decision made by or on behalf of the Authority	Council
Any function relating to contaminated land.	Cabinet
The discharge of any function relating to the control of pollution or the management of air quality.	Cabinet
The service of an abatement notice in respect of a statutory nuisance.	Cabinet
The passing of a resolution that Schedule 2 to the Noise and Statutory Nuisance Act 1993 should apply in the Authority's area.	Cabinet
The inspection of the Authority's area to detect any statutory nuisance.	Cabinet
The obtaining of information under section 330 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as to interests in land.	Cabinet
The obtaining of particulars of persons interested in land under section 16 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976	Cabinet
The making of agreements for the execution of highways works	Cabinet
The appointment of any individual (a) to any office other than an office in which he is employed by the	Council

<p style="text-align: center;">Authority;</p> <p>(b) to any body other than –</p> <p>(i) the Authority;</p> <p>(ii) a joint committee of two or more authorities; or</p> <p>(c) to any Committee or Sub- Committee of such a body, and the revocation of any such appointment</p>	
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RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COUNCIL

The Council is responsible for:

- 2.1 The adoption and changing of the Constitution except where such changes have been delegated to the Monitoring Officer.
- 2.2 The approval and adoption of the policy framework, the budget and any application to the Secretary of State in respect of any Housing Land Transfer.
- 2.3 The adopting of rules relating to meetings and proceedings, standing orders and any subsequent amendment of these documents.
- 2.4 The approval of arrangements for the discharge of Council functions by senior staff of the Council and for the authorisation of senior staff as necessary.
- 2.5 Appointment of the:
 - a. Leader of the Council;
 - b. Chairman of the Council;
 - c. Vice-Chairman of the Council;
 - d. Chairmen (and Vice) of any other appointed Committees or relevant Sub-Committees.
- 2.6 Agreeing and/or amending the terms of reference for Council Committees (but not executive committees which are matters for the Leader) deciding on their composition and making appointments to them.

(Note – any changes to membership of a Committee or Sub-Committee can be implemented by the Monitoring Officer following a request by the relevant Group Leader and notified to the next available Council meeting).

- 2.7 To deal with matters which are statutorily required to be dealt with by the Council under any of the following statutes or any amendments thereto:
 - i. The setting of Council Tax (Local Government Finance Act 1992);
 - ii. The determination of the Council's borrowing limits;

- iii. The approval or adoption of a plan or strategy for the control of the local authority's borrowing or capital expenditure;
 - iv. The consideration of reports by the Head of Paid Service (Section 4 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989) regarding proposals for the discharge of the Council's functions and staffing and management of the Council's staff;
 - v. The consideration of reports by the Monitoring Officer (Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989) regarding any contravention, maladministration or injustice by the Council;
 - vi. The consideration of reports by the Chief Finance Officer (Section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988) regarding the making of a report in circumstances where it appears to him or her that the Council, a Committee of the Authority, a person holding any office or employment under the Authority or a joint Committee on which the Authority is represented has made or is about to make a decision which involves or would involve the Authority incurring expenditure which is unlawful or has taken or is about to take a course of action which, if pursued to its conclusion, would be unlawful and likely to cause a loss or deficiency on the part of the Council, or is about to enter an item of account the entry of which is unlawful;
 - vii. The designation of land as a Litter Control Area (Environmental Protection Act 1990);
 - viii. The approval of schemes for local authority run lotteries;
 - ix. Final approval of the Council's 3 year licensing policy under the Licensing Act 2003, and the Gambling Act 2005 and any decisions under the Council's related policies;
 - x. Preparing and amending the annual Pay Policy Statement under Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011;
 - xi. The adoption of a Code of Conduct for elected and co-opted Members of the Council under Section 27 of the Localism Act 2011;
 - xii. The adoption of a Code of Conduct for staff.
- 2.8 Appointing representatives to outside bodies, including Joint Committees established with other Local Authorities, unless the power to appoint has been delegated by the Council.
- 2.9 The adoption of a scheme of allowances for Members under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government Act 1972 and any subsequent amendment, variation revocation or re-enactment of such scheme.
- 2.10 To appoint or dismiss, in accordance with statutory procedures, the following

staff:

- a. The Chief Executive (the Head of the Council's Paid Service).
- b. The Monitoring Officer.
- c. The Electoral Registration Officer.
- d. The Returning Officer for the purpose of conducting elections.
- e. The Chief Finance Officer (S151 Officer) (if not the Chief Executive or a Director).

2.11 To agree the Council's budget.

2.12 To fix Council house rents and other service charges.

2.13 Making, amending, revoking, re-enacting or adopting byelaws and promoting or opposing the making of local legislation or personal Bills.

2.14 The exercise of functions relating to changing the name of the area.

2.15 Considering reports which any Committee refers to it in accordance with this Constitution.

2.16 Requesting the Scrutiny Committee to prepare a report on any particular issue.

2.17 Deciding issues where a decision of the Cabinet has been called in by Scrutiny Committee and the matter is to be decided by Council in accordance with the Rules of Procedure for Scrutiny Committees.

2.18 The authorisation of the making of an application:

- a. for the inclusion of a disposal in a disposals programme under subsection (5) of section 135 (programme for disposals) of the Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993; or
- b. for consent to that disposal under section 32 (power to dispose of land held for the purposes of part II) or section 43 (consent required for certain disposals not within section 32) of the Housing Act 1985.

2.19 To determine any issues which in the opinion of the Chief Executive are of an exceptional nature and warrant consideration by the Council.

2.20 To consider alterations to electoral arrangements including:

- a. any proposed alterations to District boundaries or electoral areas.
- b. approval to the making of Orders altering the number of Parish Councillors for any Parish.

c. the designation of polling places.

- 2.21 To debate Council wide issues including those included in Government White Papers.
- 2.22 To provide a Forum whereby members of the public can attend and ask questions or partners/stakeholders can discuss issues with the Council, e.g. annual state of the District debate.
- 2.23 To enable individual Councillors to pursue issues, ask questions and initiate policy.
- 2.24 The adoption of Financial Regulations and Procedures and any subsequent amendment, variation, revocation or re-enactment of these documents.
- 2.25 The exercise of functions in relation to the Local Government Pension Scheme.
- 2.26 The promotion of, or opposition to, Local Bills in Parliament.
- 2.27 All other matters which by law must be referred to Council.

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR CABINET FUNCTIONS

- 3.1 Executive functions will be performed by the Cabinet. These functions may be grouped together in the form of Cabinet portfolios, the number and scope of which will be agreed by the Leader. The Leader will also allocate responsibility for the portfolios among the individual councillors appointed to the Cabinet, on an annual basis but is entitled to amend the portfolios at any time. Wherever possible Portfolios will be aligned across Babergh and Mid Suffolk, and with the structure of the Senior Leadership Team.
- 3.2 Any function which is not a Council function is an executive function and may be discharged by the Cabinet or by a Cabinet committee or by an officer to whom the Cabinet have delegated power as set out in the scheme of delegations.
- 3.3 The Cabinet shall carry out its business in accordance with the Cabinet Procedure Rules set on in [Part 3](#) of the Constitution

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CABINET

MEMBERS

10

QUORUM 3

General Role

To take key and other decisions for the effective management of the Council's functions and services in line with the policy framework and budget adopted by full Council and to be responsible for the implementation of these in respect of executive functions and services not otherwise the responsibility of the Council or any other Committee.

Frequency of Meetings

There shall be scheduled monthly meetings Additional meetings may be called from time to time as deemed appropriate.

Substitutes

No substitutes are allowed to the Cabinet.

Role and Function

To approve and consider:-

- (i) Key strategic decisions (other than those which must be determined by the Council) including all decisions which have a major impact on a number of Council services or on the Council as a whole and decisions which are deemed significant in terms of impact on the Council's revenue or capital (to be determined by the Head of Paid Service and/or Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Leader).
- (ii) All key strategic policies (except those which are reserved to Council for approval) and to make recommendations on policies reserved to Council.
- (iii) Formulating the Authority's budget proposals and recommending the same to Council for approval.
- (iv) Formulating the Authority's capital programme and recommending the same to Council for approval.
- (v) Formulating the Authority's housing capital programme and recommending the same to Council for approval.
- (vi) Formulating, monitoring and reviewing the Authority's Housing Revenue Account Self Financing Business Plan and recommending the same to Council for approval.
- (vii) Formulating the Authority's borrowing and investment strategy and recommending the same to Council for approval.

- (viii) Managing and monitoring the Authority's Capital Programme, General Fund and HRA.
- (ix) The key strategic outcomes for delivery over the term of the HRA Business Plan.
- (x) Strategic decision-making in respect of the following:-
- Transformation Programmes.
 - Organisational Development.
 - Member Development.
 - Member Services and Civics.
 - Strategic Risk Management.
 - Audit Issues (other than matters falling within the remit of the Audit Committee).
 - Major Projects.
 - Strategic Commissioning and Procurement including Decommissioning.
 - Asset Management.
 - Staffing and resourcing issues.
 - Partnerships and shared services.
- (xi) Approval of payments or provide some other benefits for maladministration under S92 of the Local Government Act 2000.
- (xii) To approve the write-off of any outstanding debt owed to the Council above the delegated limit of £10,000 with the exception of the write-off of debts related to the functions of the Shared Revenues Partnership.
- (xiii) Making recommendations to the Council on standing orders relating to contracts and financial regulations.
- (xiv) All cross cutting matters which affect the Authority as a whole and any matter/issue not expressly delegated to another Committee.
- (xv) Determining the Authority's strategic approach to wider County and Regional issues.
- (xix) To take action or make recommendations to Council after considering reports from Scrutiny Committee (Joint or otherwise) and the Audit and Standards Committee (Joint or otherwise).
- (xx) To set up and monitor the activity of Working Groups (including the Transformation Enquiry Groups) and receive reports and recommendations from them, in line with agreed protocols.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

MEMBERS

14

QUORUM

4

General Role

To exercise the Council's powers as local planning authority in respect of:

- (i) All aspects of planning and development control referred to Committee for determination in accordance with the [Protocol for Use of Planning Officer Delegations](#).
- (ii) All aspects of planning and development control where the decision would not be in accordance with the overall policies and procedures approved by the Council as defined within the Protocol for Use of Planning Officer Delegations.

Note – The Monitoring Officer shall determine whether any Member has undertaken the requisite training.

Frequency of Meetings - Every two weeks.

Substitutes - Any Member from the same political group, providing the substitute has undertaken the requisite planning training.

Functions

- (a) For the purpose of the above all aspects of planning and development control include:
 - (i) the consideration, modification and amendment of all aspects of planning obligations under Section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
 - (ii) all aspects of planning enforcement including the enforcement of matters under The Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended
 - (iii) in relation to Planning Policy the consideration of briefs for the development and/or redevelopment of land
 - (iv) all aspects of the Planning (Hazardous Substances) Act 1990 including enforcement matters
 - (v) all aspects of Tree Preservation control under the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
 - (vi) all aspects of the control of advertisements under the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
 - (vii) the revocation or modification of a planning permission, listed building consent or conservation area consent

- (b) To consider and determine matters concerning public rights of way.
- (c) To consider and make Orders under Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 relating to the proper maintenance of land and resolutions to prosecute for non-compliance with an order.

DRAFT

THE BABERGH AND MID-SUFFOLK JOINT STANDARDS BOARD

Joint Standards Board

Babergh, Mid Suffolk and Suffolk County Council will together establish a Committee known as the Suffolk Joint Standards Board. Membership of the Board shall exclude the Chairman of any Council and any Cabinet, member.

Composition

The Committee is constituted pursuant to sections 101, 102, 103 and 111 of the Local Government Act 1972.

[The political balance rules in section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 do not apply.]

- (a) *Membership.* The Joint Standards Board will be composed of nine Councillors (three elected members from each Council).
- (b) *Chairing the Board.* The Joint Standards Board or any Sub Committee will nominate the Chairman at each meeting.
- (c) The quorum is three (being one member from each Council) for a full meeting of the Joint Standards Board.
- (d) The quorum for Sub-Committee meetings of the Joint Standards Board is three members. Sub-Committee meetings will be arranged by the Monitoring Officer from the Council receiving the original complaint and will take place as and when required. The members will be drawn from the other Councils.

Role and Function

The Joint Standards Board will have the following roles and functions:

- (a) To receive reports from Monitoring Officers when complaints about the conduct of Councillors have been investigated and found that a breach of the Code of Conduct has occurred, and to consider the appropriate sanction (if any) recommended by an Independent Person (as defined within the Localism Act 2011) subject to statute, regulations and Government guidance.
- (b) To promote a culture of openness, accountability and probity in order to ensure the highest standards of conduct.
- (c) To promote the values of putting people first, valuing public service and creating a norm of the highest standards of personal conduct.
- (d) To receive reports from a Monitoring Officer and any independent person appointed by the Council pursuant to the Localism Act 2011.
- (e) To determine appropriate action on matters referred to the Joint Standards Board by a Monitoring Officer, Council or Committee.

- (f) To support a Monitoring Officer in his or her statutory role and the issuing of guidance on his or her role from time to time in relation to the consideration and/or handling of complaints.
- (g) To manage any resources assigned to the Committee subject to any framework set by any Council or Committee.
- (h) To be responsible for securing equality in relation to the functions of the Joint Standards Board.
- (i) To establish and delegate to Sub-Committees, as appropriate, and manage that Sub-Committee.
- (j) To receive, consider and make decisions on reports received from any Sub-Committees and to make recommendations to any Council in relation to matters reserved to the Council by statute or Procedure Rules.
- (k) If requested by any participating Council to do so, to make representations to the Local Government Association and central Government or other organisations about any matter relating to the general principles of conduct for Councillors.
- (l) If requested by any participating Council to do so to provide advice and guidance to Councillors and make arrangements for training in connection with any matters within the terms of reference of the Committee.
- (m) If requested by any participating Council to do so, to review and make recommendations on Councillors' training to promote the ethical framework.

Additional roles of the Joint Standards Board

The Councils may assess the scope for further work for the Joint Standards Board as events develop.

Terms of Reference

The Suffolk Joint Standards Board will have the Terms of Reference set out in this Constitution.

The Suffolk Joint Standards Board

Terms of Reference

1. Definitions

In this Constitution:

“the Act” means the Local Government Act 1972

“the Councils” means

- (a) Babergh District Council
- (b) Mid Suffolk District Council
- (c) Suffolk County Council

“the Joint Standards Board” means the Suffolk Joint Standards Board

“Monitoring Officer” means the officer designated by the Councils under section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and any deputy nominated by them acting where they are unable to do so owing to absence or illness

“Proper Officer” has the same meaning as in the Act

2. Constitution and Terms of Reference

- 2.1 The Councils, in exercise of their powers under sections 101, 102, 103 and 111 of the Act, have each determined to establish a Joint Standards Committee, to be known as the Suffolk Joint Standards Board to exercise those functions as set out in these Terms of Reference and in the Constitution.

3. Functions to be exercised by the Joint Standards Board

- 3.1 The Joint Standards Board may exercise the functions set out in the Articles of the Constitution.

4. Membership of the Joint Standards Board

- 4.1 The Joint Standards Board shall consist of

- a) nine members of the Councils, appointed by those Councils in accordance with paragraph 4.2;

- 4.2 Subject to paragraph 4.3, the Councils shall each appoint three members of their authorities to be members of the Joint Standards Board.

- 4.3 Membership of the Board shall exclude the Chairman of any Council and any Cabinet member.

- 4.4 A person who is disqualified under Part 5 of the Local Government Act 1972 shall be disqualified from membership of the Joint Standards

Committee.

5. Tenure of office and casual vacancies

5.1 Any member of the Joint Standards Board will hold office until one of the following occurs:

- a) He or she resigns by giving written notice to the Proper Officer of the Council that appointed him or her.
- b) He or she is removed or replaced by the Council that appointed him or her.
- c) He or she is disqualified from membership of the Joint Standards Board.
- d) He or she ceases to be eligible for appointment to the Joint Standards Board in the capacity in which he or she was appointed.
- e) The functions of the Joint Standards Board are allocated to another Committee.
- f) The Councils determine to reduce the size of the Joint Standards Board and notice is given to the Member to terminate his or her membership of the Joint Standards Board.
- g) The Council which appointed him or her ceases to participate in the Joint Standards Board.
- h) A resolution of the Councils not to continue with a Joint Standards Board.

5.2 A casual vacancy may be filled as soon as possible by the Council which appointed the member of the Joint Standards Board whose membership has ceased.

6. Sub-Committees

6.1 The Joint Standards Board will appoint Sub-Committees for purposes in the exercise of its functions.

6.2 Each person appointed as a member of a Sub-Committee must be a member of the Joint Standards Board.

6.3 The quorum for Sub-Committee meetings is three members. Where a Sub-Committee is established to determine a complaint against a Councillor then Members of the Sub-Committee will be drawn from other Councils to that which has received the complaint.

6.4 If the Joint Standards Board appoints more than one Sub-Committee to exercise one or more of its functions then it shall ensure that the Proper Officer of the Council's providing support to the Joint Standards Board allocates particular matters to a Sub-Committee first on the basis of the availability of the members required to constitute the Sub-Committee, and thereafter by rotation, and summonses meetings accordingly.

7. Meetings and proceedings

7.1 The regularity of meetings and rules for the conduct of proceedings of the Joint Standards Board (and its Sub Committees) will be set by the Board. The rules of procedure must be consistent with the requirements of the Act. They may provide for different procedures to be followed when the Joint Standards Board or a Sub-Committee is exercising different functions.

8. Monitoring Officer

8.1 The Monitoring Officer will agree and keep under review a protocol about how the Monitoring Officer will exercise their functions in relation to the matters dealt with by the Joint Standards Board.

8.2 The Joint Standards Board will be responsible for approving changes to the protocol.

9. Support

9.1 The Joint Standards Board will meet at the offices of the Council that received the complaint and the Councils agree to provide accommodation and professional, technical, administrative and clerical support for meetings held on its premises.

9.2 The Proper Officer appointed by each Council for the time being providing such support will discharge the proper officer functions under the Act that relate to the meetings of the Board. He or she will therefore prepare agendas and minutes and summaries of meetings and arrange for notices and other communications to and from the Joint Standards Board to be given and received, save in so far as the Monitoring Officer agrees to undertake this activity.

10. Expenses of Joint Standards Board

10.1 The expenses of the Joint Standards Board and of the discharge of functions relating to matters dealt with by the Joint Standards Board will be met by the Council receiving the complaint.

11. Withdrawal from the Joint Standards Board

11.1 A Council may cease to participate in the Joint Standards Board by resolution to that effect and communicated in writing to the Proper Officer the time being at least three months before the date on which it is to take effect.

JOINT AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

MEMBERS 16 (8 from each Council) QUORUM 4 (At least 1 from each Council)

General Role

To ensure a consistent approach, avoid duplication of resources and improve joint working between both Councils. This Committee will only seek to address matters which are being progressed across both Councils.

Issues that are pertinent only to a single Council area will remain the preserve of the Mid Suffolk Audit Committee or the Babergh Audit Committee.

Note: There are separate Terms of Reference for the Mid Suffolk and Babergh Audit Committees which set out their specific roles and functions.

Frequency of Meetings

Every two months.

Substitutes

Any Member from the same political group and Council, except the Chairman of the Council or any Members of the Cabinet

Role and Function

- (i) Undertake the Council's responsibilities in relation to financial governance issues.
- (ii) Receive Internal Audit's charter, annual plan and progress against the plan that includes an annual report from the Head of Internal Audit.
- (iii) Consider the effectiveness of the joint risk management arrangements, the control environment and associated anti-fraud and anti-corruption.
- (iv) Be satisfied that the joint Annual Governance Statement properly reflects the risk environment and any actions taken to improve it.
- (v) Ensure that there are effective relationships between external and internal audit, inspection agencies and other relevant bodies and that the value of the audit process is actively promoted.
- (vi) Review and consider the annual Treasury Management Strategies of both Councils, receive reports on performance during the year and ensure appropriate Member training and guidance is provided.
- (vii) Design, monitor and review the ethical framework of the Councils to promote a culture of openness, accountability and probity in order to ensure the highest standards of conduct.

- (viii) Exercise the functions of the Councils in relation to the ethical framework and standards of conduct of the Councils, Parish/Town Councils, Joint Committees and other bodies, as relevant.
- (ix) Advise the Councils on the adoption or revision of a Code of Conduct for Members. Overview codes of good practice, protocols and policies with regard to probity and ethics.
- (x) Oversee and manage programmes of training and development on ethics, standards and probity for Councillors. Issue advice and guidance on standards related matters.
- (xi) Receive reports on complaints made under the Code of Conduct for Members.
- (xii) Support the Monitoring Officer in his or her statutory role and the issuing of guidance on his or her role from time to time.
- (xiii) Support the Section 151 officer responsible for the administration of the relevant Council's financial affairs in his or her statutory role in connection with financial probity and the issuing of national guidance on his or her role from time to time.
- (xiv) To peruse, review and comment upon the non-salaried expenses of Council officers.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEMBERS 8

QUORUM 3

General Role

Review and/or scrutinise decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the Cabinet functions;

Make reports and/or recommendations to the full Council or the Cabinet in connection with the discharge of any functions;

Make reports or recommendations to the full Council or the Cabinet with respect to matters affecting the area or its inhabitants;

This Committee will only seek to address matters that are pertinent only to a single Council area.

Frequency of Meeting

Monthly

Substitutes

Any Member from the same political group and Council except Members of the Cabinet.

Role and Function

The Scrutiny Committee will have the following roles and functions that remain the preserve of the Council:-

- (i) (a) **Performance monitoring and review.**
 - i) Question Members of Cabinet and senior officers about their views on issues and proposals affecting the area;
 - ii) Liaise with other external organisations operating in the area, whether national, regional or local, to ensure that the interests of local people are enhanced by collaborative working.
- (b) **Finance.** Exercise overall responsibility for the finances made available to it.
- (c) **Annual report.** Submit an annual report to Council on its workings.
- (d) **Officers.** Exercise overall responsibility for the work programme of the Officers employed to support its work.
- (e) **Task and Finish Panels.** To number 3 or 5 members. When

established a clear remit should be set with defined outcomes, time span and reporting requirements.

- (ii) Conduct its proceedings in accordance with the Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rules set out in [Part 3](#) of the Constitution.

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JOINT APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

MEMBERS 6 (3 from each Council)

QUORUM 3 (at least 1 from each Council)

General Role

Adopting and exercising such of the Councils' functions as can be delegated by full Council in respect of the appointment, discipline and dismissal of the Chief Executive, Directors and Statutory post holders as are covered by the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations or any successor regulations or Act.

Frequency of Meetings

As and when required.

Substitutes

Any Member from the same political group and Council.

Role and Function

- (i) To undertake and determine all aspects of the process for the recruitment, selection of the Chief Executive, Directors and Statutory Posts.
- (ii) The final decision as to the appointment, discipline or dismissal of the Head of Paid Service shall be reserved to Council, but the Appointments Committee may make such recommendations about these matters to Council as the law allows.
- (iii) No disciplinary action in relation to the Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer or Chief Finance/Section 151 Officer may be taken by the Appointments Committee or the Council, other than
 - (a) Suspension on full pay for no more than two months, or
 - (b) Other than in accordance with the recommendations of a Designated Independent Person's report under the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) England Regulations.
- (iv) In discharging its duties, the Appointments Committee shall follow the procedures set out in the relevant laws then in force, including the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) England Regulations and any appropriate government guidance.

- (v) All other matters pertaining to the appointment, discipline or dismissal of Council staff or staff shall remain the responsibility of the Council's Head of Paid Service.
- (vi) To hear and determine issues relating to discipline and capability for the Chief Executive, Directors and the Statutory Posts of Monitoring Officer and Chief Finance Officer.
- (vii) To deal with disciplinary cases involving Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer and Chief Finance Officer in accordance with The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 and is to make recommendations of proposed action to Council.

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LICENSING AND REGULATORY COMMITTEE

MEMBERS 10

QUORUM 3

General Role

To consider policy issues on licensing and to act as the Licensing Committee under the Licensing Act 2003, and for Gambling Act 2005 matters and any other relevant legislation that may be introduced.

To consider policy issues on any relevant legislation that may be introduced.

Frequency of Meetings

Monthly

As and when required (Licensing / Regulatory Sub-Committee).

Substitutes

Any Member from the same political group providing requisite training undertaken.

No substitutes for Licensing / Regulatory Sub-Committee.

Licensing Functions

- (i) To review and make recommendations to Council upon policies in relation to licensing matters under the Licensing Act 2003 and the statement of licensing policy.
- (ii) To discharge the Council's functions as a Licensing Authority under the Licensing Act 2003, with agreed policy.
- (iii) To review and make recommendations to Council upon policies in relation to licensing matters under the Gambling Act 2005 and the statement principles.
- (iv) To discharge the Council's functions as a Licensing Authority under the Gambling Act 2005, within agreed policy,
- (v) To arrange for the discharge of any of the licensing functions exercisable by the Committee to an officer of the Licensing Authority subject to the limitations set out in Section 10(4) of the Licensing Act 2003 and Section 154 of the Gambling Act 2005.
- (vi) To discharge any other Council function which relates to a matter which is a licensing function under the Licensing Act 2003 or the Gambling Act 2005, but which is not a licensing function (i.e. street trading) after consideration of a report from the Licensing Section.

Licensing Act 2003

- (i) To carry out functions as the Licensing Committee pursuant to the Licensing Act 2003.
- (ii) To advise the Council on its 'Statement of Licensing Policy', related Licensing policies and practices and make recommendations to the Council on their adoption and review.
- (iii) To appoint Sub-Committees of three Members (to be known as Licensing Sub Committees).

To delegate any of its functions within its terms of reference to the Licensing Sub-Committee or officers, subject to the restrictions set out in the Licensing Act 2003.

Regulatory Functions

- (i) To establish and act through Committees made up of 3 Members of the Regulatory Committee (to be known as Regulatory Sub-Committees) to determine a range of regulatory and other functions (including Naming of Streets, Trees, Staffing etc).
- (ii) Power to issue licences, certificates or consents including (where legally possible):
 - a. a power to attach conditions to any licence, certificate or consent;
 - b. a power to refuse to grant any licence certificate or consent;
 - c. a power to set general conditions and regulations with respect to all licences of a certain kind;
 - d. the power to revoke or suspend licences certificates or consent;
 - e. any function for which the Council may charge and issue any approval or consent that may be needed under the terms of any licence.
- (iii) The Regulatory Committee shall decide its own procedures for dealing with applications and disciplinary hearings and in carrying out these functions shall have due regard to any relevant regulations/national guidance. It shall have the power to set enforcement and other licensing or regulatory policies.

Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing

- (i) To determine suspension or revocation (or else no action) of licences for Hackney Carriage vehicles, Hackney Carriage drivers, Private Hire Vehicles, Private Hire Drivers, Private Hire Operators.
- (ii) To determine applications for licences for Hackney Carriage Vehicles; Hackney Carriage Drivers; Private Hire Vehicles; Private Hire Drivers and Private Hire Operators when the Head of Environment is disposed to recommend suspension or revocation of a licence or refusal to grant or refusal to renew and chooses not to exercise his/her delegated authority but refers the matter to the Regulatory Committee for consideration in accordance with a protocol approved by the Regulatory Committee.

General Matters

- (i) Any other appeal arrangements as shall arise under any enactment or government regulation.
- (ii) To determine licences, registrations and consents or to make, revoke or vary closing orders as necessary pursuant to licensing, regulatory, environmental, safety and other statutes (or any subsequent amendment thereto) if the appropriate officer is disposed to recommend revocation, variation, refusal or refusal to renew or does not wish to use his/her delegated authority.

Gambling Act Functions

- (i) To carry out functions as the Licensing Committee pursuant to the Gambling Act 2005.
- (ii) To advise the Council on its 'Statement of Licensing Principles', related Gambling Act 2005 policies and practices and make recommendations to the Council on their adoption and review.
- (iii) To appoint Sub-Committees of three Members to be known as the Licensing Sub-Committee.
- (iv) To delegate any of its functions within its terms of reference to the Licensing Sub-Committee or officers, subject to the restrictions set out in the Gambling Act 2005.

LICENSING ACT 2003: SCHEME OF DELEGATIONS

Matter to be dealt with	Committee	Sub Committee	Officers
		WHERE OBJECTION, REPRESENTATION or REVIEW	<u>NO</u> OBJECTION or REPRESENTATION
Application for personal licence		✓	✓
Application for personal licence with unspent convictions		All cases	
Application for premises licence/club premises certificate		✓	✓
Application for provisional statement		✓	✓
Application to vary premises licence/ club premises certificate		✓	✓
Application to vary designated premises supervisor		✓	✓
Request to be removed as designated premises supervisor			All cases
Application for transfer of premises licence		✓	✓
Applications for interim authorities		✓	✓
Application to review premises licence/ club premises certificate		All cases	
Decision on whether a representation is irrelevant frivolous vexatious etc			All cases *
Decision to object when local authority is a consultee and not the relevant authority considering the application		All cases	

Matter to be dealt with	Committee	Sub Committee	Officers
		WHERE OBJECTION, REPRESENTATION or REVIEW	<u>NO</u> OBJECTION or REPRESENTATION
Determination of a police representation to a temporary event notice		All cases	
Determination of minor variation applications for premises licences and club premises certificates			All cases
Determination of applications to disapply mandatory conditions at community premises		✓	✓
Licensing Authority role as a responsible authority			All cases

* In consultation with Chair, Vice-Chair or other members of the Regulatory Committee

GAMBLING ACT 2005: SCHEME OF DELEGATIONS

Matter to be dealt with	Council	Committee	Sub Committee	Officers
			WHERE OBJECTION, REPRESENTATION or REVIEW	NO OBJECTION or REPRESENTATION
Final approval of three year licensing policy	✓			
Policy not to permit casinos	✓			
Fee setting (when appropriate)		✓		
Application for premises licences			✓	✓
Application for a variation to a licence			✓	✓
Application for a transfer of a licence			✓	✓
Application for a provisional statement			✓	✓
Review of a premises licence			All cases	
Application for club gaming/club machine permits			✓	✓
Cancellation of club gaming/club machine permits			All cases	
Applications for other permits				All cases
Cancellation of licensed premises gaming machine permits				All cases

Matter to be dealt with	Council	Committee	Sub Committee	Officers
			WHERE OBJECTION, REPRESENTATION or REVIEW	NO OBJECTION or REPRESENTATION
Consideration of temporary use notice				All cases
Decision to give a counter notice to a temporary use notice			All cases	

Note:

Schedule 6 (Minor and Consequential Amendments) of the Licensing Act 2003 amends section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972. The effect of this amendment is that nothing in Section 101 applies in relation to any function under the Licensing Act 2003 of a Licensing Authority. The requirement for the Licensing Act 2003 Committee to be politically balanced does not apply, but is recommended.

The wording of the Licensing Act 2003 indicates that the Committee discharging those functions should only deal with those functions and related matters. This is supported by views expressed by the DCMS and LACORS.

BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK JOINT HOUSING BOARD (PANEL)

Terms of Reference and Constitution

- 1. Membership:** 6 Councillors (3 from each Council)
6 tenants/leaseholders (3 from each Council)
- 2. Quorum:** 4 (1 Councillor and 1 tenant/leaseholder from each Council)
- 3. Frequency of meetings:** Meetings will be held monthly
- 4. Purpose of the Board**
 - This is an advisory and consultative panel only
 - To review policy on any aspect of the landlord function and to make recommendations to the Cabinet
 - To be consulted on and then advise and make recommendations to Cabinet on financial matters relating to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA)
 - Support the active involvement of tenants and leaseholders in the process of decision making on housing (HRA) related matters
 - Provide a means of improving delivery of the housing service
- 5. Nomination of Councillors**
 - Councillors will be nominated to the Board by each Council in accordance with its own constitutional arrangements
- 6. Election of tenants**
 - Every tenant and leaseholder of Mid Suffolk and Babergh District Councils will have an opportunity to vote for a candidate in their area (unless there is only one eligible candidate for any vacancy)
 - Elections will be held every 4 years to coincide with the District Council elections
- 7. Qualifying to stand as a Candidate**

All tenants will be given an opportunity to stand for election to the Board. A formal ballot will be held in which every tenant will be eligible to vote for their chosen candidate.

Eligibility Criteria

Each candidate or Board member **must**:

- Be over the age of 18 years.
- Be a current tenant or leaseholder of Babergh or Mid Suffolk District Council.
- Live within the electoral area in which they are standing for election.

Each candidate or Board member **must not**:

- Be under a “Notice Seeking Possession” in respect of their tenancy.
- Be an employee of either Babergh or Mid Suffolk District Council.
- Be a serving member of the Tenant Scrutiny Panel
- Be the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or an interim order
- Have been convicted, in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man, within the last 5 years of any offence punishable by imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of not less than 3 months without the option of a fine.
- Be disqualified from being elected or being a member of either authority under Part III of the Representation of the People Act 1983.

8. Key Roles and responsibilities of Board Members

- Act in the interest of the tenants of Mid Suffolk and Babergh District Council. Board members are custodians of the tenants’ interests and finances. Their behaviour and decisions should reflect this responsibility.
- Contribute to and share responsibility for all Board recommendations.
- Prepare for and attend meetings, training and other events as required.
- Maintain the standards set out in the Code of Conduct for tenant involvement.
- Monitor the Councils’ performance, budgets, controls, complaints and decisions and the performance of comparable bodies.
- Ensure that the Council Housing Services of Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils comply with the Tenant Services Authority Regulatory Framework.
- Ensure that the policy and practices of Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council Housing Services are in keeping with its Strategic Priorities and Delivery Programme outcomes.

9. Confidentiality

- Board members will have access to such information necessary to carry out their role. Information regarded as confidential should not be divulged to anyone, other than Board members and Council officers entitled to know it.

10. Allowances

- Tenant Board members will be entitled to claim an attendance allowance for each meeting attended up to a total of £500 per annum. They will also be entitled to mileage and childcare expenses at the approved rate.
- Elected Councillors will be entitled to claim travelling expenses in accordance with the Councils scheme of allowances.

11. Functions of the Board

The Board will make strategic and policy recommendations about the HRA landlord related functions of both councils. In general terms these are:

- The review and development of the HRA Business Plan.
- All housing landlord strategy and new policy development issues.
- All tenant services and housing management functions
- The review and development of housing maintenance and improvement programmes
- Leasehold property management.
- Compliance with the Tenant Services Authority regulatory framework.
- A monitoring role relating to operational HRA services.
- Rent and budget setting are not included in the remit although the Board will have a consultative role in these issues.

12. Governance

- All Board Members will have equal voting rights.
- All issues will be decided on a simple majority of board members present at the meeting.
- If there are an equal number of votes for and against, the Chair will have a second or casting vote.
- The Chair will be determined annually by the members of the Joint Housing Board, alternating between tenant/member on an annual basis.
- A Vice-Chair will also be determined annually, ideally being a tenant when the Chair is a Councillor and vice versa.
- The quorum of the meeting will be one third of the Board membership (i.e. 4). With one tenant and one member being from each Council.
- The Board will determine which matters are solely to be voted on by MSDC members and BDC members.
- When a decision is the concern of one Council a quorum will be one Tenant Board Member and one Elected Member of the Council to whom the decision relates.
- When making decisions, the Joint Housing Board will consider the Strategic Priorities of both Councils and ensure these are embedded in everything done with a corporate context and connection.
- The Joint Housing Board activities are authorised without recourse to Committees of either Council following an amendment to the current Scheme of Delegation which is in place at present in both Councils placing delegations on the Head of Housing.
- When an issue has both HRA and non HRA aspects the board will make decisions on the HRA aspect and have a consultative role in the non HRA aspect.
- The Councillor Membership of the Joint Housing Board will be politically balanced.
- Meetings will be held monthly in the afternoon or early evening.
- Venue for the meetings will alternate between the two Councils.
- The Joint Housing Board will report to the Cabinet.

Additionally the Joint Housing Board will:

- Have the power to deselect any Tenant Board Member who is absent from three consecutive meetings without good reason or is guilty of a breach of the Code of Conduct.

13. Confidentiality and Data protection

The business of the Board may involve dealing with issues of a confidential or sensitive nature and members must exercise care and discretion. All information must be kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. This also includes storing of information in paper files, or electronically.

- Any confidential information that is presented to or discussed by the Board should not be disclosed to anyone apart from the Board. The only exceptions to this are:
 - a) That you have the consent of a person authorised to give it.
 - b) You are required by law to do so.
 - c) The disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional advice providing that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person.
- A Board member must not prevent another person from gaining access to information to which a person is entitled by law.
- Board members must not disclose information that they have received in their role for personal advantage or that of anyone known to them or to discredit or disadvantage others.

SCHEME OF DELEGATIONS TO OFFICERS

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Scheme of Delegation to Officers set out below has been approved and adopted by the Council for the purposes of Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972. The delegations in respect of Cabinet functions, made under s 15 of the Local Government Act 2000, have been approved by the Leader of the Cabinet who may amend any executive delegations to officers at any time by giving notice to the Chief Executive, the Monitoring Officer and the S151 Officer and any officer directly affected by the amendments.

1.2 Delegations may also be given by individual resolutions or as part of the approval of any policy procedure or protocol by the Council or Cabinet.

1.3 The following powers and duties are delegated to the officers named in this Scheme of Delegation within the normal constraints of Council policy but in the event of those officers being unavailable or unable to exercise the functions referred to, the following officers are authorised to act in their stead:

For the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive or if the Deputy Chief Executive is unavailable a Strategic Director

For a Strategic Director, the relevant Assistant Director

For the Section 151 Officer, the Deputy Section 151 Officer

For the Monitoring Officer, the Deputy Monitoring Officer.

Any officer referred to by his/her title/post throughout this Constitution will automatically succeed his/her successor in title/post.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Any delegation to an officer which authorises the incurring of any capital or revenue expenditure will be subject to there being sufficient budgetary provision to cover that expenditure.

Any delegation to an officer to take action under a statutory provision shall be deemed to authorise action under any amendment or statutory re-enactment of that provision.

Any delegation to an officer shall require that delegation to be exercised in compliance with the Council's Procedure Rules, Financial Regulations and Procedures and Procurement and Contract Standing Orders, Human Resources Policies and any other policies or conditions imposed either by the Council or the Cabinet or as required by this Constitution or by statute and any Code of Practice relating to specific functions which may be adopted.

Prior to exercising any delegation that sufficient consultation shall be carried out where required by law or by any other part of the Constitution.

Where delegated powers or proper officer functions have been granted to a post on the Council's staff and the designation of such post is changed then such delegated powers or proper officer functions shall vest in the post holder of the new post designation.

In addition to the constraints referred to in the Scheme of Delegations there are exceptions to officers' delegated powers. There is no delegation to officers of:

- (a) matters specifically reserved to Council or Committee and;
- (b) any matter which by law may not be delegated to an officer.

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2.1 GENERAL DELEGATIONS

To the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Strategic Directors and Assistant Directors (together referred to as the “Principal Officers”).

Any officer referred to by his/her title/post throughout this Constitution will automatically succeed his/her successor in title/post.

Each Principal Officer is authorised to act on behalf of the Council in relation to any matters (including spending decisions) within the service areas for which he/she is responsible (See Schedule below, as may be amended from time to time).

RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

2.2 The relevant Assistant Director shall be authorised to submit responses on consultation on matters within their functions and area of responsibility in line with the scheme of delegations.

If any consultations are deemed by the Assistant Director Law and Governance to be of sufficient significance they will be referred to the relevant Committee.

Matters that are likely to be of sufficient significance are consultation documents on national, regional or local issues which have been or likely to be high profile, complicated and controversial.

Should the deadline for the response not enable the matter to be considered by the Committee then the Assistant Director Law and Governance, in consultation with the relevant Assistant Director and Committee Chairman be authorised to submit a response, a copy of which will be submitted to the next meeting of that Committee for information.

All consultation responses issued in the name of the District Council must be in accordance with adopted Council policy, as well as any existing national or regional policy.

Members are of course entitled to make separate individual, personal responses to the consultation.

2.3 SCHEDULE OF SPECIFIC DELEGATIONS TO OFFICERS

The scheme of delegations to Officers is set out below:

<u>Post</u>	<u>Function and areas of responsibility</u>
Chief Executive	Head of Paid Service Overall corporate management and operational responsibility (including management responsibility for all officers and staffing matters). Returning Officer for Elections and Electoral Registration Officer
Section 151 Officer	Principal adviser to the Council on financial matters. Responsible for the overall management of the Council's financial affairs including Internal Audit.
Monitoring Officer	Responsible for ensuring that the Council acts in a lawful manner and that it does not do anything which might cause maladministration or injustice.

<u>Post</u>	<u>Function and areas of responsibility</u>
Assistant Director – Supported Living	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landlord Services Management of Housing Stock, Upgrading Repairs and Rents Private Sector Housing Homelessness Right to Buy Supported Housing, Housing Advice Community Alarms Commissioning Housing Repairs and Maintenance Surveyors and Building Services Property, Accommodation and Facilities
Assistant Director Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Development Support to Communities of Interest and Characteristic Arts Sports and Leisure Health Improvement and Health and Wellbeing Partnership Community Safety and Community Access Countryside Services Open Space and Grounds Maintenance Arboriculture Rights of Way Children and Young People Local Partnerships Joint Service Delivery Partnerships Business Continuity, Emergency Planning and GOLD support Grants to Communities Equalities and Diversity – Service delivery Community Rights
Assistant Director Planning for Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning Policy Housing Strategy and Enabling including Gypsy and Traveller Sites Planning and Development Control Building Control Conservation Access to Grants for Local Authority Activities including Planning Obligations Community Infrastructure Levy Focused Partnership Working

<u>Post</u>	<u>Function and areas of responsibility</u>
Assistant Director Environment & Projects	Development of all aspects of the Environment Agenda Environmental Health Enforcement Safety and Food Safety Noise and other Nuisance Pollution Control Waste Management Environmental Management Street Scene Car Parks and Public Conveniences
Assistant Director Law & Governance	Governance Democratic and Member Services Electoral Services Executive Support and Business Management Communications Legal Services (Shared Legal Partnership) Internal Audit Policy Development and Corporate Planning Performance Management Data and Information Management (Freedom of Information, Access to and Management of Observatory, all Land and Asset Related Information Services etc) Land Charges
Assistant Director Corporate Resources	Financial Matters Financial Management Revenues and Benefits Asset Utilisation Procurement and Contracting including Commissioning Support to External Audit Customer access and complaints handling (including Ombudsman cases) Human Resources and Organisational Development (including training and development) Health and Safety Occupational Health Equality and Diversity – Corporate
Assistant Director Investment & Commercial Resources	Tourism and Tourist Information Centres Economic Development and Regeneration Local Enterprise Partnership and other Economy Partnerships Licensing

2.4 DELEGATION MATTERS SUBJECT TO CONSULTATION WITH CHAIRMAN (OR VICE-CHAIRMAN IN ABSENCE) OF APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE

Power to act out of Council meeting – General Power

Where, in his/her opinion, by reason of limitation of time, or urgency a decision is required on any matter, (other than those specifically excluded from delegation) the Chief Executive shall have power to make a decision on that matter subject to consultation with the Chairman of the appropriate Committee on the action to be taken by the Chief Executive.

This power shall not apply to:-

- (a) Matters reserved to the Council by statute or common law without power of delegation to a Committee.
- (b) The setting of Council taxes.
- (a) Incurring of expenditure for which no allowance has been made in the annual budget unless the approval of the Chairman of the Council, and of the Leader has been given to such expenditure.
- (d) Any proposal which involves the formulation of a major new policy or a major variation of an existing major policy.
- (e) Any matter on which the Council or the Cabinet has given a specific direction.

Note:

At the next ordinary meeting of the appropriate Committee a report is to be submitted setting out all relevant information in relation to the action taken and detailing the reasons why it was necessary to deal with the matter out of meeting.

2.5 RECORDING AND PUBLICATION OF OFFICER DECISIONS MADE UNDER EITHER EXPRESS AUTHORISATION OR THE SCHEME OF DELEGATIONS

2.5.1 There are two sets of regulations that apply to officer decision making depending on whether an officer decision is taken under Executive Functions or Non-Executive functions.

Executive Functions

2.5.2 When any officer with delegated power (or is duly authorised to take such decisions) takes any executive decision on matters that are the responsibility of the Council's Cabinet, and which affect external parties or the community such as (by way of examples):

- decisions about awarding contracts above a total value of £10,000;
- decisions to exercise powers of Compulsory Purchase;
- decisions on disposal of and/or provision of open space, allotment land or other green spaces;
- decisions to purchase new ICT systems;
- decisions about the holding/cancellation of car boot sales/markets or events on council-owned land;
- decisions about the operating hours of off-street car parks;
- decisions to close a park or sports centre;
- decisions resulting in the closure of a major road.

2.5.3 These must be recorded in writing to comply with the *Local Authorities (Meetings & Access to Information) England Regulations 2012 no. 2089*.

The written record must be completed by the officer at the time of making the decision including:

- details of the decision and the date it was made;
- reasons for the decision;
- any other options considered and why those options were rejected;
- details of any conflict of interest declared by any executive member consulted in relation to the decision; and
- a note of any dispensation granted in respect of any declared conflict of interest.

Non-Executive Functions

2.5.4 When any officer with delegated power takes a non-Executive decision:

- under a specific express authorisation, or under a general authorisation where the effect of the decision is to:

- grant permissions or licences,
 - affect the rights of individuals,
- award contracts or incur expenditure which, in either case, materially affects the Council's financial position (normally this will be a contractor expenditure above a total value of £10,000).

2.5.5 These decisions must be recorded in writing to comply with *The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 no. 2095*. The written record must be produced as soon as reasonably practicable

(normally within 10 working days) after the decision has been made including:

- The date the decision was taken;
- A record of the decision taken along with reasons for the decision;
- Details of alternative options if any considered and rejected; and
- Where the decision is taken under a specific express authorisation to include the name of any member who has declared a conflict of interest in relation to the decision.

2.5.6 A copy of the record of the decision must be sent by the relevant officer to the Monitoring Officer for publication or inspection as soon as practicable after the decision has been made to enable publication within the timescale set out in 2.5.5 above.

2.5.7 Executive Functions cease to be Executive Functions (and the decision must be taken by full Council) if the decision maker proposes to:

- (a) make a decision which is inconsistent with a policy approved by the full Council which applies to that decision; or
- (b) make a decision contrary to the budget, capital programme or treasury management in circumstances where the full Council has not authorised this.

2.6 Authorisations to other Officers

Officers with delegated powers may, in writing, authorise another officer or officers to exercise those powers in any or particular circumstances. Such authorisations may be subject to limitations and conditions. The officer with the delegated powers shall keep a register of all authorisations granted.

Copies of any authorisations must also be sent:

- (a) to the Monitoring Officer: every authorisation;
- (b) to the S151 officer: authorisations relating to the management of employees and authorisations to sign orders/requisitions cheques etc.

2.7 Reserve Delegations

The delegated powers held by a post may be exercised by the line manager of that post (or by the line manager's line manager or by the Chief Executive) if:

- (a) that post is vacant;
- (b) the post-holder is not at work for any reason;
- (c) the person who has the delegated power has a conflict of interest in the decision or matter.

2.8 Transfer of Functions

Where the name of a post is changed for any reason, the renamed post shall retain any delegated powers possessed by the post prior to the name change.

Where a service area is restructured, the Chief Executive has authority to re-allocate any officer delegated powers (whether council or executive functions) to other posts and shall give notice of this to the Monitoring Officer and shall also notify all Councillors. The officer to whom any delegated power is transferred is responsible for reauthorising any subordinate officers to take any action under his or her delegations

When a post is vacant and an employee takes on the duties of the post in an "acting" capacity, they have the same delegated powers that they would have if they held the substantive post.

SPECIFIC DELEGATIONS

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. To take any action, including the incurring of expenditure, in connection with an emergency or disaster in the district.
2. To exercise powers delegated to any Officer when that Officer is unable or unwilling to act.
3. To employ outside consultants and firms in cases where he/she is satisfied that it is necessary to do so in order to carry out work which cannot be dealt with by in-house staff.

MONITORING OFFICER

1. To institute, defend, appear and be responsible for the conduct of legal proceedings before any court, tribunal or public inquiry on behalf of and in the name of the Council where it is in the Council's interests to do so and in particular:
 - a) To instruct and retain Counsel and obtain advice in relation to any matter whenever this is considered to be in the interests of the Council;
 - b) To settle proceedings of any description including the payment of damages, compensation and legal costs in consultation with Strategic Directors. Where the settlement figure exceeds £50,000 the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council will be consulted first.
2. To authorise officers to appear in any civil or criminal court or tribunal, and act as authorised officers for the purposes of all legislation under which the Council has duties and powers.
3. To authorise officers to enter land and premises where an authorised officer of the Council may do so under any enactment.
4. To authorise, issue and serve all Statutory Notices (including Requisitions for Information) under any enactment.
5. To sign and seal documents on behalf of the Council.
6. To issue enforcement notices and/or serve stop notices under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
7. To determine applications for Lawful Development Certificates pursuant to Sections 191-194 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

8. To accept statutory declarations for the purpose contained in the Housing Acts 1980, 1985 and 1988.
9. To sign indemnities and provide solicitors' undertakings where they are required to enable the Council to exercise any of its functions subject to consultation with the Section 151 Officer where the indemnity or undertaking has considerable financial implications.
10. To ensure compliance with the requirements specified in the Data Protection Act 1998, the Human Rights Act 1998, the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.
11. To make/amend the Constitution or the Scheme of Delegations where there has been a change of law, job title, structure or rearrangement of responsibilities between officers or to correct typographical and clerical errors (all members to be notified forthwith).

DRAFT

PROPER OFFICER PROVISIONS

Any officer referred to by his/her title/post throughout this Constitution will automatically succeed his/her successor in title/post.

“Proper Officer” appointments in accordance with the relevant provisions of the specified legislation are as set out hereunder:-

Local Government Act 1972

<u>Section</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Proper Officer</u>
13(3)	Chairman of Parish Meeting and Proper Officer shall become a body corporate where there is no separate parish council.	Head of Paid Service
83(1)	Receipt of Declaration of Acceptance of Office.	Monitoring Officer/ Head of Paid Service
84	The Officer to whom a person elected to any office under the Council may give written notice of resignation.	Monitoring Officer/ Head of Paid Service
88(2)	The Officer who may convene a meeting of the Council for the election to fill a vacancy.	Head of Paid Service
89(1)(b)	The Officer who may receive notice in writing of a casual vacancy in the office of Councillor from two local government electors.	Head of Paid Service
96(1)	Receipt of notices of pecuniary interest.	Monitoring Officer
96(2)	The Officer who shall keep the record of disclosures of interest under Section 94 and of notices under Section 96(1) and of Section 19 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.	Monitoring Officer
100A- 100K	Access to Information	Monitoring Officer
115(2)	The Officer who shall receive all money due from every officer employed by the Council.	Section 151 Officer
146(1)(a) and (b)	The Officer who shall give statutory declarations and certificates with regard to securities on the change of name or status.	Section 151 Officer
151	The Officer responsible for the proper administration of financial affairs.	Section 151 Officer

<u>Section</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Proper Officer</u>
191	The Officer to whom applications under Section 1 of the Ordnance Survey Act 1841 should be sent.	Strategic Director
225(1)	Deposit of Documents with the Proper Officer and making of notes or endorsements and receipts.	Monitoring Officer
229(5)	The Officer who shall certify that a document is a photographic copy of a document in the custody of the Council.	Monitoring Officer
234	The Officer who may authenticate documents.	Monitoring Officer
236(9) and (10)	The Officer who is responsible for sending certified copies of byelaws to appropriate bodies.	Monitoring Officer
238	The Officer who shall certify copies of Byelaws as true copies.	Monitoring Officer
Sch 12 Para 4(2)(b)	The Officer who may sign a summons to Council meetings.	Head of Paid Service
Sch 12 Para 4(3)	The Officer who may receive notice from a Member of the address to which a summons to a meeting is to be sent.	Head of Paid Service
Sch 14 Para 25(7)	The Officer who may certify copies of resolutions passed under the Public Health Acts 1875 to 1925 as true copies for production in legal proceedings.	Monitoring Officer
Local Government Act 1974		
30(5)	Publication in newspapers of reports of Local Commissioner.	Head of Paid Service
Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976		
41	Certification of copies of resolutions, minutes and other documents.	Monitoring Officer
Building Act 1984		
S93	Authentication of documents	Section 151 Officer

Note: Infectious disease legislation for which Babergh is the enforcing Authority is co-ordinated to a large extent by the joint approaches of the Assistant Director Environment and Projects and the Consultant in Communicable Diseases Control (CCDC). The CCDC is appointed to act as a Proper Officer on behalf of Babergh District Council.

Public Health Acts - Health Protection Functions

The CCDC, where nominated below, shall be the Consultant in Communicable Disease Control for Suffolk as designated by the Health Protection Agency's Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire Health Protection Unit (NSCHPU), or by any successor agency or unit, or any equivalently medically qualified deputising officer, also as designated by any successor agency or unit.

<u>Section</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Proper Officer</u>
Public Health Act 1936		
84	Cleansing of filthy and verminous articles.	CCDC (as Medical Officer of Health)
85	Cleansing of filthy and verminous persons and their clothing.	CCDC (as Medical Officer of Health)
Public Health (Control of Disease Act) 1984 as amended, and any subordinate Regulations or Orders		
Wherever Proper Officer is referenced or specified:-		CCDC
61	Powers of entry	CCDC or Assistant Director Environment and Projects
62	Supplementary powers of entry	CCDC or Assistant Director Environment and Projects
National Assistance Act 1948 (as amended) and Section 61 of the National Assistance Act 1951		
47	Removal to suitable premises of persons in need of care and attention	Assistant Director Environment and Projects to appoint consultant(s) as necessary to act as the Medical Officer of Health

DEPUTY PROPER OFFICER PROVISIONS

In respect of the purposes for which the Head of Paid Service is the Proper Officer of the Council, the Deputy Chief Executive and/or the Strategic Director will act as the Proper Officer and as Deputy Returning Officer for all purposes for Elections and as Deputy Electoral Returning Officer.

In other cases where the designated Proper Officer is unable to act, the following are designated Deputy Proper Officers:-

For any Assistant Director, a Strategic Director, the Deputy Chief Executive or Head of Paid Service.

For a Strategic Director, another Strategic Director, the Deputy Chief Executive or the Head of Paid Service.

For the Section 151 Officer, the Deputy Section 151 Officer.

For the Monitoring Officer, a Deputy Monitoring Officer.

For the Consultant in Communicable Diseases (CCDC), any equivalently medically qualified officer as designated by the Health Protection Agency's Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire Health Protection Unit (NSCHPU), or by any successor agency or unit.

For the Assistant Director Environment and Projects in respect of sections 61 and 62 of the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984, any Officer duly authorised by the Assistant Director Environment and Projects.

Any Proper Officer may appoint any other person in writing to act on his/her behalf.

PART 3

Rules of Procedure

GLOSSARY FOR COUNCIL, COMMITTEE AND SUB COMMITTEE MEETINGS

PROPOSITION FLOWCHART

AMENDMENT FLOWCHART

COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES

COMMITTEE AND SUB COMMITTEE PROCEDURE RULES

CABINET PROCEDURE RULES

ACCESS TO INFORMATION PROCEDURE RULES

BUDGET & POLICY FRAMEWORK

SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULES

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES

CONTRACT STANDING ORDERS

STAFF EMPLOYMENT PROCEDURE RULES

GLOSSARY FOR CABINET, COUNCIL, COMMITTEE AND SUB COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Access to Information Rules - Provisions that apply to all councils that provide the public and press with access to meetings and connected papers of the Council, its committees or sub committees unless confidential or exempt information is likely to be disclosed.

Agenda – The list of matters to be discussed at a meeting. Referred to as a Summons in respect of Council meetings.

Allocation of Seats – The allocation to different political groups of seats on a committee.

Annual Meeting of the Council – A meeting that happens every year when the Chairman and Vice Chairman are appointed and the membership of the Council's Committees is confirmed according to the political proportionality of the Council at that time.

Articles – The basic rules governing the Council's business.

Background Papers – The law says that report authors must list any papers used in compiling a report for decision, and these papers must be available for 6 years to anyone wishing to inspect them.

Cabinet - The leader elected by the Council and up to 9 councillors chosen by the Leader to form a cabinet with legal powers and responsibilities for discharging executive functions including the day to day management of the council's business in line with an overarching framework approved by the Council.

Chairman – The Chairman and Vice Chairman are elected at the Annual meeting of the Council and preside over all meetings of the Council.

Clear Working Days – All agendas and papers for decision in public must be available five clear working days before the decision is taken (special rules can apply to urgent late items). The five days does NOT include the day the papers are sent out or the date of the meeting (hence the use of 'clear'). 'Working' is taken to be Monday to Friday inclusive and excludes Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays.

Committee – Council committees comprise a group of members appointed to perform some service or function on behalf of the Council.

Confidential Information – Information either given to the Council by the Government on terms which forbid its public disclosure or which cannot be publicly disclosed by Court Order. (See also 'Exempt Information' below).

Councillor – An elected Member of the Council.

Debate – The formal discussion between the elected Councillors of a Council or a Committee during a meeting according to the rules of procedure for that body.

Delegation of Functions – The Cabinet Leader or the Council can delegate the exercise of their statutory functions to officers or to committees or to another local authority, while also retaining the power to discharge the function itself. Officers who have been given delegated powers may also authorise other officers to discharge all or part of their delegated authority (with or without further limitations) on their behalf, although the officer with the delegated power remains responsible for the proper discharge of the power. S.101(3) of the Local Government Act 1972 provides that where the Council has entered into joint arrangements with another local authority, functions can be discharged on behalf of the Council by the other authorities' officers.

Exempt Information - Information, falling into one of 7 categories set out in the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended) which usually cannot be publicly disclosed – see the [Access to Information Procedure Rules in Part] of the Constitution.

Extraordinary Meeting – Is one called in accordance with the process as set out in the Constitution. This type of meeting is outside the regular timetable and has special requirements as to who can call this meeting. This is not to be confused with calling an Ordinary Meeting or an additional Council meeting.

Key Decision – a cabinet decision meeting the criteria set out in Article 12 that is included in the Forthcoming Decision Plan.

Ordinary Meeting – Most Council meetings are ordinary or regular meetings (known as Ordinary meetings). These meetings are held on a regular basis and conduct the ordinary business of the Council.

Motion – A motion is a formal proposal put to Council or a Committee. The motion must be moved and then seconded before it can be debated.

“it must be expressed as a motion in positive terms to adopt a certain course of action or to do some act or to declare a particular attitude”

This should not be confused with a report recommendation and/or question from the floor of the Council Chamber or any committee or to Cabinet.

There are two types of motion, formal on notice and procedural without notice. For the process

Nomination – This means the act of officially suggesting someone to be on one of the Council's Committees or outside bodies.

Personal Explanation – A personal explanation is when a Councillor wishes to clarify the meeting's understanding of something they said in an earlier speech which appears to have been misunderstood by other Councillors in the current debate. For example, if another Councillor is taking what the Councillor raising the personal explanation has said in the wrong context or is deliberately misinterpreting it. This must relate to a material part of an earlier speech.

Petition – This is a formal written request, typically one signed by twenty people appealing to the Council in relating to the exercise or non-exercise of duties or powers of the Council. Signing a petition is one way for citizens who are resident in and/or who work or study in the District to express their concerns and priorities to the Council. Such a petition shall be referred to the next meeting of the Committee or Sub-Committee responsible for the administration of the powers in connection with the subject matter of the petition. In addition the Chief Executive shall report the receipt of such a petition to the next meeting of the Council where there shall be no comment or debate upon that fact.

Point of Order – A point of order may be raised by a Councillor who believes that there has been a breach of the Council procedure rules or the law. This is a very narrow definition, upon which the Chairman's ruling is final.

Political Balance Rules – Sections 15-17 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 ("the Act") require the Council to follow rules to secure the political balance on Committees and Sub Committees. Political groups for the purposes of the Act should not be confused with political parties. The formula for determining entitlement to seats is complicated but the number of seats on the main Committees allocated to a political group must bear the same relationship to the total membership of the Council.

Political Proportionality – A legal principle which dictates that Committees of the Council must include elected politicians in proportion to the size of their groups on the Council as a whole.

Powers – The Council provides a wide range of services either directly itself or by commissioning services from outside organisations. The Council largely works within powers laid down under Acts of Parliament but the Council also has a general power of competence (The Localism Act 2011). Most Council services are mandatory. This means that the Council must do them because they are under a duty to do so by law. Some Council services and functions are discretionary; these are services a Council can choose to provide.

Proper Officer – A senior officer of the Council who is given a set of responsibilities by statute.

Proposition/Proposal – A formal suggestion/motion put forward for consideration by the Committee or Council meeting. A proposition/proposal must be seconded before it can be debated or voted upon.

Questions – Questions at ordinary meetings of the Council can either be from the public or from Councillors. At some other Committees, for example Planning or Licensing, members of the public can make representations according to the rules of these Committees.

Quorum – The minimum number of Councillors that must be present at either a Council meeting or a Committee meeting to make the proceedings of that meeting valid.

Report – This is the written format of information put before the Council or a Committee. A report must provide sufficient information and detail for Councillors to take a lawful and informed decision on the subject matter. A report will have a form of action or a decision to take no action or note something.

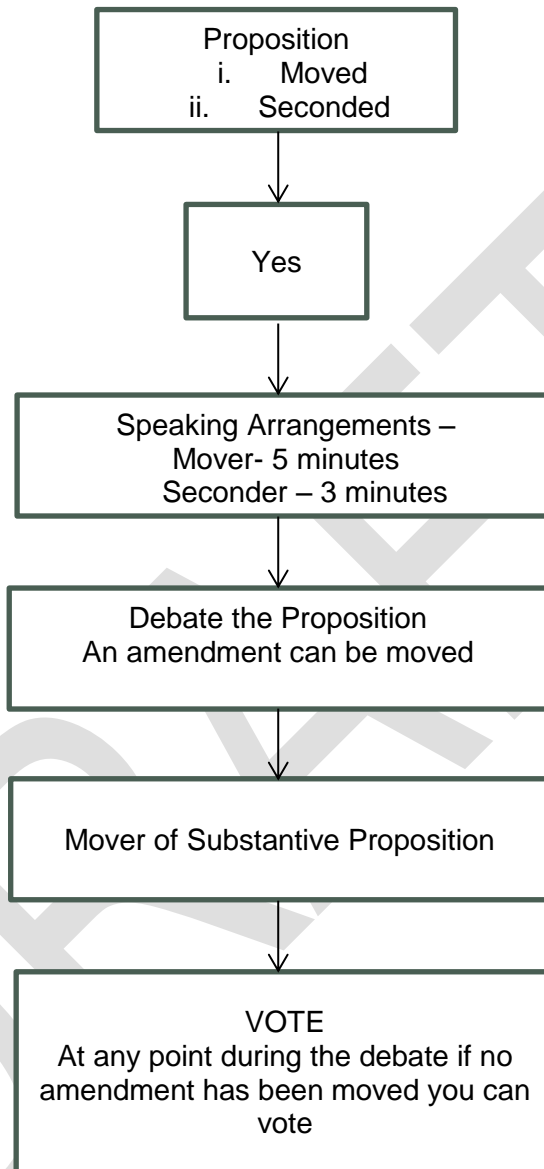
A report is prepared by Officers for and on behalf of elected Councillors. A report is not to be confused with laying down a formal motion. When a report is placed before Council or a Committee, a Councillor must move the recommendation(s) and they must be seconded before they can be debated. Any elected Councillor can put forward an amended recommendation and seek a seconder for that.

Requisition – This is a request or call for an additional Council (extraordinary) meeting.

Statute – This is an Act of Parliament.

Substitute – A substitute on a Committee is a Councillor acting in the place of another Councillor.

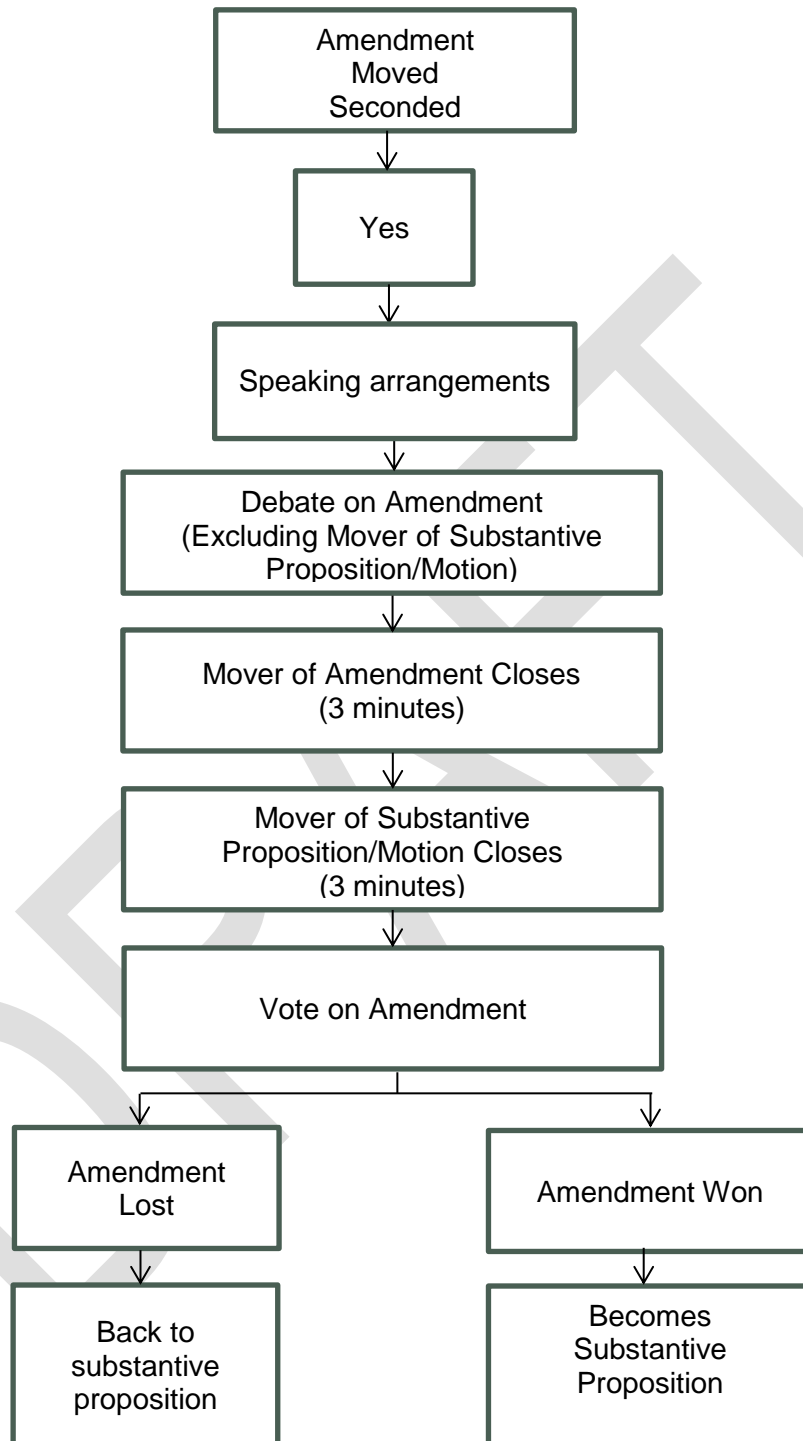
Dealing with Main Substantive/Original Proposition/Motion



At any time after moved and seconded:

Point of Order – A point of order may be raised by a Councillor who believes that there has been a breach of the Council procedure rules or the law.

Dealing with Amendments



At any time after moved and seconded:
Point of Order – A point of order may be raised by a Councillor who believes that there has been a breach of the Council procedure rules or the law.

COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 These rules are designed to ensure meetings of the Council run smoothly and are conducted properly.
 - 1.2 So far as the law allows, any of these rules may be suspended at any meeting of Council, either for the whole meeting or for a particular item on the agenda. In order to achieve this at least one half of the whole number of Members of the Council should be present, a motion must be moved and seconded and a vote carried.
 - 1.3 If any issues arise at a meeting in relation to interpretation of the procedure rules the Chairman's decision shall be final.
 - 1.4 Any motion (including a motion received on notice) or proposition to add to, vary or revoke these Council meeting Procedure Rules, shall when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the Council.
-

2. ARRANGEMENTS FOR COUNCIL MEETINGS

- 2.1 Consideration and Signing of the Minutes

The Chairman will sign the Minutes of the proceedings at the next suitable meeting. The only part of the Minutes that can be discussed is their accuracy
- 2.2 Placards, banners, advertising materials and similar items are not permitted in any Council meeting.
- 2.3 Members of the public may record proceedings and report all public meetings, although oral commentary during meetings is not permitted as this would be disruptive to the good order of the meeting.
- 2.4 Mobile phones must be switched off or to silent mode.
- 2.5 The public may record (eg film, audio, tweet, blog) meetings which are open to the public.
- 2.6 The Chair of the meeting has the discretion to stop or suspend recordings by the public if in their opinion continuing to do so would disrupt proceedings at the meeting. The circumstances in which this might occur include:
 - (a) Excessive noise in recording or setting up and re-setting equipment
 - (b) Intrusive lighting and use of flash photography

- (c) Moving to areas outside the area designated for the public without the Chair's consent.
 - (d) Whilst taking a recording (eg film, audio, tweet, blog) you must not do so in a manner which constitutes an invasion of privacy.
- 2.7 Those recording meetings are strongly urged to respect the wish of any member of the public not to be recorded.
- 2.8 Agendas for and signage at meetings will make it clear that recording can take place. Anyone who does not wish to be recorded should let the Chair of the meeting know.
- 2.9 Recording and reporting the meetings is subject to the law and it is the responsibility of those doing the recording and reporting to ensure compliance; eg with the Human Rights Act, the Data Protection Act and the laws of libel, defamation and public order. Freedom of speech within the law should also be exercised with personal and social responsibility – showing respect and tolerance towards the views of others.
- 2.10 The Council has a protocol in place in respect of [recording at meetings](#) which is available on the Council's website.
-

3. SUMMONS AND AGENDA

- 3.1 The time and place of meetings will be determined by the Chief Executive and notified in the summons which, at least five clear working days before a meeting will be signed by the Chief Executive and sent to every Member of the Council by electronic mail or left at his/her usual place of residence and to the public in accordance with the Access to Information Rules.
- 3.2 The agenda and papers for meetings of the Council must be available at least five clear working days before the meeting.
- 3.3 The duration of any meeting shall be at the absolute discretion of the Chairman. At any time during the meeting the Chairman may adjourn the meeting.
-

4. ORDER OF BUSINESS

4.1 Annual Meeting of Council

This is a statutory order of business and cannot be changed.

In a year when there is an ordinary election of Councillors, the annual meeting will take place within 21 days of the retirement of the outgoing Councillors (Councillors take office on the 4th day after the election). In any other year, the annual meeting will usually take place in May.

The annual meeting will:

- (a) elect a person to preside if the Chairman and Vice Chairman are not present;
- (b) elect the Chairman of Council for the administrative year;
- (c) elect the Vice-Chairman of Council for the administrative year;
- (d) receive apologies;
- (e) receive declarations of interest;
- (f) deal with any item required by statute to be dealt with before any other item;
- (g) approve the minutes of the last meeting;
- (h) receive any announcements from the Chairman, Leader and/or Head of Paid Service;
- (i) elect a Leader;
- (j) appoint Committees and Sub-Committees as the Council considers appropriate;
- (k) elect Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees and Sub Committees;
- (l) decide the allocation of seats to Committees and substitutes of political groups in accordance with the political balance rules.
- (m) receive nomination and appoint Councillors to serve on each Committee and outside body/partnership.
- (n) consider any business set out in the notice convening the meeting;

4.2 Election of Chairman of Council

The Term of Office of the Chairman of Council shall be for one year with the retiring Chairman and previous Chairmen being eligible for re-election.

4.3 Holding of Office

Any Member of the Council appointed to a Committee or other body shall not hold office later than the next Annual Meeting of the Council.

4.4 Dissolution of Committee

The Council may at any time dissolve a Committee or alter its Membership.

5. ORDINARY MEETINGS

The following order of business does not have to be followed and can be changed at the Chairman's discretion before the agenda/summons is sent out or during the meeting itself by a resolution following a motion that has been moved, seconded and put to the meeting without debate.

Ordinary meetings will:

- (a) elect a person to preside if the Chairman and Vice-Chairman are not present;
- (b) receive apologies;
- (c) receive declarations of interest;
- (d) deal with any item required by statute to be dealt with before any other item;
- (e) approve the minutes of the last meeting;
- (f) receive any announcements from the Chairman, Leader and/or Head of Paid Service;
- (g) receive notification of petitions;
- (h) deal with any business from the last Council meeting;
- (i) consider questions from, and provide answers to, the public in relation to matters which in the opinion of the person presiding at the meeting are relevant to the business of the meeting;

- (j) consider questions from, and provide answers to, Councillors on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties or which affects the District;
 - (k) receive reports about, and receive questions and answers on, the business of joint arrangements and external organisations;
 - (l) receive reports from the Leader and/or when necessary from relevant Portfolio Holders;
 - (m) receive reports from the Chairman of Joint Scrutiny Committee;
 - (n) consider any other business specified in the summons to the meeting;
 - (o) consider motions received on Notice.
-

6. EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS

The following may request the Chief Executive to call Council meetings in addition to ordinary meetings:

- (a) the Council by resolution;
 - (b) the Chairman of Council;
 - (c) the Monitoring Officer;
 - (d) the Chief Finance Officer; and
 - (e) where at least one-third (rounded up) of Members of the Council have signed a requisition presented to the Chairman of Council and he/she has refused to call a meeting or has failed to call a meeting within seven days of the presentation of the requisition.
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7. STATE OF THE DISTRICT DEBATE

7.1 Calling of State of the District Debate

The Chairman of Council may call a State of the District debate on a date and in a form to be agreed.

7.2 Form of the State of the District Debate

The Chairman of Council will decide the form of the debate with the aim of enabling the widest possible public involvement and publicity.

7.3 **Chairing of the State of the District Debate**

The debate will be chaired by the Chairman of Council.

7.4 **Results of the State of the District Debate**

The results of the debate will be:

- (a) disseminated as widely as possible within the community and to relevant agencies and organisations in the area; and
- (b) considered by the Cabinet in proposing the budget and policy framework to the Council for the coming year.

8. **QUORUM**

8.1 The quorum of a meeting will be one quarter of the whole number of Councillors (for the avoidance of doubt this will be rounded up to the next whole number). During any meeting if the Chairman counts the number of Councillors present and declares there is not a quorum present, then the meeting will adjourn immediately.

8.2 Remaining issues will be considered at a time and date fixed by the Chairman. If he/she does not fix a date, the remaining business will be considered at the next ordinary meeting.

9. **URGENT ITEMS**

9.1 No business shall be transacted at a meeting of the Council other than that specified in the agenda except business brought before the meeting as a matter of urgency as certified by the Chairman for specific reasons which are to be included in the Minutes.

10. **PETITIONS**

10.1 If any petition is submitted to the Chief Executive, either directly or indirectly, relating to the exercise or non-exercise of duties or powers of the Council and signed by at least twenty persons who are resident in the District or who work or study in the District it shall be referred to the next meeting of the Committee or Sub-Committee responsible for the administration of the powers in connection with the subject matter of the petition. In addition the Chief Executive shall report the receipt of such a petition to the next meeting of the Council where there shall be no debate or comment thereon.

The [petition scheme](#) is available on the Council website.

11. QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC

11.1 General

Members of the public may ask questions of the Chairman in accordance with the provisions of this rule.

11.2 Order of Questions

Questions shall be asked in the order notice of them was received, except that the Chairman may group together similar questions.

11.3 Notice of Questions

A question may be asked only if notice has been given by delivering it in writing or by electronic mail to the Chief Executive no later than midday three clear working days before the day of the meeting. Each question must give the name and address of the questioner and must name the relevant Chairman to whom it is to be put.

11.4 Number of Questions

At any one meeting no person may submit more than one question (plus a supplementary question) and no more than one question (plus a supplementary question) may be asked on behalf of one organisation. The Chairman shall also have the discretion to limit the number of questions received at any one meeting.

11.5 Scope of Questions

The Chief Executive may reject a question if it:

- (a) is not about a matter for which the Local Authority has a responsibility or which affects the district;
- (b) is defamatory, frivolous, vexatious or offensive;
- (c) is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the past six months; or
- (d) requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.
- (e) relates to a regulatory matter which the relevant committee has determined.

11.6 Asking a Question at the Meeting

The Chairman will invite the questioner to put the question to any Councillor who may be named in the question. If a questioner who has submitted a written question is unable to be present, he or she may ask the Chairman to put the question on his/her behalf. The Chairman may ask the question on the questioner's behalf, indicate that a written reply will be given or decide, in the absence of the questioner, that the question will not be dealt with.

11.7 Supplementary Question

A questioner who has put a question in person may also put one supplementary question without notice to the Councillor who has replied to his or her original question. A supplementary question must arise directly out of the original question or the reply. The Chairman may reject a supplementary question on any of the grounds in Rule 11.5 above.

11.8 Written Answers

Any question which cannot be dealt with during the public question time, either because of lack of time or because of the non-attendance of the Councillor to whom it was to be put, will be dealt with by a written answer and be made available on request.

11.9 Reference of Question to a Committee

Unless the Chairman decides otherwise, no discussion will take place on any question, but any Councillor may move that a matter raised by a question be referred to the appropriate Committee or Sub-Committee.

12. QUESTIONS BY COUNCILLORS

12.1 General

Councillors may ask questions of the Chairman in accordance with any item on the Agenda. These questions can be asked without notice.

12.2 Questions on Notice at Council

A Councillor may ask a question on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties or which affects the District of:

- (a) the Chairman; or
- (b) the Chairman of any Committee or Sub-Committee
- (c) a Portfolio Holder

provided Rule 12.3 has been followed.

12.3 Notice of Questions

A Councillor may only ask a question under this Rule if either:

- (a) he/she has given by noon at least three clear working days' notice in writing or by electronic mail of the question to the Chief Executive.
- (b) if the question relates to an urgent matter, then with the consent of the Council Chairman provided that the question is given to the Chief Executive by 4 p.m. on the working day prior to the meeting it can be put to Council.

12.4 Response

An answer may take the form of:

- (a) a direct oral answer given at the meeting;
- (b) where the desired information is in a publication of the Council or other published work, a reference to that publication; or
- (c) where the reply cannot conveniently be given orally, a written answer circulated later to the questioner.

12.5 Supplementary Question

A Councillor asking a question under Rule 12.2 may ask one supplementary question without notice to the Councillor to whom the first question was asked. The supplementary question must arise directly out of the original question or the reply.

13. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

13.1 Notice

Except for motions which can be moved without notice under Rule 14, written notice of every motion, signed by at least two Councillors, must be delivered to the Chief Executive no later than five clear working days (that is not counting either the day of the meeting or the day of receipt) before the date of the meeting.

13.2 Motion on Notice

Motions for which notice has been given will be listed on the Council Agenda in the order in which notice was received, unless the Councillor giving notice states, in writing, that he/she proposes to move it to a later meeting or withdraws.

13.3 **Scope**

Motions must be about matters for which the Council has a responsibility or which affect the District

13.4 **Circumstances when a Motion on Notice will not be accepted**

The Chief Executive may reject any motion if she/he considers that it:-

- (a) does not relate to the business of the Council or affect the District;
- (b) is defamatory, frivolous or offensive; or
- (c) is a motion which the Council has no power to pass or which contravenes any provision in these Rules of Procedure.

13.5 At the meeting a valid motion on notice must be moved and seconded before any consideration or debate can take place. The Councillor proposing the motion must move and explain the purpose of it. No speeches or debate can take place until the motion has been seconded.

13.6 If the subject matter of any motion in respect of which notice has been duly given falls within the terms of reference of any Committee the Chairman may without any discussion or debate determine that it will be referred to the relevant Committee or to such other Committee or Committees for initial consideration and/or investigation. If the motion stands referred then a report will be provided to the Council as soon as possible informing Council of the outcome

13.7 If the motion stands referred to a Committee the Chairman may use his/her discretion and allow the motion to be dealt with at the meeting at which it is brought forward. If the Councillor giving notice of the motion is not on the Committee then he/she should be invited to the relevant meeting.

13.8 **Alteration of Motion**

A Councillor may alter a motion of which he/she has given notice with the consent of the meeting. The meeting's consent will be signified without discussion.

A Councillor may alter a motion which he/she has moved without notice with the consent of both the meeting and the seconder. The meeting's consent will be signified without discussion.

Only alterations which could be made as an amendment may be made.

14. PROPOSITION/PROPOSALS AND MOTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

14.1 Motions and/or propositions without any notice can be moved and seconded then voted upon at meetings.

The following motion may be moved without notice:

- (a) to appoint a Chairman of the meeting at which the motion is moved;
- (b) in relation to the accuracy of the Minutes;
- (c) to change the order of business in the Agenda;
- (d) to refer something to an appropriate body or individual;
- (e) to appoint a Committee or Councillor arising from an item on the summons for the meeting;
- (f) to receive reports or adoption of recommendations of Committees or officers and any resolutions following from them;
- (g) to withdraw a motion;
- (h) to amend a motion;
- (i) to proceed to the next business;
- (j) that the question be now put;
- (k) to adjourn a debate;
- (l) to adjourn a meeting;
- (m) to suspend a particular Council Procedure Rule other than Council Procedure Rules 18.5 (recorded vote) and 2.1 (signed minutes);
- (n) to exclude the public and press in accordance with the Access to Information Rules;
- (o) to not hear further a Councillor named under Rule 19.3 or to exclude him or her from the meeting under Rule 19.4;
- (p) to give the consent of the Council where its consent is required by this Constitution.
- (q) To amend or accept the recommendation contained in a report under consideration by the Council.

15. AMENDMENTS TO PROPOSITIONS/PROPOSALS AND MOTIONS ON NOTICE

- (a) An amendment to a proposal/motion must be relevant to the motion and will either be:
- (i) to refer the matter to an appropriate body or individual for consideration or reconsideration;
 - (ii) to leave out words;
 - (iii) to leave out words and insert or add others; or
 - (iv) to insert or add words
- as long as the effect of (ii) to (iv) is not to negate the motion.
- (b) Only one amendment may be moved and discussed at any one time. No further amendment may be moved until the amendment under discussion has been disposed of.
- (c) The mover of the amendment has no right of reply to the debate on his or her amendment.
- (d) If an amendment is not carried, other amendments to the original proposal/motion may be moved.
- (e) If an amendment is carried, the proposal/motion as amended takes the place of the original proposal/motion. This becomes the substantive proposal/motion to which any further amendments are moved.
- (f) After an amendment has been carried, the Chairman will read out the amended proposal/motion before accepting any further amendments, or if there are none, put it to the vote.

- 15.1 If an amendment to a proposal/motion has been moved and seconded, the mover of the original proposal/motion has a right of reply at the close of the debate on the amendment following the mover of the amendment's closing remarks but may not otherwise speak on it.

15.2 Withdrawal of Motion

A Councillor may withdraw a motion which he/she has moved with the consent of both the meeting and the seconder. The meeting's consent will be signified without discussion. No Councillor may speak on the motion after the mover has asked permission to withdraw it unless permission is refused.

16. RULES OF DEBATE

- 16.1 If a Councillor wishes to speak they should indicate their intention by raising their hand.
- 16.2 The Chairman will decide the order in which speakers will be heard.
- 16.3 Councillors will stand when speaking and must address the Chairman.
- 16.4 Speeches must be directed to the subject under discussion or to a personal explanation or point of order. The speech of a proposer of any motion or amendment shall not exceed 5 minutes and no other speech may exceed 3 minutes without the consent of the Chairman.
- 16.5 When seconding a motion or amendment, a Councillor may reserve his/her speech until later in the debate.
- 16.6 Unless notice of the motion has already been given, the Chairman may require it to be written down and handed to him/her before it is discussed.
- 16.7 Councillors may speak once on any motion. However, if a motion is amended Councillors may speak once on each amendment.
- 16.8 If the motion has been amended since the Councillor last spoke, that Councillor may move a further amendment to the motion.
- 16.9 The Councillor who moved the original motion has a right of reply at the close of the debate on that motion or any agreed amendment.
- 16.10 A Councillor may raise a point of order at any time. The Chairman will hear him/her immediately. A point of order may only relate to an alleged breach of these Council Procedure Rules or the law. The Councillor must indicate the rule or law and the way in which he/she considers it has been broken. The ruling of the Chairman on the matter will be final.
- 16.11 A Councillor may make a personal explanation at any time. A personal explanation may only relate to some material part of an earlier speech by the Councillor which may appear to have been misunderstood in the present debate. The ruling of the Chairman on the admissibility of a personal explanation will be final.

16.12 **Bringing Debate to Early Closure**

- (a) A Councillor who has not already spoken in the matter may orally move a motion (which must be seconded and voted upon):
- (i) To proceed to the next business;
 - (ii) That the question be now put;

- (iii) To adjourn a debate;
 - (iv) To adjourn a meeting which shall not be put to the vote until it has been seconded.
- (b) If a motion/proposition to proceed to next business is seconded and the Chairman thinks the item has been sufficiently discussed, he or she will give the mover of the original motion/proposition / a right of reply and then put the procedural motion to the vote.
- (c) If a motion/proposition that the question be now put is seconded and the Chairman thinks the item has been sufficiently discussed, he/she will put the procedural motion to the vote.
- (d) If it is passed he/she will give the mover of the original motion/proposition a right of reply before putting his/her motion/proposition to the vote
- (e) If a motion/proposition to adjourn the debate or to adjourn the meeting is seconded and the Chairman thinks the item has not been sufficiently discussed and cannot reasonably be so discussed on that occasion, he/she will put the procedural motion to the vote without giving the mover of the original motion/proposition the right of reply.
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17. PREVIOUS DECISIONS AND MOTIONS

- 17.1 Council decisions are final and should normally not be altered or amended for six months.
- 17.2 A motion or amendment to rescind a decision made at a meeting of Council within the past six months cannot be moved unless the notice of motion is signed by at least 14 Councillors.
- 17.3 A motion or amendment in similar terms to one that has been rejected at a meeting of Council in the past six months cannot be moved unless the notice of motion or amendment is signed by at least 14 Councillors. Once the motion or amendment is dealt with, no one can propose a similar motion or amendment for six months.
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18. VOTING

18.1 Majority

Unless this Constitution provides otherwise any matter will be decided by a simple majority of those Councillors voting and present in the room at the time the question was put.

18.2 Chairman's Casting Vote

If there are equal numbers of votes for and against, the Chairman will have a second or casting vote. There will be no restriction on how the Chairman chooses to exercise a casting vote.

18.3 Budget Meetings

Immediately after any vote is taken at a budget decision meeting of the Council the names of Councillors who cast a vote for the decision or against the decision or who abstained from voting shall be recorded in the Minutes of that meeting.

18.4 Show of Hands

Unless a recorded vote is demanded under Rules 18.5, the Chairman will take the vote by show of hands, or if there is no dissent, by the affirmation of the meeting.

18.5 Recorded Vote

If five Councillors present at the meeting demand it, the names for and against the motion or amendment or abstaining from voting will be taken down in writing and entered into the Minutes.

18.6 Right to Require Individual Vote to be Recorded

Where any Councillor requests it immediately after the vote is taken, his/her vote will be so recorded in the Minutes to show whether he/she voted for or against the motion or abstained from voting.

18.7 Voting on Appointments

If there are more than two people nominated for any position to be filled and there is not a clear majority of votes in favour of one person, then the name of the person with the least number of votes will be taken off the list and a new vote taken. The process will continue until there is a majority of votes for one person.

19. COUNCILLORS' CONDUCT

19.1 Standing to Speak

When a Councillor speaks at Council he/she must stand and address the meeting through the Chairman. If more than one Councillor stands, the Chairman will ask one to speak and the others must sit. Other Councillors must remain seated whilst a Councillor is speaking unless they wish to make a point of order or a point of personal explanation.

19.2 Chairman Standing

When the Chairman stands during a debate, any Councillor speaking at the time must stop and sit down. The meeting must be silent.

19.3 Councillor not to be Heard Further

If a Councillor persistently disregards the ruling of the Chairman by behaving improperly or offensively or deliberately obstructs business, the Chairman may move that the Councillor be not heard further. If seconded, that motion will be voted on without discussion.

19.4 Councillor to Leave the Meeting

If the Councillor continues to behave improperly after such a motion is carried, the Chairman may move that either the Councillor leaves the meeting or that the meeting is adjourned for a specified period. If seconded, that motion will be voted on without discussion.

19.5 General Disturbance

If there is a general disturbance making orderly business impossible, the Chairman may adjourn the meeting for as long as he/she thinks necessary.

20. DISTURBANCE BY PUBLIC

20.1 Removal of Member of the Public

If a Member of the public interrupts proceedings, the Chairman will warn the person concerned. If he/she continues to interrupt, the Chairman will order his/her removal from the meeting room.

20.2 Clearance of Part of Meeting Room

If there is a general disturbance in any part of the meeting room open to the public, the Chairman may call for that part to be cleared.

21. APPOINTMENT/DELEGATIONS TO COMMITTEES

21.1 Delegation of Functions

The Council shall delegate its functions to such Committees and Sub-Committees as it deems appropriate.

22. RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

22.1 All Councillors present during the whole or part of a meeting must sign their names on the appropriate attendance record before the conclusion of every meeting to assist with the record of attendance.

23. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC

- a. Members of the public and press may only be excluded either in accordance with the [Access to Information Rules](#) in Part 3 of this Constitution or Rule 20.
- b. If any question arises at a meeting of the Council as to the appointment, promotion, salary, dismissal, pension entitlement or conditions of service or the conduct of a Council employee, such questions shall not be discussed until the Council has considered whether or not to exclude the press and public under Part 1 Paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

COMMITTEE AND SUB COMMITTEE PROCEDURE RULES

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 These rules are designed to ensure meetings run smoothly and are conducted properly.
 - 1.2 So far as the law allows, any of these rules may be suspended at any meeting, either for the whole meeting or for a particular item in the agenda. In order to achieve this at least one half of the whole number of Members of the committee or Sub Committee should be present, a motion must be moved and seconded and a vote carried.
 - 1.3 If any issues arise at a meeting in relation to interpretation of the procedure rules the Chairman's decision will be final.
 - 1.4 Any motion (including received on notice) or proposition to add to, vary or revoke these Committee meeting Procedure Rules, shall when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the Committee.
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2. ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMMITTEE AND SUB COMMITTEE MEETINGS

- 2.1 The agenda and papers, including such reports as are available, for meetings must be available at least five clear working days before the meeting.
 - 2.2 The duration of any meeting shall be at the absolute discretion of the Chairman.
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3. ORDER OF BUSINESS

- 3.1 The order of business will usually be:
 - (a) elect a person to preside if the Chairman and Vice-Chairman are not present;
 - (b) receive apologies;
 - (c) receive declarations of interest;
 - (d) deal with any item required by statute to be dealt with before any other item;
 - (e) approve the minutes of the last meeting;
 - (f) consider any relevant petitions
 - (g) deal with any business from the last meeting of the Committee;

- (h) consider questions from, and provide answers to, the public in relation to matters which in the opinion of the person presiding at the meeting are relevant to the business of the meeting;
- (i) consider questions from, and provide answers to, Councillors on any matter in relation to which the Committee has powers or duties;
- (j) receive reports for decision by Committee;
- (k) receive reports for information;
- (l) consider any other business specified on the agenda;
- (m) consider motions referred by Council

3.2 This order of business does not have to be followed and can be changed at the Chairman's discretion before the agenda is sent out or during the meeting itself.

4. REMOVAL OF CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEE

- 4.1 At any meeting of a Committee or Sub-Committee a Councillor may propose that "the meeting has no confidence in the Chairman", the question shall after debate be put and if carried by a majority of at least two thirds of the Councillors present the Chairman shall stand down and the remainder of the meeting shall be chaired by the Vice-Chairman or in his or her absence by a Councillor elected for that purpose by the meeting.
 - 4.2 Following a successful vote of no confidence in the elected Chairman he or she shall not officiate at any subsequent meeting of the Committee or Sub-Committee prior to the next meeting of the Council. At that meeting the Council shall consider whether to confirm or not the vote of no confidence. If by a simple majority the Council shall decide to confirm the vote the office of Chairman of the relevant Committee shall be declared vacant and a new Chairman shall be elected by the Council.
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5. QUORUM

- 5.2 The quorum of a meeting will be one quarter of the whole number of Councillor on that Committee (for the avoidance of doubt this will be rounded up to the next whole number). During any meeting if the Chairman counts the number of Councillor present and declares there is not a quorum present, then the meeting will adjourn immediately. Remaining issues will be considered at a time and date fixed by the Chairman. If he/she does not fix a date, the remaining business will be considered at the next meeting of that Committee.
- 5.2 The quorum of the Regulatory Sub Committee and the Licensing Sub Committee will be 3 members
- 5.3 At any time during the meeting the Chairman can adjourn the meeting.
- 5.4 The order of business can be varied at the discretion of the Chairman or by a resolution following a motion moved, seconded and put to the meeting without debate.
- 5.5 The person presiding at the meeting may exercise any power or duty of the Chairman.
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6 URGENT ITEMS

No business shall be transacted at a meeting of the Committee other than that specified in the agenda except business brought before the meeting as a matter of urgency as certified by the Chairman for specific reasons which are to be included in the Minutes.

7 QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC

7.1 General

Members of the public may ask questions of any Chairman of a Committee in accordance with the meeting agenda.

7.2 Order of Questions

Questions will be asked in the order notice of them was received, except that the Chairman may group together similar questions.

7.3 Notice of Questions

A question may only be asked if notice has been given by delivering it in writing or by electronic mail to the Chief Executive no later than three clear working days before the day of the meeting. Each question must give the name and address of the questioner and must name the relevant Chairman to whom it is to be put.

7.4 Number of Questions

At any one meeting no person may submit more than one question (plus a supplementary question) and no more than one question (plus a supplementary question) may be asked on behalf of one organisation. The Chairman shall also have the discretion to limit the number of questions received at any one meeting.

7.5 Scope of Questions

The Chief Executive may reject a question if it:

- (a) is not about a matter for which the Committee has a responsibility;
- (b) is defamatory, frivolous, vexatious or offensive;
- (c) is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of the Committee in the past six months; or
- (d) requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.

7.6 Asking the Question at the Meeting

The Chairman will invite the questioner to put the question to the Member named in the notice. If a questioner who has submitted a written question is unable to be present, he or she may ask the Chairman to put the question on his/her behalf. The Chairman may ask the question on the questioner's behalf, indicate that a written reply will be given or decide, in the absence of the questioner, that the question will not be dealt with.

7.7 Supplementary Question

A questioner who has put a question in person may also put one supplementary question without notice to the Member who has replied to his or her original question. A supplementary question must arise directly out of the original question or the reply. The Chairman may reject a supplementary question on any of the grounds in Rule 7.5 above.

7.8 Written Answers

Any question which cannot be dealt with during the public question time, either because of lack of time or because of the non-attendance of the Member to whom it was to be put, will be dealt with by a written answer and be made available on request.

8 QUESTIONS BY COUNCILLORS

8.1 Questions on Notice at Committees and Sub-Committees

Subject to Rule 8.2 a Member of a Committee or Sub-Committee may ask the Chairman a question on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties or which affect the District and which falls within the terms of reference of that Committee or Sub-Committee.

8.2 Notice of Questions

A Member may only ask a question if either:

- (a) he/she has given by noon at least three clear working days' notice in writing or by electronic mail of the question to the Chief Executive.
- (b) if the question relates to an urgent matter, then with the consent of the Committee Chairman provided that the question is given to the Chief Executive by 4 p.m. on the working day prior to the meeting it can be put to Council.

8.3 Response

An answer may take the form of:

- (a) a direct oral answer given at the meeting;
- (b) where the desired information is in a publication of the Council or other published work, a reference to that publication; or
- (c) where the reply cannot conveniently be given orally, a written answer circulated later to the questioner.

8.4 Supplementary Question

A Member asking a question under Rule 8.1 may ask one supplementary question without notice to the Member to whom the first question was asked. The supplementary question must arise directly out of the original question or the reply.

9 CONSIDERATION OR RECOMMENDATIONS IN REPORTS

With regard to the Planning Committee, the process to be followed in respect of the moving of recommendations is set out in the [Planning Charter](#).

- 9.1 The report recommendation should be moved by one Committee member and seconded by another Committee member. It then becomes a motion which may be debated before a vote is taken.
- 9.2 Motions relating to the following may be moved and seconded without notice but must be provided in writing to the Chairman when being moved:
- (a) an alternative to a recommendation in the report
 - (b) amendments to motions

10 MOTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Motions can be moved and seconded orally at meetings to ensure meetings run smoothly and are conducted properly. The following motions may be moved without notice:

- (a) to appoint a Chairman for the meeting in the absence of the Chairman and Vice Chairman;
- (b) in relation to the accuracy of the Minutes;
- (c) to change the order of business in the Agenda;
- (d) to refer something to an appropriate body or individual;
- (e) to appoint a Sub Committee arising from an item on the agenda for the meeting;
- (f) to withdraw a motion;
- (g) to amend a motion;
- (h) to proceed to the next business;
- (i) that the question be now put;
- (j) to adjourn a debate;
- (k) to adjourn the meeting;
- (l) to suspend a particular Committee Procedure Rule other than Committee Procedure Rules 13.4 (recorded vote) and 14.1 (signed minutes);
- (m) to exclude the public and press in accordance with the Access to Information Rules;

- (n) to not hear further a Member named under Rule 15.2 or to exclude him or her from the meeting under Rule 15.3;
 - (o) to give the consent of the Committee where its consent is required by this Constitution.
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11 RULES OF DEBATE

- 11.1 If a Councillor wishes to speak they should indicate their intention by raising their hand.
- 11.2 The Chairman will decide the order in which speakers will be heard.
- 11.3 Councillors will remain seated when speaking and must address the Chairman.
- 11.4 Speeches must be directed to the subject under discussion or to a personal explanation or point of order. The speech of a proposer of any motion or amendment shall not exceed 5 minutes and no other speech may exceed 3 minutes without the consent of the Chairman
- 11.5 When seconding a motion or amendment, a Member may reserve his/her speech until later in the debate.
- 11.6 Councillors may speak once on any motion. However, if a motion is amended Councillors may speak once on each amendment.
- 11.7 If the motion has been amended since the Councillor last spoke, that Councillor may move a further amendment to the motion.
- 11.8 The Councillor who moved the original motion has a right of reply at the close of the debate on that motion or any agreed amendment.
- 11.9 If an amendment to a motion has been moved and seconded, the mover of the original motion has a right of reply at the close of the debate on the amendment following the mover of the amendment's closing remarks but may not otherwise speak on it.
- 11.10 A proposition/motion may be altered with the consent of the mover and the seconder

11.11 A Member may raise a point of order at any time. The Chairman will hear him/her immediately. A point of order may only relate to an alleged breach of the Committee and Sub Committee Procedure Rules or the law. The Member must indicate the rule or law and the way in which he/she considers it has been broken. The ruling of the Chairman on the matter will be final.

11.12 A Member may make a personal explanation at any time. A personal explanation may only relate to some material part of an earlier speech by the Member which may appear to have been misunderstood in the present debate. The ruling of the Chairman on the admissibility of a personal explanation will be final.

11.13 **Amendments to Recommendations and Motions**

- (a) An amendment to a motion must be relevant to the motion and will either be:
 - (i) to refer the matter to an appropriate body or individual for consideration or reconsideration;
 - (ii) to leave out words;
 - (iii) to leave out words and insert or add others; or
 - (iv) to insert or add wordsas long as the effect of (ii) to (iv) is not to negate the motion.
- (b) An amendment may be accepted by the mover of the original motion.
- (c) Only one amendment may be moved and discussed at any one time. No further amendment may be moved until the amendment under discussion has been disposed of.
- (d) The mover of the amendment has no right of reply to the debate on his or her amendment.
- (e) If an amendment is not carried, other amendments to the original motion may be moved.
- (f) If an amendment is carried, the motion as amended takes the place of the original motion. This becomes the substantive motion to which any further amendments are moved.
- (g) After an amendment has been carried, the Chairman will read out the amended motion before accepting any further amendments, or if there are none, put it to the vote.

11.14 Propositions or Motions Which May be Moved During Debate

When a motion or a report recommendation is under debate, no other motion or proposition may be moved except the following procedural motions:

- (a) to withdraw a motion or proposition;
- (b) to amend a motion or a proposition;
- (c) to proceed to the next business; must be seconded and vote has to take place - see below
- (d) that the question be now put; must be seconded and vote has to take place - see below
- (e) to adjourn a debate; must be seconded and a vote has to take place see below
- (f) to adjourn a meeting; must be seconded and a vote has to take place see below
- (g) to exclude the public and press in accordance with the Access to Information Rules; must be seconded and a Council resolution has to be passed
- (h) to not hear further a Member named under Rule 15.2 or to exclude him or her from the meeting under Rule 15.3.
- (i) To amend or accept the recommendation contained in a report under consideration by the Committee.

11.15 Withdrawal of Motion

A Member may withdraw a motion which he/she has moved with the consent of both the meeting and the seconder. The meeting's consent will be signified without discussion. No Member may speak on the motion after the mover has asked permission to withdraw it unless permission is refused.

11.16 Bringing Debate to Early Closure

- (a) A member who has not already spoken in the matter may orally move a motion:
 - (i) To proceed to the next business;
 - (ii) That the question be now put;
 - (iii) To adjourn a debate;
 - (iv) To adjourn a meeting.

- (c) If a motion/proposition to proceed to next business is seconded and the Chairman thinks the item has been sufficiently discussed, he or she will give the mover of the original motion/proposition / a right of reply and then put the procedural motion to the vote.
 - (d) If a motion/proposition that the question be now put is seconded and the Chairman thinks the item has been sufficiently discussed, he/she will put the procedural motion to the vote.
 - (e) If it is passed he/she will give the mover of the original motion/proposition a right of reply before putting his/her motion/proposition to the vote
 - (f) If a motion/proposition to adjourn the debate or to adjourn the meeting is seconded and the Chairman thinks the item has not been sufficiently discussed and cannot reasonably be so discussed on that occasion, he/she will put the procedural motion to the vote without giving the mover of the original motion/proposition the right of reply.
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12 MATTERS AFFECTING EMPLOYEES

If any question arises at a meeting of the Committee as to the appointment, promotion, salary, dismissal, pension entitlement or conditions of service or the conduct of a Council employee, such questions shall not be discussed until the Committee has considered whether or not to exclude the press and public under Part 1 Paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

13 VOTING

13.1 Majority

Unless this Constitution provides otherwise any matter will be decided by a simple majority of those Councillor voting and present in the room at the time the question was put.

13.2 Chairman's Casting Vote

If there are equal numbers of votes for and against, the Chairman will have a second or casting vote. There will be no restriction on how the Chairman chooses to exercise a casting vote.

13.3 Show of Hands

Unless a recorded vote is demanded under Rule 13.4, the Chairman will take the vote by show of hands, or if there is no dissent, by the affirmation of the meeting.

13.4 Recorded Vote

If three Councillors present at the meeting demand it, the names for and against the motion or amendment or abstaining from voting will be taken down in writing and entered into the Minutes.

13.5 Right to Require Individual Vote to be Recorded

Where any Member requests it immediately after the vote is taken, his/her vote will be so recorded in the Minutes to show whether he/she voted for or against the motion or abstained from voting.

13.6 Voting on Appointments

If there are more than two people nominated for any position to be filled and there is not a clear majority of votes in favour of one person, then the name of the person with the least number of votes will be taken off the list and a new vote taken. The process will continue until there is a majority of votes for one person.

14 MINUTES

14.1 Signing the Minutes

The Chairman will sign the Minutes of the proceedings at the next suitable meeting. The only part of the Minutes that can be discussed is their accuracy.

14.2 Form of Minutes

Minutes will contain all motions and amendments in the exact form and order the Chairman put them.

14.3 Record of Attendance

All Councillor present during the whole or part of a meeting must sign their names on the appropriate attendance record before the conclusion of every meeting to assist with the record of attendance.

14.4 Exclusion of Public

Members of the public and press may only be excluded either in accordance with the [Access to Information Rules](#) in Part 3 of this Constitution or Rule 16.

15 COUNCILLORS CONDUCT

15.1 Chairman Standing

When the Chairman stands during a debate, any Councillor speaking at the time must stop. The meeting must be silent.

15.2 Councillor not to be Heard Further

If a Councillor persistently disregards the ruling of the Chairman by behaving improperly or offensively or deliberately obstructs business, the Chairman may move that the Councillor be not heard further. If seconded, the motion will be voted on without discussion.

15.3 Councillor to Leave the Meeting

If the Councillor continues to behave improperly after such a motion is carried, the Chairman may move that either the Councillor leaves the meeting or that the meeting is adjourned for a specified period. If seconded, the motion will be voted on without discussion.

15.4 General Disturbance

If there is a general disturbance making orderly business impossible, the Chairman may adjourn the meeting for as long as he/she thinks necessary.

16 DISTURBANCE BY PUBLIC

16.1 Removal of Member of the Public

If a Member of the public interrupts proceedings, the Chairman will warn the person concerned. If he/she continues to interrupt, the Chairman will order his/her removal from the meeting room.

16.2 Clearance of Part of Meeting Room

If there is a general disturbance in any part of the meeting room open to the public, the Chairman may call for that part to be cleared.

17 OTHER

17.1 Placards, banners, advertising materials and similar items are not permitted in any Committee meeting.

17.2 Mobile phones must be switched to silent.

18 RIGHTS TO RECORD COMMITTEE AND SUB COMMITTEE MEETINGS (ie the proceedings at a meeting)

- (a) The public may record (e.g. film, audio, tweet, blog) meetings which are open to the public.
- (b) The Chairman of the meeting has the discretion to stop or suspend recordings by the public if in their opinion continuing to do so would disrupt proceedings at the meeting. The circumstances in which this might occur include:
- Excessive noise in recording or setting up and re-setting equipment
 - Intrusive lighting and use of flash photography
 - Moving to areas outside the area designated for the public without the Chairman's consent.
 - Whilst taking a recording (e.g. film, audio, tweet, blog) you must not do so in a manner which constitutes an invasion of privacy.
- (c) Those recording meetings are strongly urged to respect the wish of any member of the public not to be recorded.
- (d) Agendas for and signage at meetings will make it clear that recording can take place. Anyone who does not wish to be recorded should let the Chairman of the meeting know.
- (e) Recording and reporting the meetings is subject to the law and it is the responsibility of those doing the recording and reporting to ensure compliance; e.g. with the Human Rights Act, the Data Protection Act and the laws of libel, defamation and public order. Freedom of speech within the law should also be exercised with personal and social responsibility – showing respect and tolerance towards the views of others.
- (f) The Council has a protocol in place in respect of recording at meetings which is available on the Council's website. ([Link](#))
-

19 PUBLIC SPEAKING AT DEVELOPMENT CONTROL/ PLANNING COMMITTEES

Public speaking at the Planning Committees [and Planning Referrals Committee] is allowed in accordance with the [Charter on Public Speaking at Planning Committee](#). The practical arrangements on the day remain at the discretion of the Chairman of the meeting whose decision on arrangements is final.

20 SUBSTITUTIONS

20.1 Substitutes for Council Committees shall be as follows:-

COMMITTEE	SUBSTITUTES
Planning	Any Member from the same political group, providing the substitute has undertaken the requisite planning training. None.
Licensing Act 2003 and Regulatory	Any Member of the same political group, providing the substitute has undertaken any requisite training.
Joint Audit and Standards	Any Member from the same political group and Council, except members of the Cabinet
Joint Scrutiny	Any Member from the same political group and Council, except members of the Cabinet.
Scrutiny	Any Member from the same political group, except members of the Cabinet.
Joint Appointments	Any Member from the same political group and Council.

The Monitoring Officer shall determine whether any Member has undertaken the requisite training.

No member of the Cabinet shall chair any council committee.

20.2 Powers and duties

Substitute Members will have all the powers and duties of any ordinary Member of the Committee/Sub-Committee but will not be able to exercise any special powers or duties exercisable by the person they are substituting.

20.3 Substitution

Substitute Members may attend meetings in that capacity only:

- (a) to take the place of the ordinary Member;
- (b) or where the ordinary member will be absent for the whole of the meeting;
- (c) and after the Chief Executive has been notified by 1.00 p.m. on the previous working day before the commencement of the meeting of a named substitute Councillor that will attend in the place of an ordinary member.

20.4 Members of the Cabinet cannot be substitute Members for Scrutiny Committees.

- 20.5 No Councillor may be involved in scrutinising a decision in which he or she has been directly involved. Councillors acting as substitute Members on the Joint Scrutiny Committee and Babergh Scrutiny Committee should not take part in any business being considered by the Joint Scrutiny and Babergh Scrutiny Committee in circumstances where the substitute Member has been directly involved in determining the issue under scrutiny.
- 20.6 Substitutes for Planning Committee must undertake requisite training before participating in any meeting to the same extent required of a Member of the Committee. The Monitoring Officer shall determine whether the Councillor has undertaken the requisite training.
-

21 COUNCILLOR ATTENDING / SPEAKING AT A COMMITTEE WHERE NOT A MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE

A Councillor not serving on a particular Committee may request permission from the Chairman to attend in respect of a matter to be considered at the meeting. At the meeting of the Committee the Councillor shall have the opportunity to speak on the relevant matter, but may not put any motions or amendments, nor vote on the matter.

CABINET PROCEDURE RULES

1. How does the Cabinet operate?

1.1 Executive functions

The Cabinet is the Council's executive body and is responsible for carrying out those functions which by law or under this constitution are designated as "executive functions".

The arrangements for the discharge of executive functions are set out in Article 6. The arrangements may provide for executive functions to be discharged by:-

- (a) the Cabinet as a whole;
- (b) a committee of the Cabinet;
- (c) an individual member of the Cabinet;
- (d) an officer;
- (e) an area committee;
- (f) joint arrangements; or
- (g) another local authority.

1.2 Delegation of executive functions

- (a) Where the Cabinet, a committee of the Cabinet or an individual member of the Cabinet is responsible for an executive function, they may delegate further to an officer or by joint arrangements.
- (b) Even where executive functions have been delegated, that fact does not prevent the discharge of delegated functions by the person or body who delegated.

1.3 Delegation of executive functions by the Leader

- (a) Subject to (b) below, the delegation of executive functions will be as notified to the Council and set out in Part 2 of this Constitution.
- (b) Where the Leader grants delegation of any executive functions he/she will give advance written notice to the Monitoring Officer and to the person, body or committee concerned. The notice must set out the extent of the amendment to the scheme of delegation and whether it entails the withdrawal of delegation from any person, body, committee or the Cabinet as a whole.
- (c) Where the Cabinet seeks to withdraw delegation from a committee, notice will be deemed to be served on that committee when the Leader has served it on its chairman.

1.4 Cabinet Meetings

The Cabinet will meet at times to be agreed by the Leader at a suitable venue in Suffolk in such location to be agreed by the Leader and will be held in public except in accordance with the Access to Information Procedure Rules. Notice of the dates and times of meetings, and their agendas, will be published in accordance with the Access to Information Procedure Rules.

1.6 Quorum

The quorum for a meeting of the Cabinet, or a committee of it, shall be one third of the total number of members of the Cabinet (including the Leader) or three, whichever is the larger.

1.7 How are decisions to be taken by the Cabinet?

- (a) Executive decisions which have been delegated to the Cabinet as a whole will be taken at a meeting convened in accordance with the Access to Information Rules.
- (b) Where executive decisions are delegated to a committee of the Cabinet, the rules applying to executive decisions taken by them shall be the same as those applying to those taken by the Cabinet as a whole.

2. How are executive meetings conducted?

2.1 Who presides?

The Leader, or in his/her absence the Deputy Leader, will preside at any meeting of the Cabinet or its Committees at which he or she is present. In the absence of the Leader and Deputy Leader the members of the Cabinet who are present shall elect one of them to preside.

2.2 Who may attend?

2.1.1 The public may attend in accordance with the Access to Information Rules in Part 4 of this Constitution.

2.1.2 Any member of the Council who is not a member of the Cabinet may attend a meeting of the Cabinet. He or she can speak only:

- (a) to ask a question in accordance with rule 2.4.1 below;
- or
- (b) if invited to by the person presiding.

2.3 What business?

At each meeting of the Cabinet or a Committee of the Cabinet the following business will be conducted:-

- (a) apologies for absence;
- (b) confirm as a correct record and sign the minutes of the last meeting;
- (c) the receipt of any petitions (submitted and presented in accordance with the Council's Petition Scheme);
- (d) matters referred to the Cabinet, whether by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, or by the Council for reconsideration in accordance with the provisions of contained in the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules or the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules;
- (e) consideration of reports from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and
- (f) matters set out in the agenda for the meeting, and which shall indicate which are key decisions and which are not in accordance with the Access to Information Procedure rules set out in Part 4 of this Constitution.

2.5 Who can put items on the Cabinet agenda?

- 2.5.1 Normally, the Leader will decide upon the schedule for the meetings of the Cabinet.
- 2.5.2 An item will be placed on the agenda of the next available meeting of the Cabinet where the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Joint Scrutiny Committee or the Joint Audit and Standards Committee or the full Council have resolved that an item be considered by the Cabinet. There will be a standing item on the agenda of each meeting of the Cabinet for matters referred by the Overview and Scrutiny or the Joint Audit and Standards Committees.
- 2.5.3 The Monitoring Officer and/or the Chief Finance Officer may include an item for consideration on the agenda of a Cabinet meeting and may require the proper officer to call such a meeting in pursuance of their statutory duties. In other circumstances, where any two of the Head of Paid Service, Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer are of the opinion that a meeting of the Cabinet needs to be called to consider a matter that requires a decision, they may jointly include an item on the agenda of a Cabinet meeting. If there is no meeting of the Cabinet soon enough to deal with the issue in question, then the person(s) entitled to include an item on the agenda may also require that a meeting be convened at which the meeting the item will be considered.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION PROCEDURE RULES

1. SCOPE

These rules apply to all meetings of the Council, its Committee and Sub-Committees (together called meetings).

2. ADDITIONAL RIGHTS TO INFORMATION

These rules do not affect any more specific rights to information contained elsewhere in this Constitution or the law.

3. RIGHTS TO ATTEND MEETINGS

Members of the public may attend all meetings subject only to the exceptions in these rules.

4. NOTICES OF MEETING

The Council will give at least 5 working days' notice of any meeting (excluding the day of publication and the day of the meeting) by posting details of the meeting at the Council Offices at 131 High Street, Needham Market, Ipswich IP6 8DL (the designated office).

5. ACCESS TO AGENDA AND REPORTS BEFORE THE MEETING

The Council will make copies of the agenda and reports open to the public available for inspection at the designated office at least 5 working days before the day of the meeting. If an item is added to the agenda later, the revised agenda (where reports are prepared after the summons has been sent out, the Monitoring Officer shall make each such report available to the public as soon as the report is completed and sent to Councillors) will be open to inspection for the time the item was added to the agenda.

6. SUPPLY OF COPIES

The Council will supply copies of:

- (a) any agenda and reports which are open to public inspection;
- (b) any further statements or particulars necessary to indicate the nature of the items in the agenda; and
- (c) if the Monitoring Officer thinks fit, copies of any other documents supplied to Councillors in connection with an item

to any person on payment of a charge for postage and any other reasonable costs.

7. ACCESS TO MINUTES ETC AFTER THE MEETING

The Council will make available copies of the following for 6 years after a meeting:

- (a) the minutes of the meeting excluding any part of the minutes of proceedings when the meeting was not open to the public or which disclose exempt or confidential information;
- (b) summary of any proceedings not open to the public where the minutes open to inspection would not provide a reasonably fair and coherent record;
- (c) the agenda for the meeting; and
- (d) reports relating to items when the meeting was open to the public.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 List of background papers

The Monitoring Officer will set out in every report a list of those documents (called background papers) relating to the subject matter of the report which in his/her opinion:

- (a) disclose any facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the report is based; and
- (b) which have been relied on to a material extent in preparing the report

but does not include published works or those which disclose exempt or confidential information.

8.2 Public inspection of background papers

The Council will make available for public inspection for 4 years after the date of the meeting one copy of each of the documents on the list of background papers.

9. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC'S RIGHTS

A written summary of the public's rights to attend meetings and to inspect and copy documents must be kept at and available to the public at the designated office.

10. EXCLUSION OF ACCESS BY THE PUBLIC TO MEETINGS

10.1 Confidential information – requirement to exclude public

The public must be excluded from meetings whenever it is likely in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that confidential information would be disclosed.

10.2 Exempt information – discretion to exclude public

The public may be excluded from meetings whenever it is likely in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that exempt information would be disclosed.

Where the meeting will determine any person's civil rights or obligations, or adversely affect their possessions, Article 6 of the Human Rights Act 1998 establishes a presumption that the meeting will be held in public unless a private hearing is necessary for one of the reasons specified in Article 6.

10.3 Meaning of confidential information

Confidential information means information given to the Council by a Government Department on terms which forbid its public disclosure or information which cannot be publicly disclosed by Court Order.

10.4 Meaning of exempt information

Exempt information means information falling within the following 7 categories (subject to any condition):

Category	Condition – see notes below
1. Information relating to any individual.	(1)
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.	(1) and (2)
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).	(1), (2) and (3)
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.	(1) and (2)
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.	(1) and (2)

Category	Condition – see notes below
6. Information which reveals that the authority proposes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction under any enactment. 	(1) and (2)
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.	(1) and (2)
For Standards Committees or Standards Sub-committees (SI 2006/87) -	
7A. Information which is subject to any obligation of confidentiality	(1) and (2)
7B. Information which relates in any way to matters concerning national security	(1) and (2)
7C. The deliberations of a Standards Committee or of a Sub-committee of a Standards Committee in reaching any finding on a matter referred.	(1) and (2)

Notes:

- (1) As long as the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.
 - (2) As long as it does not relate to proposed development for which the Council or any other Council as Planning Authority may grant itself planning permission pursuant to regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992.
- (1) Provided that the information is not required to be registered under:
- (a) the Companies Act 1985
 - (b) the Friendly Societies Act 1974
 - (c) the Friendly Societies Act 1992
 - (d) the Industrial and Provident Societies Acts 1965 to 1978
 - (e) the Building Societies Act 1986
 - (f) the Charities Act 1993

11. EXCLUSION OF ACCESS BY THE PUBLIC TO REPORTS

If the Monitoring Officer thinks fit, the Council may exclude access by the public to reports which in his or her opinion relate to items during which, in accordance with Rule 10, the meeting is likely not to be open to the public. Such reports will be marked "Not for publication" together with the category of information likely to be disclosed.

12. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ACCESS TO DOCUMENTS

12.1 Rights to copies

Subject to Rule 12.2 below, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee will be entitled to copies of any document which is in the possession or control of the Cabinet (or its panels) and which contains material relating to any business transacted at a public or private meeting of the Cabinet.

12.2 Limit on rights

The Scrutiny Committee will not be entitled to:

- (a) any document that is in draft form;
- (b) any part of a document that contains exempt or confidential information, unless that information is relevant to an action or decision they are reviewing or scrutinising or intend to scrutinise.

13. ADDITIONAL RIGHTS OF ACCESS FOR MEMBERS

13.1 Material relating to previous business

All Members will be entitled to inspect any document which is in the possession or under the control of the Cabinet and contains material relating to any business previously transacted at a private meeting unless it contains exempt information falling within paragraphs 1. to 7. of the categories of exempt information.

13.2 Nature of rights

These rights of a Member are additional to any other right he/she may have.

14. Application of rules to the Cabinet

- 14.1 Rules 14-23 apply to the Cabinet and its committees. If the Cabinet or its committees meet to take a key decision then it must also comply with Rules 1-13 unless Rule 15 (General Exception) or Rule 16 (Special Urgency) apply. A key decision is as defined in [Article 1](#) of this Constitution.

- 14.2 If the Cabinet or its committees meet to discuss a key decision to be taken collectively, with an officer other than a political assistant present, within 28 days of the date according to the Forthcoming Decisions Plan by which it is to be decided, then it must also comply with Rules 1-12 unless Rule 15 (General exception) or Rule 16 (Special urgency) apply. A key decision is as defined in [Article 1](#) of this Constitution.

This requirement does not include meetings whose sole purpose is for officers to brief members.

15. Procedure before taking key decisions or holding executive meetings in private

15.1 Key decisions

- 15.1.1 Subject to Rule 16 (General exception) and Rule 17 (Special urgency), a key decision may not be taken unless:-

- (a) a notice (called here a Forthcoming Decisions Plan) has been published in connection with the matter in question, at least 28 clear days before the decision is to be taken; and
- (b) where the decision is to be taken at a meeting of the Cabinet or its Committees, notice of the meeting has been given in accordance with Rule 4 (Notice of Meetings).

15.2 Matters to be considered in private

- 15.2.1 At least 28 clear days before a private meeting of the Cabinet, or a committee or joint committee of the Cabinet, the decision-making body must make available and publish on its website a notice including a statement of the reasons for the meeting, or part of the meeting, to be held in private.
- 15.2.2 At least five clear days before a private meeting, the decision-making body must make available and publish on its website an additional notice of its intention to hold a meeting or part of a meeting in private, including a statement of the reasons for the meeting to be held in private, details of any representations received by the decision-making body about why the meeting should be open to the public, and a statement of its response to any such representations. For ease of reference this notice will be incorporated into the agenda for the meeting in question.

16. The Forthcoming Decision Plan

16.1 Publication of Forthcoming Decision Plan

16.1.1 **The Forthcoming Decision Plan** will be prepared by the Leader to ensure that 28 clear days' notice of the taking of any key decision, or the holding of any meeting, or part of a meeting, in private, is given. This document will be made available for inspection at the Council's offices and on its website.

16.2 Contents of the Forthcoming Decisions Plan

16.2.1 The **Forthcoming Decision Plan** will contain matters which the Leader has reason to believe will be subject of a key decision to be taken by the Cabinet, a committee of the Cabinet, individual members of the Cabinet, officers or under joint arrangements in the course of the discharge of an executive function during the period covered by the plan. It will describe the following particulars in so far as the information is available or might reasonably be obtained:-

- (a) the matter in respect of which a decision is to be made;
- (b) where the decision taker is an individual, their name and title, if any and where the decision taker is a body, its name and details of membership;
- (c) the date on which, or the period within which, the decision will be taken;
- (d) a list of the documents submitted to the decision taker for consideration in relation to the matter;
- (e) the address from which, subject to any prohibition or restriction on their disclosure, copies of, or extracts from, any document listed is available;
- (f) that other documents relevant to those matters may be submitted to the decision maker; and
- (g) the procedure for requesting details of those documents (if any) as they become available.

16.2.2 The **Forthcoming Decision Plan** will also detail any matters which it is intended will be considered in private, and the reason for the matter being considered in private.

16.2.3 Exempt information need not be included in a **Forthcoming Decision Plan** and confidential information cannot be included.

17. General exception

17.1 If a matter which is likely to be a key decision has not been publicised with 28 clear days' notice then subject to Rule 18 (Special urgency), the decision may still be taken if:

- (a) the decision must be taken by such a date that it is impracticable to defer the decision; and
- (b) the proper officer has informed the Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, or if there is no such person, each member of that committee in writing, by notice, of the matter to which the decision is to be made; and
- (c) the proper officer has made copies of that notice available to the public at the Council's offices and on its website; and
- (d) at least five clear days have elapsed following the day on which the proper officer made the notice available.

17.2 Where such a decision is taken collectively, it must be taken in public, unless it relates to exempt information as determined under Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972, when the public will be excluded.

18. Special urgency

18.1 Key decisions

18.1.1 If by virtue of the date by which a decision must be taken Rule 16 (General exception) cannot be followed, then the decision can only be taken if the decision taker (if an individual) or the Chairman of the body making the decision, obtains the agreement of the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that the taking of the decision cannot be reasonably deferred. If there is no Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, or if the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is unable to act, then the agreement of the Vice-Chairman will suffice.

18.2 Matters to be considered in private

18.2.1 Where the date by which a meeting must be held makes publication within 28 clear days, and repeated within 5 days, impracticable, the meeting may only be held in private where agreement has been obtained from the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that the meeting is urgent and cannot reasonably be deferred. If there is no Chairman, or if the Chairman is unable to act, then the agreement of the Vice-Chairman will suffice.

18.3 In the case of both key decisions and matters to be considered in private, as soon as practicable after the decision-maker has obtained such agreement, the decision-maker will make available at the Council's offices, and on its website, a notice setting out the reasons

why the decision or matter is urgent and cannot reasonably be deferred.

19. Report to Council

19.1 When an Overview and Scrutiny Committee can require a report

19.1.1 If the Overview and Scrutiny Committee thinks that a key decision has been taken which was not:-

- (a) treated as being a key decision; or
- (b) the subject of the general exception procedure; or
- (c) the subject of an agreement with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairman, or the Vice-Chairman, under Rule 17; the Committee may require the Cabinet to submit a report to the Council within such reasonable time as the Committee specifies.

19.1.2 The report will include:-

- (a) the decision and the reasons for the decision;
- (b) the decision making body by which, or the individual by whom, the decision was made; and
- (c) the reasons as to why the decision was considered not to be a key decision.

19.1.3 The power to require a report rests with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee but is also delegated to the Monitoring Officer, who shall require such a report on behalf of the Committee when so requested by the Chairman or any 5 Members. Alternatively the requirement may be raised by resolution passed at a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

19.2 Cabinet's report to Council

19.2.1 The Cabinet will prepare a report for submission to the next available meeting of the Council. However, if the next meeting of the Council is within 7 days of receipt of the written notice, or the resolution of the Committee, then the report may be submitted to the meeting after that.

19.2.2 The report to Council will set out particulars of the decision, the individual or body making the decision, and if the Leader is of the opinion that it was not a key decision the reasons for that opinion.

20.3 Quarterly reports on special urgency decisions

20.3.1 The Leader will submit quarterly reports to the Council on the Executive decisions taken (if any) in the circumstances set out in Rule 17 (Special urgency) in the preceding three months.

20.3.2 The report will include the number of decisions so taken and a summary of the matters in respect of which those decisions were taken together with the reasons for the decision and why the matter was considered to be urgent.

21. Record of decisions

21.1 After any meeting of the Cabinet or any of its Committees, whether held in public or private, the proper officer or his/her nominee will produce a record of every decision taken at that meeting as soon as practicable.

21.2 The record will include:-

- (a) a record of the decision including the date it was made;
- (b) a record of the reasons for the decision;
- (c) details of any alternative options considered and rejected by the decision making body at the meeting at which the decision was made;
- (d) a record of any conflict of interest in relation to the matter decided which is declared by any member of the decisionmaking body which made the decision; and
- (e) in respect of any declared conflict of interest, a note of any dispensation granted by the Council's Head of Paid Service.

22. Executive meetings relating to matters which are not key decisions

22.1 The Cabinet will meet in public to consider matters which are not key decisions, unless confidential or exempt information is being discussed.

23. Officers

23.1 The Head of the Paid Service, the Chief Finance Officer and the Monitoring Officer, and their nominees are entitled to attend any meeting of the Cabinet and its committees. The Cabinet may not meet unless the Chief Executive has been given reasonable notice that a meeting is to take place.

23.2 A Cabinet meeting may only take place in the presence of the Chief Executive or his/her nominee with responsibility for recording and publicising the decisions and the provisions of Rule 19 will apply.

24. Decisions by individuals

24.1 **Reports intended to be taken into account**

- (a) Where a Cabinet member or officer receives a report, which will be taken into consideration when a key decision is made, he or she shall not make that decision until the report has been available for public inspection for at least five clear days.
- (b) The Cabinet member or officer making the decision shall ensure that Democratic Services make the report available for inspection by the public as soon as is reasonably practicable after that officer or member receives it.
- (c) The officer who prepares the report shall, in any report to be available for inspection by the public, include a list of background papers for the report or part of the report, and shall ensure that the background papers are available on the Council's website.

24.2 Provision of reports to Overview and Scrutiny Committees

- 24.2.1 Where a report has been submitted to a Cabinet Member or officer with a view to it being considered when a key decision is made, the person who submitted the report shall, as soon as is reasonably practicable, ensure that it is available electronically to the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or, where there is no Chairman, to every member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

25.3 Record of individual decision

- 25.3.1 As soon as reasonably practicable after an executive decision has been taken by an individual member of the Cabinet, or after an officer has taken a decision closely associated with the discharge of an executive function, he or she will prepare, or instruct the proper officer to prepare, a record of the decision which must include:-

- (a) a record of the decision including the date it was made;
- (b) a record of the reasons for the decision;
- (c) details of any alternative options considered and rejected at the time when the decision was made;
- (d) a record of any conflict of interest declared by any Cabinet Member who is consulted in relation to the decision; and
- (e) in respect of any declared conflict of interest a note of any dispensation granted by the Council's Head of Paid Service.

- 25.3.2 The provisions of Rules 7 and 9 (inspection of documents after meetings) will also apply to the making of decisions by individual members of the Cabinet. This does not require the disclosure of exempt or confidential information.

26. Overview and Scrutiny Committee members' access to documents

26.1 Rights to copies

Subject to Rule 26.2 below, a Member of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be entitled, no later than 10 clear days after the Cabinet receives the request, to copies of any document which is in the possession or control of the Cabinet and which contains material relating to:-

- (a) any business transacted at a public or private meeting of the Cabinet or its Committees; or
- (b) any decision taken by an individual Member of the Cabinet; or
- (c) any decision that has been made by an officer of the authority which is closely associated with the discharge of an executive function.

26.2 Limit on rights

A Member of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee will not be entitled to:-

- (a) any document that is in draft form;
- (b) any part of a document that contains exempt or confidential information, unless that information is relevant to an action or decision they are reviewing or any review contained in any programme of work of such a committee or sub-committee of such a committee; or
- (c) any document or part of a document containing the advice of a political adviser or assistant.

26.3 Where the Cabinet determines that a Member of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee is not entitled to a copy of a document or part of any such document for a reason set out in paragraphs 23.1 or 23.2 it must provide the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with a written statement setting out its reasons for that decision.

27. Additional rights of access for members

27.1 Material relating to previous business

All Members will be entitled to inspect any document which is in the possession or under the control of the Cabinet or its committees, and contains material relating to any business previously transacted at a private meeting unless it contains:-

- (a) exempt information falling within paragraphs 1, 2, 3 (to the extent that the information relates to any terms proposed or to be proposed by or to the authority in the course of negotiations for a contract), 4, 5 and 7 of the categories of exempt information; or
- (b) the advice of a political adviser.

27.2 Material relating to key decisions

All Members of the Council will be entitled to inspect any document (except those available only in draft form) in the possession or under the control of the Cabinet or its Committees which relates to any key decision unless paragraph (a) and/or (b) in 24.1 above applies.

27.3 Nature of rights

These rights of a Member are additional to any other rights he or she may have.

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28. Confidentiality

- 28.1 No member of the Council, nor any co-opted member of any committee, sub-committee, panel or working group, shall without the permission of the Council or (in respect of Cabinet functions) the Cabinet, or (in respect of their functions) of the appropriate committee, sub-committee, panel or working group, disclose any exempt or confidential matter unless and to the extent only that that matter shall have been placed in the public domain by the Council, Cabinet, committee, sub-committee, panel or working group (as the case may be).

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BUDGET & POLICY FRAMEWORK

1. The framework for decision-making

- 1.1 The Council will be responsible for the adoption of a budget and major policy framework as set out in [Article 4](#). Once a budget or a policy framework is in place, it will be the responsibility of the Cabinet to implement it.
- 1.2 Decisions by the Cabinet and any other Committees must be in line with the budget and major policy framework. The Senior Leadership Team and any staff with delegated authority (or otherwise authorised to act under a power delegated to another officer) will operate within the budget and policy framework and financial regulations and contract standing orders.
- 1.3 Any changes to the budget and policy framework are reserved to the Council.
- 1.4 The process by which the budget and policy framework is undertaken will be determined and kept under review annually.

2. In year changes to the budget and policy framework

- 2.1 No changes to any policy and strategy which make up the policy framework may be made by Cabinet or officer with delegated authority except changes necessary to ensure compliance with the law, ministerial direction or government guidance.

3. Budget virement and carry forward

- 3.1 These are governed by financial regulations and the detailed financial procedures issued by the CFO.
- 3.2 Any budget virement and carry forwards exceeding £25,000 that affects the level of service delivery requires the approval of the Cabinet.

SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULES

1. The Council will have the Scrutiny Committees set out in [Article 6](#) and will appoint to them as it considers appropriate from time to time.

The roles of the formal Committees are as follows:

- (a) Joint Audit and Standards Committee

This Committee discharges the Audit Committee function for the authorities providing a strengthened governance assurance mechanism to Councillors as a focused control mechanism in this time of change and increased risk of governance failure. The Standards Committee function is also provided through this joint Committee,. The linking of these oversight functions recognises the strong synergies between a widened audit function which focuses on the ethical culture in the organisation and the Standards function which seeks to develop high ethical standards for Members, thus ensuring a comprehensive and unified approach for both Members and officers.

- (b) Scrutiny Committee

This Committee provides a focus for scrutinising the work of external stakeholders and service providers, and the role of holding the Cabinet to account.

Scrutiny ensures that Cabinet are held accountable for their decisions, that their decision-making process is clear and accessible to the public and that there are opportunities for the public and their representatives to influence and improve public policy.

2. SCRUTINY

The key purpose of the Scrutiny Committee is to:-

- (a) scrutinise the work of external stakeholders and service providers
- (b) hold Executive to account
- (c) be the home of call – in (see below)
- (d) be the home of Councillor call for action (see below)

To ensure that actions of the Cabinet accord with the relevant policies and budget of the Council.

- (i) To review relevant decisions of the Cabinet referred pursuant to the "Call-in Protocol" (set out below) whereupon the Committee may either –
 - (a) confirm or accept the decision of the Cabinet which may then be implemented forthwith, or
 - (b) refer the matter back to the Cabinet for further consideration, or
 - (c) refer the matter to Council for a final determination, or for referral back to the Cabinet
 - (d) defer consideration until a specified time when further reports shall be considered.
- (ii) In the event that the matter is referred back to Cabinet in accordance with (i) (b) above, and the Cabinet does not accept the recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee, then in these circumstances the original decision of Strategy Committee, together with the report and recommendations of Scrutiny Committee shall be referred to Council for consideration and Cabinet cannot implement its original decision until Council has determined the matter.
- (iii) In undertaking such a review of any decision, the Scrutiny Committee may question Members of the Cabinet and the Chief Executive, Directors and Assistant Directors and any other person (with their consent) and shall consider whether the appropriate criteria were applied in reaching the decision in question, whether the decision accords with the policy of the Council, is lawful and/or within the powers of the Council and whether it contributes to the efficient, effective and economic discharge of the function.

3. GENERAL

To prepare an Annual Work Programme and to submit to the Council an Annual Report on the Committee's work which shall include suggestions for future Work Programmes and amended working methods as appropriate.

4. WHO MAY SIT ON A SCRUTINY COMMITTEE?

All Councillors, except the Members of the Cabinet, may be Members of a Scrutiny Committee. No Member may be involved in scrutinising a decision in which he/she has been directly involved.

Non-Elected Members could be representatives of other local authorities, emergency services, voluntary groups, health providers, social landlords.

5. NON-ELECTED MEMBERS

The Scrutiny Committees or any Sub-Committees shall be entitled to recommend to Council the appointment of a number of people as non-voting non-elected Members. Non-voting Members shall be subject to the same rules relating to declarations of interests as Members.

6. WORK PROGRAMME

The Scrutiny Committees/Sub-Committees will be responsible for setting their own work programme and in doing so they shall take into account wishes of Members on that Committee who are not Members of the largest political group on the Council.

7. AGENDA ITEMS

7.1 Any Member of a Scrutiny Committee or Sub-Committee shall be entitled to give notice to the Strategic Director that he/she wishes an item relevant to the functions of the Committee or Sub-Committee to be included on the Agenda for the next available meeting of the Committee or Sub-Committee. On receipt of such a request the Strategic Director will ensure that it is included on the next available Agenda.

7.2 Any Member of the Council who is not a Member of the Scrutiny Committees may give written notice to the Strategic Director that he/she wishes an item to be included on the Agenda of the relevant Scrutiny Committee. If the Strategic Director receives such a notification, then he/she will include the item on the first available Agenda of the relevant Scrutiny Committee for consideration by the Committee.

7.3 The Scrutiny Committees shall also respond, as soon as their work programme permits, to requests from the Council and, if it considers it appropriate, the Cabinet to review particular areas of Council activity. Where they do so, the Scrutiny Committees shall report their findings and any recommendations back to the Council via the Cabinet.. The Cabinet and Council shall consider the report of a Scrutiny Committee within one month of receiving it.

8. REPORTS FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

- (a) Once it has formed recommendations, the Scrutiny Committee will prepare a formal report and submit it to the Strategic Director for consideration by the Cabinet (if the recommendations are consistent with the existing budgetary and policy framework) or to the Council as appropriate (if the recommendation would require a departure from or a change to the agreed budget and policy framework).
- (b) If a Scrutiny Committee cannot agree on one single final report to the Council or the Cabinet as appropriate, then not more than one minority report may be prepared and submitted for consideration to the Council or Strategy Committee with the majority report.
- (c) The Council or the Cabinet shall consider the report of the Scrutiny Committee within two months of it being submitted to the Strategic Director.

9. RIGHTS OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEMBERS TO DOCUMENTS

- (a) In addition to their rights as Councillors, Members of Scrutiny Committees have the additional right to documents, and to notice of meetings as set out in the [Access to Information Procedure Rules](#) in Part 3 of this Constitution.
- (b) Nothing in this paragraph prevents more detailed liaison between the the Cabinet and Scrutiny Committees as appropriate depending on the particular matter under consideration.

10. MEMBERS AND OFFICERS GIVING ACCOUNT

- (a) Any Scrutiny Committee or Sub-Committee may scrutinise and review decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any Council functions in accordance with the Committee's Terms of Reference and the Scrutiny Rules. As well as reviewing documentation, in fulfilling the scrutiny role, it may require any Member of the Cabinet, the Head of Paid Service, and senior officer to attend before it to explain in relation to matters within their remit:-
 - (i) any particular decision of the Cabinet or series of decisions;
 - (ii) the extent to which the actions taken implement Council policy; and/or

(iii) their performance.

and it is the duty of those persons to attend if they are required, save that in exceptional circumstances where those persons are unable to attend they could nominate an officer to attend on their behalf.

- (b) Where any Member or officer is required to attend a Scrutiny Committee under this provision, the Chairman of that Committee will inform the Strategic Director. The Strategic Director shall inform the Member or Officer in writing giving at least five working days' notice of the meeting at which he/she is required to attend. The notice will state the nature of the item on which he/she is required to attend to give account and whether any papers are required to be produced for the Committee. Where the account to be given to the Committee will require the production of a report, then the Member or officer concerned will be given sufficient notice to allow for preparation of that documentation.
- (c) Where, in exceptional circumstances, (for example illness) the Member or Officer is unable to attend on the required date, and it is not appropriate for another person to substitute then the Scrutiny Committee shall, in consultation with the Member or officer, arrange an alternative date for attendance to take place within a maximum of twenty-one days from the date of the original request.

11. ATTENDANCE BY OTHERS

A Scrutiny Committee may invite people other than those referred to in the paragraph above to address it, discuss issues of local concern and/or answer questions. It may, for example, wish to hear from residents, stakeholders and Members and Officers in other parts of the public sector and shall invite such people to attend, and these attendances of course are entirely optional.

12. CALL-IN

Call-in should only be used in exceptional circumstances. These are where Members of the Scrutiny Committees consider that one or more of the circumstances set out in [Protocol 2](#) apply.

- (a) When a decision is made by the Cabinet, the decision shall be published, including where possible by electronic means, and shall be available at the main offices of the Council normally within two days of being made. All Members will be sent copies of the records of all such decisions within the same timescale, by the person responsible for publishing the decision.
- (b) That notice will bear the date on which it is published and will specify that the decision will come into force, and may then be implemented, on the expiry of five working days after the publication of the decision, unless it is called in.

- (c) During that period of time, a minimum of five Members including at least one member from a minority party or an independent member (but not a member of the Cabinet) may request that a decision of the Cabinet be called-in for scrutiny by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee. The request shall be submitted to the Monitoring Officer in the prescribed form set out in [Protocol 1](#) in hard copy form, by fax or by email.
- (d) Upon receipt of a call-in request, the Monitoring Officer shall consult with the Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee to decide which would be the most appropriate format for the Scrutiny Committee to consider the call-in.
- (e) The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee shall consider the validity of a call-in request in consultation with the Monitoring Officer.
- (f) Where a 'call-in' is deemed valid the Monitoring Officer shall call a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee on such a date as he/she may determine, after consultation with the Chairman (or Vice Chairman in his or her absence) of the Committee. Such meeting to be held as soon as practicable.
- (g) Any Member named on the call-in request may attend and speak at the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee at which the call-in is considered.
- (h) If having considered the decision, the Scrutiny Committee is still concerned about it, then it may either:-
 - (i) refer it back to the Cabinet for reconsideration, or
 - (ii) refer it to Council for a final determination, or for referral back to the Cabinet as provided in (k) below, or
 - (iii) defer the matter to a future meeting for further information.in each case setting out in writing the nature of its concerns.

- (i) If referred to the Cabinet that Committee shall then reconsider as soon as practicable. If the Cabinet does not accept the recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee the issue shall be referred to Council for consideration. If the Cabinet accepts the recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee, it may adopt the amended decision.
 - (j) If following the setting up of the meeting for consideration of the call-in request the Scrutiny Committee does not meet on the date specified by the Monitoring Officer, the decision shall take effect on the date it is known that the meeting will not take place. If the Committee does meet but does not refer the matter back to the Cabinet, or refer it to Council the decision shall take effect on the date of the Scrutiny Committee meeting.
 - (k) If the matter was referred to full Council under (h) (ii) above or in circumstances where the Cabinet did not accept the recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee (as set out in (i) above) and Council does not object to the original decision, then no further action is necessary and the decision will be effective in accordance with the provision below. However, if Council does object, Council will either make a final determination on the matter or refer any decision to which it objects back to the Cabinet, together with the Council's views on the decision. The Cabinet shall then make its decision in accordance with the views expressed by Council at a meeting convened to reconsider the matter as soon as practicable following Council's referral.
 - (l) If the Council does not meet, or if it does but does not refer the decision back to the Cabinet the decision will become effective on the date of the Council meeting or expiry of the period in which the Council meeting should have been held, whichever is the earlier.
13. A proposal should only be called in once. If, however, the Cabinet substantially amends the original proposal in a way which the Scrutiny Committee has not considered, nor could reasonably have foreseen, to the extent that in reality it is a different proposal, the Scrutiny Committee has the right to call it in again.
14. PROCEDURE ON CALL-INS
- 14.1 The end of the call-in period will normally be 5.00 p.m. on the fifth working day after the publication of the Cabinet decision. The Monitoring Officer will be responsible for informing the Leader of the Council and the Senior Leadership Team of any item that has been called-in.
- 14.2 Officers need to bear in mind that if a call-in is registered, then the Cabinet decision cannot be actioned until finally dealt with. Only work that can be undertaken without presuming the ultimate decision can be undertaken.
- 14.3 The item called in will require the following papers:-

- (a) the report that was presented to the Cabinet;
 - (b) the relevant extract of the Cabinet Minutes;
 - (c) any supplementary report, either updating figures and information which was supplied orally to the Cabinet or giving further updated information available to the Cabinet, or both.
- 14.4 Members who have exercised call-in can withdraw their request at any time before the meeting either individually or “en bloc”.
- 14.5 Officers may be approached for information before the Scrutiny Committee and they are referred to the Member/Officer protocol to deal with any such issues. Generally any information which is necessary for the Member’s understanding of the item coming to Scrutiny Committee is a matter that must be dealt with by the Officer. In cases of confidential/exempt matters the same applies but for good administrative practice this should be limited to Members of the Cabinet, Scrutiny Committee and Members who have called-in the item.
- 14.6 At the meeting, the Scrutiny Committee shall determine whether the called-in item shall be further considered having regard to the reasons given in the call-in request in relation to the criteria specified in the call-in Protocol against which a call-in request is to be determined. If the reason for the call-in is not, in the opinion of the Committee, a valid reason for call-in, no further consideration of the item shall take place and the decision of the Cabinet shall take immediate effect but if the Committee is satisfied that the call-in request cites a valid reason for call-in, it will proceed to determine the merits of the reason. The Committee will determine the focus of the evidence that it wishes to hear in relation to the Decision, and with regard to the hearing of that evidence, the following will be the usual order of appearance:-
- (a) The author of the call-in report notifies Members of the Scrutiny Committee of the updated position.
 - (b) The “call-in” Members (one or all) make a presentation of their reasons for call-in.
 - (c) Members of the Scrutiny Committee may question them.
 - (d) The Leader of the Council (or relevant portfolio holder) explains why the decision was made.
 - (e) Members of the Scrutiny Committee may question him/her.
 - (f) Any other contributions from representatives from outside the Council.
 - (g) Members of the Scrutiny Committee may question him/her.

- (h) The author of the report presents his/her papers with or without comments. The Officer is not expected to make a further presentation.
- (i) Members of the Scrutiny Committee may question him/her.
- (j) Member of the Cabinet (as in (d) above) to respond.
- (k) Discussion takes place.
- (l) There will be a vote giving the reason for the Scrutiny Committee's decision (if the Strategy Committee Member has indicated that he/she is prepared to take the matter back to the Committee that will be noted and referred to together with the reason).
- (m) The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee will have the discretion to operate the above process flexibly where it is considered that changes would be conducive to the effective performance of the Scrutiny role.

15. QUESTIONING

Scrutiny Committee Members may ask any questions which are supplemental or related to the reason(s) attributable to call-in. The decision as to whether such questions are appropriate will be a matter for the Chairman of Scrutiny Committee.

16. CONSIDERING EVIDENCE

A Member of the Scrutiny Committee should participate in the determination and voting on a matter that has been called-in, only if he or she has been present during the Committee's consideration of the item.

17. CALL-IN AND URGENCY

The call-in procedure set out above shall not apply where the decision being taken by the Cabinet is urgent. A decision will be urgent if any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would seriously prejudice the Council's or the public's interests. The record of the decision, and notice by which it is made public shall state whether in the opinion of the decision-making body, the decision is an urgent one, and therefore not subject to call-in. The Chairman of the Council must agree both that the decision proposed is reasonable in all circumstances and to it being treated as a matter of urgency. In the absence of the Chairman the Vice-Chairman's consent shall be required. In the absence of both, the Head of Paid Service or his/her nominee's consent shall be required. Decisions taken as a matter of urgency must be reported to the next available meeting of the Council, together with the reasons for urgency.

The operation of the provisions relating to call-in and urgency shall be monitored annually, and a report submitted to Council with proposals for review if necessary.

18. COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION ([PROTOCOL 3](#))

Any Councillor may request a Councillor Call for Action (CCfA) under the terms of the CCfA Protocol contained in Part 3 of this Constitution. The operation of CCfA will be in full compliance of the Protocol.

19. PROCEDURE FOR SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

(a) Scrutiny Committees shall consider the following business:-

- (i) Minutes of the last meeting;
- (ii) Declarations of interest,
- (iii) Consideration of any matter referred to the Committee for a decision in relation to call-in of a decision;
- (iv) Responses of the Cabinet to reports of the Scrutiny Committee; and
- (v) The business otherwise set out on the Agenda for the meeting.

(b) Where the Scrutiny Committee conducts investigations the Committee may also ask people to attend to give evidence at Committee meetings which are to be conducted in accordance with the following principles:-

- (i) that the investigation be conducted fairly and all Members of the Committee be given the opportunity to ask questions of attendees, and to contribute and speak;

- (ii) that those assisting the Committee by giving evidence be treated with respect and courtesy and that they treat the Committee Members and Officers with respect and courtesy; and
- (iii) that the investigation be conducted so as to maximise the efficiency of the investigation or analysis.

In addition the following principles shall also apply:-

- (a) Where someone requested to attend is genuinely unable to attend, then he or she may nominate another Member or Officer who is able to speak on the topic to attend.
- (b) Anyone asked to speak to a Scrutiny Committee shall be entitled to see the Terms of Reference of the particular matter under consideration by the Scrutiny Committee before attending to speak.
- (c) Anyone asked to speak to a Scrutiny Committee shall be entitled to see the public papers which have been made available to the Scrutiny Committee and wherever possible on the same timescale for a Member of the Scrutiny Committee.
- (d) Anyone asked to speak to a Scrutiny Committee shall wherever possible be given access to statements submitted by people from whom the Scrutiny Committee has already heard but not those who have not yet given evidence. The Chairman and Members of the Scrutiny Committees shall have a discretion to disclose other papers, including statements submitted by following speakers and confidential (exempt) material, if he or she considers that will help the speakers to address a particular point or will otherwise assist the Scrutiny Committee's examination of the issue.
- (e) All speakers shall respect the confidentiality of any confidential or exempt information they receive and shall not disclose it without the authorisation of the Scrutiny Committee.
- (f) Speakers may submit papers in advance to the Scrutiny Committee but such papers shall be clear and succinct.
- (g) Speakers shall be able to bring such notes and diaries as are helpful to them in assisting the Scrutiny Committee, but shall expect to make available any such notes to the Committee on the request of the Chairman.
- (h) Papers submitted by speakers shall become public documents once they have presented their evidence and shall be cited as background papers to the Scrutiny Committee's published report unless they contain exempt information.

- (i) Scrutiny Committee Members may expect to ask searching questions but will always behave in a polite and respectful way to anyone contributing to Scrutiny Committee's proceedings.
- (j) The speaker shall have at least five minutes to contribute evidence or a longer period as the Chairman of a Scrutiny Committee may specify. If someone making such a contribution exceeds the time limit given the Chairman may stop him or her. The Chairman may also structure a discussion and limit the time allowed for questioning by Members of the Scrutiny Committee.
- (k) Speakers shall be entitled to a copy of any draft Minute or other record taken of their contribution for comment. Should they feel that such record is not accurate then they shall be given the opportunity to make a written representation asking for the correction to be submitted to the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.
- (l) Scrutiny Committee meetings shall be open to the press and public except where they are considering matters which would give rise to the disclosure of confidential or exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.
- (m) Following any investigation or review, the Committee/Sub-Committee shall prepare a report, for submission to the Cabinet and/or Council as appropriate and shall make its report and findings public.

20. DOCUMENTATION

A Scrutiny Committee:-

- (a) may commission research or advice (including from external organisations) to assist in any deliberations.
- (b) shall have access to all relevant papers of the Council.

Scrutiny Committee Members who have access to confidential material shall at all times respect the confidentiality of that material and shall not use it in a context other than the Scrutiny Committee examination without the permission of the Scrutiny Committee.

Scrutiny Committees will also have access to background information for a range of sources, including:-

- The Policy Framework and Strategic Plan.
- Service plans.
- Audit Management letter.
- Internal and external audit plan.
- Government reports and national studies.

- CIPFA statistics.
- Complaints.
- Representations from the community (individuals, community groups, local Members, Area Committees and Forums, residents, surveys, etc.).
- Research published by other organisations or commissioned by Scrutiny Committees.
- Evidence from expert witnesses at the Scrutiny Committee's request.

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PROTOCOL 1

Attn: **Monitoring Officer**

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

REQUEST FOR CALL-IN

Dated

We would like to call in the Cabinet decision as detailed below:

Decision making body or individual Date decision made

What decision do you want the Scrutiny Committee to consider

Reason for calling in the decision *(continue on separate sheet if necessary)*

Desired Witnesses

Members calling in the decision

1 Signed

2 Signed

3 Signed

4 Signed

5. signed.....

*NB1 Call-in can be requested by any four Members excluding Cabinet Members but at least one signatory must be from a different party

*NB2 The Call-in request can be submitted by fax, email or paper copy.

PROTOCOL 2

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

PROTOCOL FOR USE OF CALL-IN PROCEDURE

Issues can be investigated in depth (in which case an Assessment Sheet should be drawn up as a first step), or be looked at over one meeting, or be for information only.

Members of the Scrutiny Committees also have the right to challenge an Strategy Committee decision before it is implemented and ask Strategy Committee or Council to reconsider, through the call-in procedure.

Set out below are the criteria against which the Council expects any request for call-in to be judged.

Members should refer to the Scrutiny Procedure Rules referred to in Part 3 of the Constitution, with particular reference to Paragraphs 1a.

The Council does **NOT** expect Members to call in a Cabinet decision **UNLESS** one or more of the following circumstances applies –

- there is reasonable concern over the lawfulness of the decision;
- the decision appears to be contrary to the Budget or one of the policy framework plans or strategies;
- the decision appears to be inconsistent with any other policy approved by Council or the Cabinet;
- the decision appears to be inconsistent with recommendations previously made by a Scrutiny Committee and accepted by Council or the Cabinet;
- the Cabinet has overlooked some relevant and material consideration in arriving at its decision;
- the Cabinet appears to have acted unreasonably in failing to consult relevant stakeholders on some relevant and material issue before arriving at its decision;
- the Cabinet has not taken its decision in accordance with the decision making principles set out in [Article 12](#) of the Constitution; or
- the Cabinet has taken a decision outside its Terms of Reference as set out in the Responsibilities for Functions in Part 2 of the Constitution.

In addition, the Council expects Members to satisfy themselves, before deciding to call in a particular Cabinet decision that the delay which will ensue, as a consequence of calling in the decision in question, is unlikely to cause prejudice to the interests of the Council or third parties.

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

ASSESSMENT SHEET FOR REVIEWS

What is to be reviewed?	
Why?	
What benefits are expected?	
What needs to be examined and asked?	
Documents/evidence/research <i>What?</i> <i>Why?</i>	Questions to be asked
Site visits <i>Where?</i> <i>Why?</i>	Questions to be asked
Consultation <i>Who/what?</i> <i>Why?</i>	Questions to be asked
Witnesses <i>Who?</i> <i>Why?</i>	Questions to be asked
What resources will be needed for the review?	
Over what period should it be carried out?	Start Complete
Who will be the lead officer?	

PICK ANALYSIS

In developing its annual work programme, Scrutiny Committees should be clear about the reasons for selecting particular issues and what they are seeking to achieve.

The list of topics and issues for the work programme can be a very long one if not careful. PICK can be used to prioritise the types of issues to choose. PICK stands for:

- P Public Interest
- I Impact
- C Council Performance
- K Keep it Context

P for Public Interest

Councillors are the eyes and ears of the public, ensuring that the policies, practices and services delivered by both Mid Suffolk District Council and external organizations, are meeting local needs and to an acceptable standard. The concerns of local people should therefore influence the issues chosen for scrutiny.

I for Impact

Scrutiny is about making a difference to the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area. Not all issues of concern will have equal impact on the well-being of the community. This should be considered when deciding the work programme, and priority be given to those issues that have more impact.

C for Council Performance

Scrutiny is about improving performance and ensuring the people of Mid Suffolk are served well. Councillors will need good quality information to identify areas of poor performance both within the Council and externally. There are no shortage of Performance Indicators available in the public service arena, both national and local, although the quality and relevance will vary. There is a need to select the most relevant performance indicators and to seek an interpretation of results.

K for Keep it in Context

To avoid duplication or wasted effort priorities should take account of what else is happening in the areas being considered. Is there a Best Value Review happening or planned? Is the service about to be inspected by an external body? Are there major legislative or policy initiatives already resulting in change? If these circumstances exist councillors may decide to link up with other processes (e.g. Best Value Review) or defer a decision until the outcomes are known or conclude that the other processes will address the issues.

PICK CHECKLIST

More “ticks” across all four categories indicates that the topic is more suitable for in depth review.

<p>Public Interest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is evidence of significant public interest in this topic • It is a “high profile” topic for specific local communities or communities of interest • This is an area where we received a lot of complaints and / or bad press • The review will need to include participatory events and opportunities for local people and / or organizations to have their say • Substantial survey or research work is required
<p>Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This review will have a significant impact on the “well being” of Mid Suffolk • A local community or community of interest have much to gain or lose • Work is needed to develop the routes to influencing change (e.g. with partners) • This could make a big difference to the way services are delivered • This could make a big difference to the way resources are used
<p>Council Performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council and / or other organizations are not performing well in this area • We do not understand why our performance differs from others • We are performing well but spending too much money in this area • There are few local or national performance measures / targets for this service • This service is fundamental to the achievement of Council objective(s)
<p>Keep it in Context</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This service will not be part of a BV Review or external inspection in the next 2 years • This service will be reviewed or inspected soon but Scrutiny can make a positive contribution by focusing on key areas of interest and making recommendations • This service has not been recently reviewed or inspected • There are no current major changes to service that reduce or pre-empt the value of review • Service changes are planned and Scrutiny can positively influence change

PROTOCOL 3

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION PROTOCOL

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The “Councillor Call for Action” (CCfA) was introduced under Section 119 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, and came into force on 1 April 2009.
- 1.2 The 2007 Act enables any member of the Council to refer to the Scrutiny Committee any local government matter which affects their Ward and is relevant to the functions of the Committee.
- 1.3 In addition, Section 119 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 came into force on 30 April 2009 and enables any member of the Council to refer to the crime and disorder Committee any local crime and disorder matter which affects their Ward. The Scrutiny Committee will discharge the function of the crime and disorder Committee.
- 1.4 The power to refer a matter is available only where the matter is of direct concern to the Ward or division which the Councillor represents. The matter may affect all or part of the Ward Member’s area or any person who lives or works in that area. A Councillor can refer a matter even if no citizen has asked him/her to consider it, and there is no requirement for Councillors in multi-member wards to agree – any of them can refer a matter.

2. Limitations

- 2.1 It is important to recognise that CCfA is not guaranteed to solve a given problem. CCfA can provide a method for discussing such problems and, through discussion, trying to overcome them.

3. Issues excluded from referral as a CCfA

- 3.1 The Scrutiny (Reference by Councillors) (Excluded Matters) (England) Order 2008 excludes the following matters from referral as a CCfA:

- 3.1.1 Any matter relating to an individual or entity where there is already a statutory right to a review or appeal (other than the right to complain to the Local Government Ombudsman), for example:

Council Tax/Housing Benefit appeals

Issues currently under dispute in a court of law.

- 3.1.2 Any matter relating to a planning or listed building application or enforcement decision.
- 3.1.3 Any matter relating to a licensing application, review or enforcement decision.
- 3.1.4 Any matter which is vexatious, discriminatory or not reasonable to be included on the agenda for, or to be discussed at, a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee or any of its Sub-Committees.
- 3.2 A matter will not be excluded under 3.1.1 to 3.1.3 where the allegation consists of the function not being discharged at all or that the function has failed or is failing on a systematic basis.
- 3.3 A referral, provided it is covered by the legislation and is not an excluded matter (see above), will ensure that the matter is included on the agenda of the Scrutiny Committee. It is then up to the members of the Committee to decide whether or not to take the matter further.
- 3.4 A referral made to the Scrutiny Committee is seen as being the end of the CCfA process (the last resort) and not the first step.

4. Steps to be taken prior to making a Councillor Call for Action referral

- 4.1 Prior to a councillor referring a matter as a CCfA to the Scrutiny Committee, a Councillor **must** have tried to resolve the issue/problem themselves using all mechanisms and resources available to them at ward level. Councillors should:
- If a local crime and disorder matter, raise the issue through the Community Safety Partnership to find a way to resolve the issue.
 - Ensure that all relevant partner organisations have been informed of the issue and given enough time to resolve it, for example through formal letter written on behalf of constituents, discussion at public meetings, petitions, communication with local MPs and Councillors in other authorities etc.
 - Ensure that all relevant internal potential routes to solution have been followed, for example informal discussions with officers and/or members, questions at committees, motions on the agenda at full Council etc.
 - Ensure that this is not an issue that is currently being or should be pursued via the Council's complaints procedure.
 - Ascertain whether or not any other form of local scrutiny is investigating the issue, e.g. Suffolk County Council.

5. How to make a Councillor Call for Action referral

- 5.1 If the issue/problem is still not resolved the Councillor can refer it to the Scrutiny Committee as a “Councillor Call for Action”. To do this the councillor should complete and submit to the Strategic Director a CCfA Request Form outlining what the issue is and what steps have been taken towards a resolution. The request form, a specimen is attached as [Appendix 1](#), is available on the Council’s website, or from the Strategic Director. The request form for a CCfA includes:
- The name of the Councillor and ward they represent
 - Title of the CCfA and date of submission
 - Why you think the issue should be looked at by the Scrutiny Committee
 - A brief synopsis of what the main areas of concern are
 - What evidence you have in support of your CCfA
 - Which areas or community groups are affected by the CCfA
 - What you have done to try and resolve the issue prior to requesting a CCfA
 - Whether the CCfA is currently the subject of legal action by any party (to your knowledge) or is being examined by a formal complaints process
 - Whether there are any deadlines associated with the CCfA of which the Scrutiny Committee needs to be aware.
- 5.2 The Strategic Director will receive the referral form, log it to track its progress, and, after consultation with the Solicitor to the Council, assess the issue to ensure that it is covered by the legislation referred to above and is not a matter excluded from referral to the Scrutiny Committee. A decision that a matter is excluded pursuant to paragraph 3.1.4 above will only be taken by the Strategic Director in consultation with the Chairman of the relevant Scrutiny Committee.
- 5.3 The Strategic Director will inform the Chairman of the relevant Scrutiny Committee that the item will be included on the next Committee agenda. The Councillor will be informed whether or not their referral has been successful.
- 5.4 A successful referral will ensure that the CCfA will be placed on the next agenda of the Scrutiny Committee. It is then up to the members of the Committee to decide whether or not to take the matter further.

6. Decision of the Committee whether to take the matter further

6.1 In deciding whether or not to take the matter further the relevant Scrutiny Committee will consider:

- Anything that the Councillor has done in relation to this matter; and
- Representations made by the councillor as to why the Committee should take the matter up. (Councillors have the option of either presenting their CCfA form without supporting papers, or of preparing a report setting out their views).

6.2 The criteria the Committee will use to decide whether or not to take the matter further include:

- Is the Committee satisfied that all reasonable attempts have been made to resolve the issue by the Ward Councillor? And do the responses received by the referring Councillor demonstrate that the matter is not being progressed?
- Has the Committee considered a similar issue recently – if yes have the circumstances or evidence changed?
- Is there a similar or related issue which is the subject of a review on the current work plan? It may be more appropriate to link the new issue to an existing review, rather than hold a separate CCfA hearing. Relevant time pressures on resolving the CCfA should be taken into account.
- Have all relevant service areas or partner organisations been informed and been given enough time to resolve the issue? What response has the Councillor received?
- Is this a case that is being or should be pursued via the Council's complaints procedure?
- Is it relating to a "quasi-judicial" matter or decision such as planning or licensing?
- Is the issue part of an individual's own personal agenda (an issue of genuine local concern should have an impact on the local community).
- Is this an issue currently being looked at by another form of local scrutiny, e.g. Suffolk County Council?
- And, as with all scrutiny, does the matter referred have the potential for scrutiny to produce recommendations which could realistically be implemented and lead to improvements for anyone living or working in the referring Member's ward?

- 6.3 In considering the CCfA, the Scrutiny Committee may invite the Chief Executive or relevant Director, Head of Service or external organisation to discuss the issue with the Committee and answer any questions.
- 6.4 If the Committee decides not to accept the CCfA referral it must inform the Councillor and provide reasons.
- 6.5 If the Committee decides to accept the CCfA referral, it must decide how it intends to take the matter forward and include the CCfA in its work plan. This could include:

Before holding a formal hearing:

- Asking the service area(s)/partner organisation(s) to respond to the CCfA
- Setting up a research group to undertake a more in-depth review.

At formal hearings

- Asking for further evidence and/or witnesses to be brought to a future meeting then making recommendations to the Cabinet/partner organisation.

7. Potential outcomes

- 7.1 Following a formal hearing, there are a number of potential outcomes from the Committee meeting:
 - The Committee could determine not to make a report or recommendations (perhaps because it is not considered the right time to consider a particular issue), with the ward Councillor notified in writing;
 - The Committee could determine that it is a complex issue that requires further investigation and commission a scrutiny review of the issue;
 - The Committee could write a report and make recommendations on the CCfA to the Cabinet and/or relevant partners.
 - The Committee could make a report or recommendations to full Council where the CCfA is a local crime and disorder matter.
- 7.2 Once the Committee has completed its work on the CCfA referral, the Councillor who made the CCfA referral will receive a copy of any report or recommendations made. The report will also be made available on the Council's website, unless the matter was an exempt item, in which case the report cannot be made public.

8. Timescales

- 8.1 Once the CCfA has been assessed as not being a matter which is excluded from referral to the Scrutiny Committee, the item will be included on the next Committee agenda.
- 8.2 If the Committee agrees to take the matter forward, the hearing will usually be held as an item on the next available agenda. In exceptional circumstances, for example where there are unavoidable time constraints, a separate meeting may be convened.
- 8.3 Should a CCfA hearing result in recommendations to the Cabinet or full Council being made, an item will be placed on the agenda for the next Cabinet or Council meeting, respectively.
- 8.4 Should a CCfA hearing result in recommendations to partner organisations, such organisations will also be requested to make a response to the recommendations, although they are under no legal obligation to do so.

APPENDIX 1 – COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION REQUEST FORM

This form should be used by any Councillor who would like the Scrutiny Committee to consider a Councillor Call for Action in their ward.

Councillor

The ward you represent:

Title of your Councillor Call for Action:
--

Date of Submission:

Have you approached the Scrutiny Committee on the same issue in the past six months?
Yes No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

Why you think the issue should be looked at by the Scrutiny Committee:

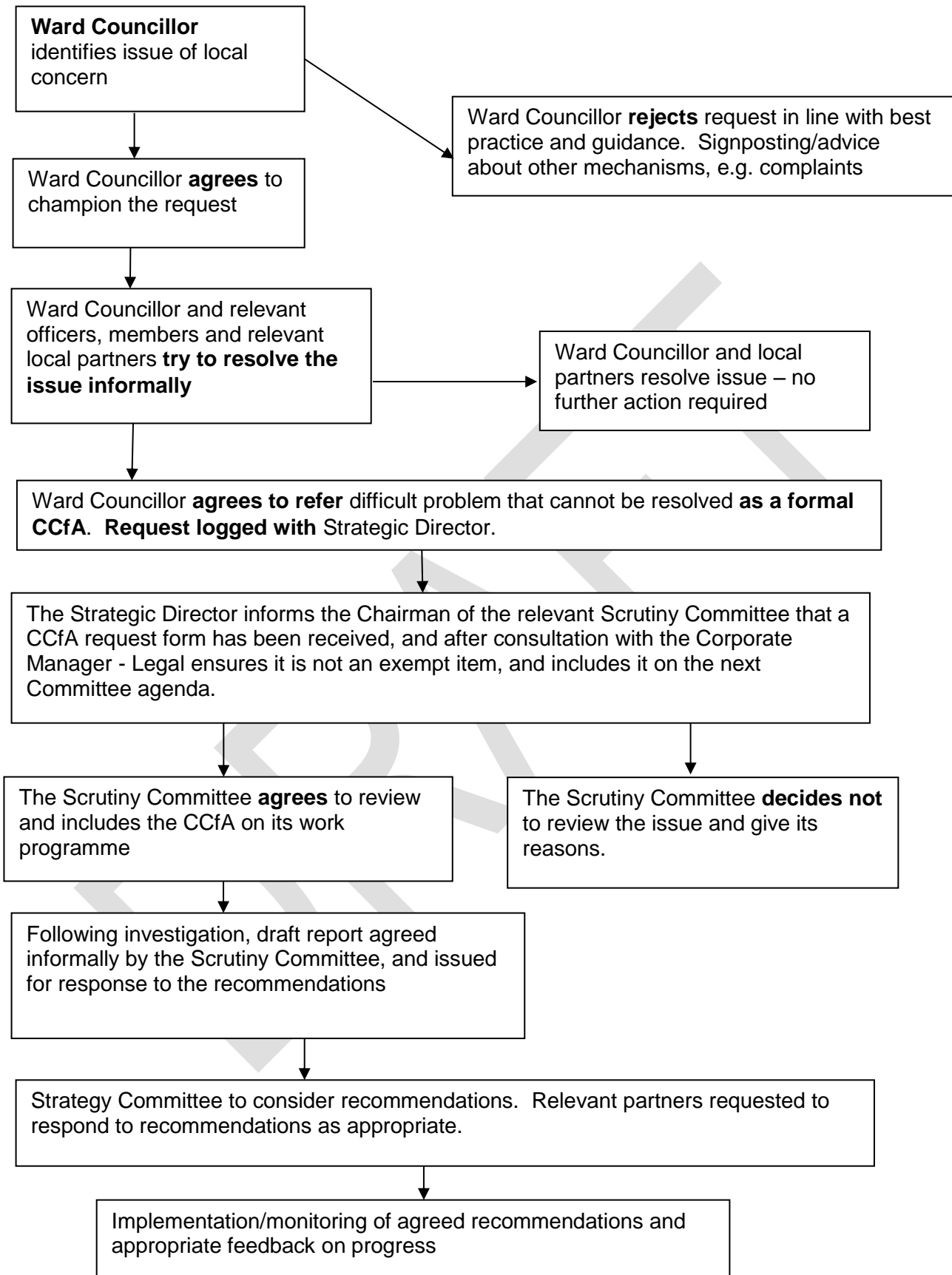
Please give a brief synopsis of the main areas of concern:

What evidence do you have in support of your CCfA:
Which areas or community groups are affected by the CCfA:
How have you tried to resolve the issue:
Is the CCfA currently the subject of legal action by any party (to your knowledge) or being examined by a formal complaints process?
Are there any deadlines associated with the CCfA of which the Scrutiny Committee needs to be aware:

Please complete and return the form to:

Strategic Director
Council Offices
High Street
Needham Market
IPSWICH
IP6 8DL

APPENDIX 2 – SUMMARY OF CCFA MECHANISM



APPENDIX 3 – EXPLANATORY NOTES

1. **Definition of a local government matter and a local crime and disorder matter**

Local government matter

For the purpose of the 2007 Act a “local government matter”, in relation to a member of a local authority is one which:

- Relates to any discharge of any function of the authority;
- Affects all or part of the electoral area for which the referring member is elected or any person who lives or works in the area (i.e. it must be specific to a particular locality); and
- Is not an excluded matter.

However, the guidance produced by the Centre for Public Scrutiny and Improvement and Development Agency advises that, to give full effect to CCfA, the interpretation of “local government matter” needs to be broader. This includes issues relating to the Council’s partners, in line with the area focus of Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA), and the fact that an authority’s duties increasingly impact on other organisations, and involve partners within and outside the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP).

Local crime and disorder matter

A “local crime and disorder matter”, in relation to a member of a local authority, has been defined in the 2006 Act to mean a matter concerning:

- (a) crime and disorder (including in particular forms of crime and disorder that involve anti-social behaviour adversely affecting the local environment); or
- (b) the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances that affects the electoral area represented by the member, or the people who live or work in that area.

2. **Definitions of “vexatious”, “persistent”, “discriminatory” and “not reasonable”**

Statutory regulations deal with matters that can be excluded from CCfA, stating that “any matter which is vexatious, discriminatory or not reasonable to be included on the agenda for, or to be discussed at, a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee is to be excluded”.

Vexatious/Persistent

Deciding whether a request is vexatious is a balancing exercise, taking into account all the circumstances of the case. There is no rigid test or definition, and it will often be easy to recognise. The key question is whether the request is likely to cause distress, disruption or irritation, without any proper or justified cause.

Issues around persistency are implied by this definition. However, a persistent request may well be entirely valid – it may relate to a systematic problem that has not been effectively resolved.

CCfAs need to be looked at on their merits, rather than on the basis of who is bringing them, or whether somebody thinks there is an ulterior motive for them being brought.

Where a request for a CCfA is clearly vexatious, detailed reasons for coming to this decision will be given to the councillor concerned. There could, however, be instances where changes to the scope of the CCfA, or its focus, could make it more acceptable while still meeting the councillor's requirements.

Discriminatory

A modern interpretation of the word “discrimination” is provided at Section 45 of the Equality Act 2006, in relation to religion and belief, as follows:

A person (A) discriminates against another (B) if on the grounds of the religion or belief of B or of any other person except A, A treats B less favourably than he treats others. This definition can easily be amended to deal with other forms of discrimination, such as discrimination for reasons of sex and/or race. So a discriminatory CCfA might be one which implies or states that a group of people or an area should receive better, or worse, services on account of that group's predominant religion, race, gender or other characteristic, as covered by discrimination legislation.

Not reasonable

It is suggested that, in the interests of transparency, authorities do not interpret “not reasonable” as being the same as the legal word “unreasonable”. It is best to consider it as a qualifier to the word “vexatious”, as a vexatious request is likely not to be reasonable and a request that is not reasonable is likely to be vexatious.

3. Structure of the CCfA hearing

A CCfA hearing will be based on the Scrutiny Committee's protocol for dealing with call-in hearings.

The following protocol is intended to formalise the conduct of CCfA hearings and the preparation work carried out in the run-up to such a hearing. It should be noted, however, that the protocol may be varied by the Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee to meet the requirements of any particular circumstances.

Prior to the hearing

1. The CCfA Request Form and any additional papers provided by the referring councillor will be published with the agenda for the meeting.
2. The referring Councillor and relevant officers and partners will be invited to the meeting.
3. Any other relevant external witnesses will be invited to the meeting.
4. Seven days' notice of a request to attend the meeting will be given to all participants. If a question plan is to be produced, seven days' notice of the questions planned will also be given to participants.
5. Prior to the meeting any member who may have a conflict of interest will be given relevant advice by the Monitoring Officer.

The hearing

1. The CCfA hearing will normally be the first item of business on the agenda, in order that participants and other witnesses are not kept waiting.
2. Participants and witnesses will be placed around the table with the Committee if space permits, but if there is a large number of witnesses or other attendees at the meeting; they may be required to wait in a separate seating area or the public gallery.
3. the referring Councillor will be invited to make a presentation outlining his or her main reasons for referring the matter as a CCfA. A question and answer session will follow.
4. Any other parties relevant to the hearing, for example Portfolio Holders, officers or partners, will be invited to make presentations outlining their response to the CCfA. Question and answer sessions will follow.
5. Any other relevant external witnesses will be invited to make a presentation to the Committee without interruption, following which there will be a question and answer session.
6. Witnesses will be given the opportunity to add any points of clarification before any resolution or recommendation is moved.
7. The referring Councillor will be given the opportunity to add any points of clarification before any resolution or recommendation is moved.

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURE RULES

INTRODUCTION

1 Financial Regulations

- 1.1 The following financial regulations take account of CIPFA guidance – with amendments to reflect the Council's local arrangements and requirements.
- 1.2 Financial Regulations and Procedure Rules provide the framework for managing the Council's financial affairs. They apply to every Member and officer of the Council and anyone acting on its behalf.
- 1.3 They set out the principles to be followed in securing the proper administration of the financial affairs of both Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils. They apply to every Member and Officer of the Authorities and anyone acting on its behalf.
- 1.4 All Members and officers have a general responsibility for taking reasonable action to provide for the security of the assets under their control, and for ensuring that the use of these resources is legal, is properly authorised, provides value for money and achieves best value.
- 1.5 The Council's financial procedures rules guidance contains the operational detail which underpins the financial regulations and is issued to officers by the S151 Officer. Members, officers and others acting on behalf of the Council are required to follow this guidance. The following matters are covered in the financial procedure rules guidance:
 - Banking arrangements and Imprest Accounts (petty cash)
 - Income collection and raising debts
 - Ordering goods and services and paying invoices
 - Procurement Cards
 - Assets and Security
 - Salaries, Wages and Pensions
 - Insurances
 - Budget virements (transfers) and carry forwards.
- 1.6 Assistant Directors are responsible for ensuring that all officers in their departments and those acting on behalf of the Councils are aware of the existence and content of the Council's Financial Procedure Rules, Contract Standing Orders and other internal regulatory documents and that they comply with them.

- 1.7 Each Senior Officer shall consult the S151 Officer with respect to any matter which is liable to materially affect the finances of the Council before any provisional or other commitment is incurred and before the S151 Officer reports the matter to Cabinet through the budget monitoring reporting if material, see A.15 below.
- 1.8 The S151 Officer shall report to the Councils any significant failure to comply with these rules which comes to their attention.
- 1.9 There are five financial regulations which cover:
 - A: Financial Management
 - B: Financial Planning
 - C: Risk Management and Control of Resources
 - D: Systems and Procedures
 - E: External Arrangements
- 1.10 These Regulations (and associated procedures/guidance) are to be read in conjunction with the Constitution and Scheme of Delegation and the S151 Officer shall determine any matter on which conflict may arise.
- 1.11 Failure to observe these Regulations may be classified as misconduct justifying disciplinary action.

A. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

INTRODUCTION

- A.1 Financial management covers all financial responsibilities and accountabilities of the Council, Cabinet, Committees and key officers in relation to the running of the authority, including the policy framework and budget (which is covered in Article 4 of the Constitution).

THE COUNCIL

- A.2 The Council is responsible for approving the Policy Framework and budget. It is also responsible for approving and monitoring compliance with the Council's overall framework of accountability and control. The framework is set out in its Constitution. The Council has a statutory responsibility for setting the Council Tax, determining borrowing limits and considering reports by the S151 Officer (under section 114 of the Local Government Act 1988).
- A.3 Arrangements for delegated powers are set out in the Scheme of Delegation in the Constitution.

CABINET

- A.4 Cabinet is responsible for proposing the policy framework and budget to the full Council, and for discharging functions in accordance with this.

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

- A.5 This is responsible for scrutinising Cabinet decisions before or after they have been implemented and for holding the Cabinet to account. Scrutiny Committee is also responsible for reviewing the general policy and service delivery of the authority.

DUTIES OF SENIOR OFFICERS

S151 Officer/Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

- A.6 Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires local authorities to make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and appoint a CFO to have responsibility for those arrangements.
- A.7 The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accounting (CIPFA) Statement on the role of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) in public service organisations defines the role of a CFO as:
- a key member of the Leadership Team, helping it to develop and implement strategy and to resource and deliver the organisation's strategic objectives sustainably and in the public interest;
 - must be actively involved in, and able to bring influence to bear on, all material business decisions to ensure immediate and longer term implications, opportunities and risks are fully considered, and alignment with the organisation's financial strategy; and
 - must lead the promotion and delivery by the whole organisation of good financial management so that public money is safeguarded at all times and used appropriately, economically, efficiently and effectively.
- A.8 To deliver these responsibilities the CFO:
- must lead and direct a finance function that is resourced to be fit for purpose; and
 - must be professionally qualified and suitably experienced.
- A.9 To view CIPFA's statement on the Role of Chief Finance Officer in Local Government please use the following link:

<http://www.cipfa.org/policy-and-guidance/reports/the-role-of-the-chief-financial-officer-in-local-government>

- A.10 The S151 Officer is responsible for advising the Cabinet and the Council about whether a decision is likely to be considered contrary or not wholly in accordance with the budget. Actions that may be “contrary to the budget” include:
- initiating a new policy or spending not provided for in the approved budget
 - committing expenditure in future years to above the budget level
 - budget transfers above virement limits
 - causing the net expenditure financed from council tax, grants and corporately held reserves to increase, or to increase more than the reported amount.
- A.11 The S151 Officer has statutory duties in relation to the financial administration and stewardship of the Council. This statutory responsibility cannot be overridden. The statutory duties arise from:
- Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972
 - The Local Government Finance Act 1988
 - The Local Government and Housing Act 1989
 - The Local Government Act 2003
 - The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015
- A.12 The S151 Officer is responsible for:
- The proper administration of the Council’s financial affairs
 - Setting and monitoring compliance with financial management standards
 - Advising on the corporate financial position and on the key financial controls necessary to secure sound financial management
 - Providing financial information and advice
 - Preparing medium term financial planning, revenue budget and capital programme.
 - Treasury management.
- A.13 Under Section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 the S151 Officer will report to Council, Cabinet and the External Auditor if the Authority or one of its officers:-
- Has made or is about to make a decision which involves incurring unlawful expenditure;

- Has taken or is about to take an unlawful action which has resulted or would result in a loss or deficiency to the Council;
- Is about to make an unlawful entry in the Council's accounts.

A.14 Section 114 of the 1988 Act also requires:

- The S151 Officer to nominate a properly qualified member of staff to deputise should he/she be unable to perform the duties under section 114 personally;
 - The Council to provide the S151 Officer with sufficient staff, accommodation and other resources – including legal advice where this is necessary – to carry out the duties under section 114.

Senior Leadership Team

A.15 The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for:

- Ensuring that Members are advised of the financial implications of all proposals and that the financial implications have been agreed by the S151 Officer.
- Signing contracts in relation to their specific areas on behalf of the authority in accordance with the Procurement Scheme of Delegation.
- Consulting with the S151 Officer to seek approval on any matter likely to materially affect the Council's finances, before any commitments are incurred.

Corporate Managers and Professional Leads

A.16 Corporate Managers and Professional Leads have responsibility for managing and monitoring budgets, under the guidance and direction of the Senior Leadership Team.

BUDGET MANAGEMENT, MONITORING AND CONTROL

A.17 The S151 Officer is responsible for putting into place effective procedures for ensuring that guidance and financial information is available to enable budgets to be managed, monitored and controlled effectively. The S151 Officer will report to the Cabinet on the overall position and variances compared to the Budget on a regular basis.

- A.18 It is responsibility of the Senior Officers (Assistant Directors, Corporate Managers and Professional Leads) to control income and expenditure within their area and to monitor performance, taking account of financial information and advice provided. They should take any action necessary to avoid exceeding their budgets and alert the S151 Officer to any problems as soon as possible.

BUDGET VIREMENT (TRANSFERS)

- A.19 Details of the arrangements and procedures for virement (transfer) of expenditure or income between budgets and the limits that apply are set out in financial procedures.
- A.20 Senior Officers are responsible for agreeing in-year virements within these limits, in consultation with the S151 Officer where required.

YEAR-END BUDGET CARRY FORWARDS

- A.21 Details of the arrangements and procedures for carrying forward budget underspends at the end of each financial year are also set out in financial procedures.

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

- A.22 The S151 Officer is responsible for selecting which accounting policies should be adopted and regularly reviewing them, ensuring that they are applied consistently.

ACCOUNTING RECORDS AND RETURNS

- A.23 The S151 Officer is responsible for determining the accounting procedures and records that are required for the Council.

THE ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

- A.24 The S151 Officer is responsible for ensuring that these are prepared in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom: A Statement of Recommended Practice (CIPFA). The Audit Committee is responsible for approving the annual Statement of Accounts.

B FINANCIAL PLANNING

COUNCIL

B.1. The Council is responsible for approving the policy framework and budget within which the Council operates. It is also responsible for approving and monitoring compliance with the authority's overall framework of accountability and control. The framework is set out in its Constitution. In terms of financial planning, the key elements are:

- Strategic Plan and Delivery Plans
- Medium Term Financial Strategy
- Asset Management Plan/Strategies
- Revenue Budget and Capital Programme (including associated Investment Strategies)
- Advice on the robustness of estimates and adequacy of reserves
- Treasury Management Strategy

CABINET

B.2 The Cabinet is responsible for:

- Approving the general format of the budget on the advice of the S151 Officer. This will include allocation of resources, proposed changes to charges for services and proposed taxation/council house rent levels.
- Approving procedures for agreeing variations to approved budgets, plans and strategies forming the policy framework and for determining the circumstances in which a decision will be deemed to be contrary to the budget or policy framework.
- Taking in-year decisions on resources and priorities in order to deliver the policy framework and budget within the financial limits set by the Council.

SENIOR OFFICERS

B.3 Senior Officers are responsible for:

- Drawing up the key elements of the Council's policy framework and budget
- Reviewing and proposing resource allocation processes (in conjunction with the S151 Officer) to Members.

- Contributing towards the financial planning arrangements and ensure that Operational Delivery Teams operate within guidelines that are issued.

BUDGET AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME

PREPARATION

- B.4 The S151 Officer is responsible for ensuring that a revenue budget and capital programme is prepared on an annual basis and a rolling Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for consideration by Cabinet before submission to Council. The MTFS will be reviewed annually.
- B.5 It is the responsibility of Senior Officers to ensure that the budget and capital programme reflects agreed objectives and strategic/service priorities and that these are prepared in line with guidance issued by Cabinet and the S151 Officer.
- B.6 Senior Officers are responsible for ensuring that budgets and capital programme are based upon reliable estimates and are prepared in accordance with guidance issued by the S151 Officer.

RESOURCE ALLOCATION

- B.7 The S151 Officer (in conjunction with the Senior Leadership Team) is responsible for developing, maintaining and reviewing a resource allocation process that ensures it reflects the policy framework.

GUIDELINES

- B.8 Guidelines on budget and capital programme preparation are issued by the S151 Officer. These take account of:
- legal requirements
 - medium-term financial planning
 - strategic/annual delivery plans
 - forecast available resources
 - spending/cost pressures
 - relevant government guidance
 - Council policies
 - Treasury Management Strategy

MAINTENANCE OF RESERVES

- B.9 It is the responsibility of the S151 Officer to advise Cabinet and/or the full Council on the robustness of estimates and adequacy of reserves.
- B.10 The principles for use of reserves detailed in the MTFs/Annual Budget will be followed.
- B.11 Assistant Directors, in consultation with the S151 Officer, are authorised to utilise credit balances up to a threshold of £150,000 on the reserve accounts within their area of responsibility to finance expenditure relating to the purpose of the reserve. Anything above this amount will need to go on the Forthcoming Decision Plan and approved by Cabinet.

C RISK MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL OF RESOURCES

INTRODUCTION

- C.1 It is essential that robust, integrated systems are developed and maintained for identifying and evaluating all significant operational risks to the Council. This should include the proactive participation of all those associated with planning and delivering services.
- C.2 The Accounts and Audit Regulations require that the Council's financial management is adequate and effective and that there is a sound system of financial control that facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions and that includes risk management arrangements.
- C.3 Senior Officers are responsible for reviewing the effective management of risks, internal controls and governance, supported by the Corporate Manager – Internal Audit and the S151 Officer.
- C.4 The S151 Officer is responsible for ensuring that proper insurance exists where appropriate.

RISK MANAGEMENT

- C.5 The Cabinet is responsible for recommending approval of the Council's Risk Management strategy. The Audit Committee is responsible for ensuring that there is a robust and effective risk management process in place.
- C.6 The Corporate Manager – Internal Audit is responsible for preparing the Council's Risk Management strategy and for promoting it throughout the Council and maintaining and reporting on the Council's Significant Risk Register.

INTERNAL CONTROL

- C.7. Internal control refers to the systems of control devised by management to help ensure the Council's objectives and strategic/service priorities are achieved in a manner that promotes economical, efficient and effective use of resources and that the Council's assets and interests are safeguarded.
- C.8 The systems of internal control should ensure compliance with all applicable statutes and regulations, and other relevant best practice. They should also ensure that public funds are properly safeguarded and used economically, efficiently, and in accordance with the statutory and other policies that govern their use.
- C.9 It is the responsibility of Senior Officers to establish sound arrangements for planning, appraising, authorising and controlling their operations in order to achieve continuous improvement, economy, efficiency and effectiveness and for achieving their financial performance targets.

AUDIT REQUIREMENTS AND INSPECTION

- C.10 The basic duties of the external auditor are governed by Section 5 of the Audit Commission Act 1998. The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require every local authority to maintain an adequate and effective internal audit. The S151 Officer is responsible for ensuring that this is achieved.
- C.11 Internal Audit will advise and report to management and the Audit Committee on whether the Council's governance – appropriate risk management processes, control systems and operational procedures – are in place and operating properly.
- C.12 This scope will extend to systems or services provided wholly by, or in conjunction with other organisations, including partnership arrangements.
- C.13 The Council may, from time to time, be subject to audit, inspection or investigation by external bodies such as HM Revenues and Customs who have statutory rights of access. It is the responsibility of Senior Officers and all officers to co-operate and provide such information as required by those bodies.

PREVENTING FRAUD AND CORRUPTION

- C.14 The Corporate Manager – Internal Audit is responsible for:
- the development and maintenance of a Prevention of Financial Crime Policy and ensuring that Members and staff are aware of its contents.

- ensuring that there is a pro-active approach to fraud prevention, detection and investigation and promote a council-wide anti-fraud culture across both organisations.

C.15 All officers are responsible for giving immediate notification to the Corporate Manager – Internal Audit on fraud matters where there are grounds to suggest that fraud or corruption have occurred.

MONEY LAUNDERING

C.16 The Corporate Manager – Internal Audit is the Money Laundering Reporting Officer (MLRO) and is responsible for ensuring that proper procedures are in place to combat the possibility of the authority being used for money laundering purposes.

ASSETS

C.17 Senior Officers are responsible for ensuring that records and assets are properly maintained and securely held. They must also ensure that contingency plans for the security of assets and continuity of service in the event of disaster or system failure are in place.

STAFFING

C.18 The Chief Executive, as Head of Paid Service, is responsible for determining overall staffing requirements. Cabinet will consider changes to these within the overall policy and budget framework.

C.19 The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for controlling total staff numbers.

C.20 The Assistant Director (Corporate Resources) is responsible for ensuring that there is proper use of the job evaluation or other agreed systems for determining the remuneration of a job.

C.21 Appointments of all employees shall be made in accordance with the regulations of the Council and the approved establishments, grades and rates of pay.

TREASURY MANAGEMENT

C.22 The Council has adopted CIPFA's Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Local Authorities. The code includes a 'Treasury Management Policy Statement'. The S151 Officer is responsible for implementing and monitoring the statement and will advise the Cabinet immediately of any significant amendment to the Code and any consequent or necessary amendment to the Treasury Management Policy Statement and/or Treasury Management Strategy.

- C.23 The S151 Officer is responsible for submitting to the Cabinet/Council:
- a proposed Treasury Management Strategy before the start of each financial year
 - a mid year and annual review of activity compared to the approved strategy by 30 September of the succeeding financial year.
- C.24 The S151 Officer is responsible for reporting to the Cabinet any significant variations to the approved strategy during the year.
- C.25 All executive decisions on borrowing, investment or financing shall be delegated to the S151 Officer, who is required to act in accordance with CIPFA's *Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Local Authorities*.

D. SYSTEMS AND PROCEDURES

INTRODUCTION

- D.1 Sound systems and procedures are essential to an effective framework of accountability and control.

GENERAL

- D.2 The S151 Officer issues guidance and requirements in relation to the above (see also Financial Regulation C: Risk Management and Control of Resources which covers advice and reports by the Corporate Manager – Internal Audit on systems of internal control).
- D.3 Senior Officers have responsibility to ensure adherence to these.
- D.4 Any changes made by Senior Officers to the existing financial systems or the establishment of new systems must be approved by the S151 Officer. Senior Officers are responsible for the proper operation of financial processes in their own areas.
- D.5 Any changes to agreed procedures by Senior Officers to meet their own specific service needs are to be agreed with the S151 Officer.
- D.6 Senior Officers should ensure that staff receive relevant training and guidance.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

- D.7 Guidance and procedures on the collection of all money due to the Council will be under the supervision of the S151 Officer.

- D.8 It is the responsibility of Senior Officers to identify staff authorised to act on their behalf in respect of making payments, receiving income and placing orders, together with the limits of their delegated authority.
- D.9 The Cabinet is responsible for approving procedures for writing off debts as part of the overall control framework of accountability and control with the following exception:-
The process of debt write-off related to the functions of the Shared Revenues Partnership (SRP) which is delegated to authorised SRP officers in consultation with the SRP Joint Committee, within limits as agreed by that Committee.

PAYMENTS

- D.10 The S151 Officer is responsible for arrangements relating to all payments (to suppliers, contractors, employees and Members).

TAXATION

- D.11 The S151 Officer is responsible for advising Senior Officers, in the light of guidance issued by appropriate bodies and relevant legislation as it applies, on all taxation issues that affect the authority.
- D.12 The S151 Officer is responsible for maintaining the council's tax records, making all tax payments, receiving tax credits and submitting tax returns by their due date as appropriate.

TRADING ACCOUNTS

- D.13 It is the responsibility of the S151 Officer to advise on the establishment and operation of trading accounts.

E EXTERNAL ARRANGEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

- E.1 The local authority provides a distinctive leadership role for the community and brings together the contributions of the various stakeholders. It must also act to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of its area.

PARTNERSHIPS

- E.2 The Cabinet is responsible for approving delegations, including frameworks for partnerships. The Council will continually look for

opportunities to form partnerships with other local public, private, voluntary and community sector organisations to address local needs and priorities.

- E.3 The Cabinet can delegate functions – including those relating to partnerships – to officers. Where functions are delegated, the Cabinet remains accountable for them to the full Council.
- E.4 The Chief Executive or other Senior Officers represent the authority on partnerships and external bodies.
- E.5 Senior Officers are responsible for ensuring that appropriate approvals are obtained before any negotiations are concluded in relation to work with external bodies.
- E.6 The S151 Officer ensures that the accounting arrangements to be adopted relating to partnerships and joint ventures are satisfactory.

EXTERNAL FUNDING

- E.7 The S151 Officer is responsible for ensuring that all funding notified by external bodies is received and properly recorded in the Council's accounts.

**BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL
MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**CONTRACT STANDING ORDERS
CONTENTS**

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Delegated Authority**
- 3. Personal Interests**
- 4. Management of Records**
- 5. Principles**
- 6. Sourcing Processes**
- 7. Exemptions to Undertaking a Competitive Sourcing Process**
- 8. Extension of Contracts**
- 9. Purchase and Works Orders**

1. Introduction

1.1 These Contract Standing Orders are made in accordance with the requirements of Section 135 of the Local Government Act 1972 and the purpose is to provide a framework within which commissioning and purchasing decisions are undertaken to enable the Council to:

- furthers its priorities
- use its resources efficiently
- commission quality goods, services and works
- operate in a fair, open and transparent manner
- safeguard its reputation from the implication of dishonesty or corruption.

1.2 These Contract Standing Orders provide the minimum standards and requirements that shall be met on all occasions when the Council enters into an agreement for the supply of goods, services or the execution of works. Further guidance that shall also be applied is provided in the Council's Commissioning and Procurement Manual.

1.3 These Contract Standing Orders apply to all contracts, leases, concessions and agreements entered into by or on behalf of the Council; except where:

- The goods, services or works are provided by a wholly owned subsidiary of the Council or where the Council controls the subsidiary in a similar way to which control is exercised over their own departments, more than 80% of the subsidiary's activities are

undertaken for the Council and there is no direct private capital participation in the subsidiary.

- The Council collaborates with other Public Authorities to deliver a public service with a view to achieving objectives that they have in common and the collaboration is implemented in a manner governed solely by considerations relating to the public interest.
- The Council has established a Mutual Organisation delivering a service contract in relation to education, healthcare and housing, health and social work services, or library and other cultural services. A contract may be awarded for no more than 3 years.
- Circumstances where purchases are made or services rendered as a consequence of a contract made by another Local Authority, Government Department, Government Body or Agent, the benefits of which the Council obtains as a result of participation in a consortium.
- Goods are purchased by public auction.
- The lending or borrowing of money.
- The appointment of any Officer directly employed by the Council.
- The sale or purchase of any land or buildings.
- The provision of services by Legal Counsel.
- Agreements setting out the conditions which the Council will provide funding to particular voluntary sector bodies.

- The goods or services are supplied at a fixed price or the prices are wholly controlled by trade organisations or Government order and no satisfactory alternative is available.

2. Delegated Authority

2.1 All commissioning and procurement activity by the Council shall be undertaken in compliance with the Council's Procurement Scheme of Delegation which is provided in Table 1.

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Table 1 – Standard Procurement Scheme of Delegation

£ Value excl. VAT	Approve the Selection of Suppliers to Invite to Tender	Approve the award of business	Signing of contracts	Approval of purchase or works orders, payment vouchers or invoices	Approval of contract extensions	Approval of exemption from undertaking competitive sourcing
Up to £25k	Not Applicable	Approved Officer	Approved Officer	Approved Officer	Approved Officer	Corporate Manager
£150k	Not Applicable	Corporate Manager	Corporate Manager	Corporate Manager	Corporate Manager	Corporate Manager
£150k to £250k	Corporate Manager	Assistant Director	Assistant Director	Assistant Director	Assistant Director	Assistant Director
Over £250k	Corporate Manager	Director	Council's Monitoring Officer	Director	Director	Director

Notes

(1) Corporate Manager or Professional Lead or the role which succeeds these roles.

(2) Assistant Director or the role which succeeds this role.

2.2 Delegation of Authority to Approved Officers

Corporate Managers have responsibility to delegate authority to Approved Officers and shall ensure that they have the appropriate levels of capability and understanding to undertake the role.

2.3 Recording of Delegations

Effective records of delegations shall be maintained in the Council's Authorised Signatory List which the Council's Section 151 Officer or his/her nominee has responsibility for the compilation of. Corporate Managers (or the role which succeeds this role) have responsibility to ensure that details of Approved Officers are maintained in the Authorised Signatory List.

2.4 Variation from the Procurement Scheme of Delegation

Where requirements for high value contracts and purchase orders occur on a regular basis the Section 151 Officer may approve a variation from the Standard Procurement Scheme of Delegation for requirements up to £250k. Any such variations shall be recorded in the Council's Authorised Signatory List.

3. Personal Interests

3.1 Employees of the Council and Members of the Council shall give notice in writing to the Council of any pecuniary interest, direct or indirect, which he/she has in a contract entered into (or to be entered into) by the Council.

3.2 Such notification shall be given to the Council's Monitoring Officer.

4. Management of Records

4.1 Proper records of all communications, reports, minutes, meetings, quotes, tenders, contract and other relevant documents shall be retained securely so as

to protect the integrity of the process and managed in accordance with the Council's policy on The Management and Retention of Records.

4.2 A record of all Contracts shall be entered into the Council's Contract Register.

5. Principles

5.1 The following principles shall be applied to all the Council's commissioning and procurement.

5.2 Fairness and Transparency

All of the Council's commissioning and procurement shall be undertaken in an open and fair manner which provides the same information to all suppliers and an equal opportunity to all potential suppliers. The Council shall ensure that comparable situations are not treated differently and that different situations are not treated similarly.

5.3 The Principle of Proportionality

The Council's commissioning and procurement shall be undertaken with regard to the principle of proportionately. Requirements placed upon suppliers shall be appropriate for attaining the objective pursued and shall not go beyond what is required to achieve the objectives of the procurement.

5.4 Value for Money

The selection of offers for goods, services or the execution of works from suppliers shall be based upon achieving value for money for the Council.

5.5 Sustainability

The selection of offers for goods, services or the execution of works from suppliers shall ensure that sustainable and ethical sources of supply with minimal impact upon the environment are used.

5.6 Economic and Social Development

Subject to the test of fairness and equality for potential suppliers the requirement to support specific regional economic and social development opportunities may be included.

6. Sourcing Processes

6.1 The sourcing process that shall be used will depend upon the type and estimated value of the requirement (excluding VAT), refer to Table 2.

6.2 Requirements shall not be broken down into smaller portions (lots) for the purpose of avoiding the application of the procurement thresholds.

Table 2 – Sourcing Processes

Value of Expenditure	Sourcing Process
Less than £1k – All Categories	Verbal or email confirmation from supplier, pricing obtained from suppliers' catalogue.
£1k to £25k – All Categories	A written quote from the supplier shall be obtained.
£25k to £150k – All Categories	At least three quotes shall be invited using the Formal Quotation Process.
Over £150k – All Categories	<p>A Tender shall be undertaken and advertised nationally and also in the EU where the value threshold for the UK Public Contract Regulations is passed for the relevant category:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goods and Services • Light Touch Services (see Note 1) • Works <p>Definitions of the categories and the current UK Public Contract Regulations Value Thresholds are available in the Commissioning and Procurement Manual.</p>

Note (1) Light Touch Services are health, social and related services, administrative social, educational and cultural services, compulsory social services, benefit services, community social and personal services, religious services, catering services for private households, prison services, postal services, investigation and security services.

7. Exemptions to Undertaking a Competitive Sourcing Process

Exemptions to the requirement to undertake a competitive sourcing process shall be approved in accordance with the Council's Procurement Scheme of Delegation and can only be undertaken in the circumstances listed in Table 3.

Table 3- Exemptions to Undertaking a Competitive Sourcing Process

Type of Exemption	Criteria	£ Value for which this Exemption can be Applied
Sole Provider	Where for technical or artistic reasons connected with the protection of exclusive rights only a single supplier can meet the requirements.	Unlimited
Urgency A	Emergency action is required which acting diligently the Council could not have foreseen and if not taken would provide an unacceptable impact upon on the delivery of the Council's services.	Up to the value of the UK Public Contract Regulations value thresholds.
Urgency B	In cases of extreme urgency, where the health and safety of the public is at stake and the likelihood of harm during the period of delay is considerable, for reasons unforeseeable by and not attributable to the Council.	Unlimited
Additional Requirements	Where the Council requires a contractor to provide additional goods or carry out additional works or services beyond 50% of the original contract value (including any extension included in the original terms of the contract); which the Council acting diligently could not have foreseen and undertaking a further	The contract can be extended by its original value once again. However the total value of the contract must not exceed the UK Public

	<p>competitive sourcing process is unlikely to deliver value for money and will impede upon the delivery of the Council's services.</p> <p>The extension cannot include a variation in the scope of the contract.</p>	Contract Regulations value threshold for the relevant category.
Best Value	Where there is sufficient evidence that only one supplier is able to provide the goods or undertake the services or works within the required timescale and undertaking a competitive sourcing process would be unlikely to deliver value for money and will impede upon the delivery of the Council's services.	£150k

Notes

(1) The UK Public Contract Regulations value thresholds are available from the Commissioning and Procurement Manual.

8. Extension of Contracts

8.1 The term of existing contracts shall only be extended if satisfactory performance has been provided from the contracted supplier and there is adequate budgetary provision.

8.2 Contracts shall only be extended where competition was used to select the Supplier.

8.3 Contracts shall only be extended for any period that was provided for in the original terms of the contract unless clause 8.4 applies.

8.4 Where the Council requires a contractor to provide additional goods or carry out additional works or services due to circumstances which acting diligently the Council could not have foreseen an extension of up to 50% of the original value of the contract

(which includes any extension periods provided for in the terms of the original contract) can be undertaken.

8.5 Contracts shall not be varied with regard to the scope and the type of goods, services or works that they deliver unless, the variation has already been provided for in the original contract terms or the changes are not substantial and do not alter the nature of the Contract.

9. Purchase and Works Orders

With the exception of the requirements included on the Council's Purchase Order Exemption List an official Purchase or Works Order must be used to undertake all financial commitments on behalf of the Council.

STAFF EMPLOYMENT PROCEDURE RULES

1. RECRUITMENT AND APPOINTMENT

- (a) Declarations
 - (i) The Council will draw up a statement requiring any candidate for appointment as an Officer to state in writing whether they are the parent, grandparent, partner, child, stepchild, adopted child, grandchild, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew or niece of an existing Councillor or Officer of the Council; or of the partner of such persons.
 - (ii) No candidate so related to a Councillor or an Officer will be appointed without the authority of the relevant Chief Officer or an Officer nominated by him/her.
- (b) Seeking support for appointment.
 - (i) Subject to paragraph (iii), the Council will disqualify any applicant who directly or indirectly seeks the support of any Councillor for any appointment with the Council. The content of this paragraph will be included in any recruitment information.
 - (ii) Subject to paragraph (iii), no Councillor will seek support for any person for any appointment with the Council.
 - (iii) Nothing in paragraphs (i) and (ii) above will preclude a member from giving a written reference for a candidate for submission with an application for appointment.

2. Recruitment of Chief [officers], Monitoring Officer and Section 151 officer

Where the Council proposes to appoint any of the above posts and it is not proposed that the appointment be made exclusively from among their existing Officers, the Council will:

- (a) draw up a statement specifying:
 - (i) the duties of the Officer concerned; and
 - (ii) any qualifications or qualities to be sought in the person to be appointed;
- (b) make arrangements for the post to be advertised in such a way as is likely to bring it to the attention of persons who are qualified to apply for it; and

- (c) make arrangements for a copy of the statement mentioned in paragraph (a) to be sent to any person on request.

3. APPOINTMENT OF HEAD OF PAID SERVICE

This process will be subject to proposed mandatory standing orders regulations (see paragraph 6 later).

The full Council will approve the appointment of the Head of Paid Service following the recommendation of such an appointment by the Council's Joint Appointments Committee.

4. APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTORS (INCLUDING THE MONITORING OFFICER AND THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER)

The Joint Appointments Committee will appoint any Directors and Deputy Chief Executive. Designation of any officers as Monitoring Officer and the Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) will be made by full council on the recommendation of the Head of Paid Service.

5. OTHER APPOINTMENTS

- (a) **Officers below Director level.** Appointment of Officers below Director level (other than assistants to political groups) is the responsibility of the Head of Paid Service or his/her nominee, and may not be made by Councillors.
- (b) **Assistants to political groups.** Appointment of an assistant to a political group shall be made in accordance with the wishes of that political group.

6. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

- (a) **Suspension.** The Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer and Chief Financial Officer may be suspended whilst an investigation takes place into any alleged misconduct by a resolution of the Council at an extraordinary or ordinary meeting. The suspension will be on full pay and last no longer than two months. The Monitoring Officer and Chief Financial Officer will not be suspended during the period during which they are undertaking a formal investigation under their statutory powers.
- (b) **Independent person.** No other disciplinary action may be taken in respect of any of those Officers except in accordance with a recommendation in a report made by a designated independent person.
- (c) **Councillors** will not be involved in the disciplinary action against any Officer below Director level except where such involvement is necessary for any investigation or inquiry into alleged misconduct though the Council's disciplinary capability and related procedures as adopted from

time to time may allow a right of appeal to Members in respect of disciplinary action.

7. **DISMISSAL**

Councillors will not be involved in the dismissal of any Officer below Service Manager level except where such involvement is necessary for any investigation or inquiry into alleged misconduct though the Council's disciplinary, capability and related procedures as adopted from time to time may allow a right of appeal to Members in respect of dismissals.

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PART 4
Codes and Protocols

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MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT

Suffolk Local Code of Conduct for Members

In accordance with section 26 to 37 of the Localism Act 2011, on 19 and 21 June 2012 respectively Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils (individually “the Council”) resolved to adopt the Suffolk Local Code of Conduct to take effect from 1 July 2012 for the purposes of discharging its duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct within its area.

Until otherwise amended or replaced by a decision of the Council, the Suffolk Local Code of Conduct set out below shall hereafter apply to all elected members and any co-opted members entitled to vote on any decisions of the Council or its Committees, Sub-Committees or Joint Committees when acting in their capacity as a Member of the Council.

Preamble

The Suffolk Local Code of Conduct shall be interpreted in accordance with the following 7 principles of public life identified by the Committee on Standards in Public Life chaired by Lord Nolan:

Selflessness – Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interests. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

Integrity – Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity – In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability – Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness – Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty – Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in any way that protects the public interest.

Leadership – Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

SUFFOLK LOCAL CODE OF CONDUCT APPLICABLE TO ELECTED MEMBERS AND CO-OPTES APPOINTED TO THE COUNTY, BOROUGH, DISTRICT AND PARISH COUNCILS IN SUFFOLK

1. You must treat others with respect.
2. You must not:-
 - (1) do anything which may cause your authority to breach any of the Council's duties under the Equality Act 2010;
 - (2) bully any person;
 - (3) intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is or is likely to be:-
 - (a) a complainant,
 - (b) a witness, or
 - (c) involved in the administration of any investigation or proceedings, in relation to an allegation that a member (including yourself) has failed to comply with his or her authority's code of conduct; or
 - (4) do anything which compromises or is likely to compromise the impartiality of those who work for, or on behalf of, your authority.
3. You must not:-
 - (1) disclose information given to you in confidence by anyone, or information acquired by you which you believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, except where:-
 - (a) you have the consent of a person authorised to give it;
 - (b) you are required by law to do so;
 - (c) the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person; or
 - (d) the disclosure is reasonable, in the public interest, made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the authority; or
 - (2) prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law.
4. You must not conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or authority into disrepute.

5. You:-

- (1) must not use or attempt to use your position as a member improperly to confer on or secure for yourself or any other person, an advantage or disadvantage; and
- (2) must, when using or authorising the use by others of the resources of your authority:-
 - (a) act in accordance with your authority's reasonable requirements;
 - (b) ensure that such resources are not used improperly for political purposes (including party political purposes); and
- (3) must have regard to any applicable Local Authority Code of Publicity made under the Local Government Act 1986.

6. (1) When reaching decisions on any matter you must have regard to any relevant advice provided to you by:-

- (a) your authority's Chief Finance Officer; or
- (b) your authority's Monitoring Officer,

where that officer is acting pursuant to his or her statutory duties.

- (2) You must give reasons for all decisions in accordance with any statutory requirements and any reasonable additional requirements imposed by your authority.

7. **Registration of Interests**

- (1) You must register within 28 days of becoming a member of the Council (and to notify the Council's Monitoring Officer of any changes within 28 days) any Disclosable Pecuniary interests you may have for publication in the Register of Members' Interests.
- (2) You may not at any time discharge any function or participate in any Council business or discussions, or vote on any issues that relate to or concern any of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests where you are aware that you have a relevant Disclosable Pecuniary Interest. You may not remain in the chamber or meeting room or in the public gallery when any matter that relates to any of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests is under discussion or debate unless you have requested and obtained a written dispensation from your Council's Monitoring Officer or other arrangement in advance of the relevant meeting.

- (3) You must register within 28 days of becoming a member of the Council and to notify your Council's Monitoring Officer of any changes within 28 days any non-statutory Local Non Pecuniary Interests set out in Appendix A to this code, but you may participate in any discussions or debates relating or concerning any of your Local Non Pecuniary Interests after the date of registration.
- (4) You must declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Local Non Pecuniary Interest to a meeting where business is relevant to those interests, including those interests that are already registered with the Monitoring Officer or where registration is pending.
- (5) You must register, within 28 days, any gifts and hospitality received by you in accordance with the instructions issued within your Council by the Monitoring Officer.
- (6) The Council's Register of Interests will be available for inspection at the Council offices during normal office hours, and will be published on the Council's website.

8. Sensitive Interests

You may also apply to your Council's Monitoring Officer for non-publication of the full details of any of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Local Non Pecuniary Interests where you reasonably believe that publication of the details of a particular Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Local Non Pecuniary Interests could result in your being subjected to violence or intimidation. In considering such applications the Monitoring Officer shall have regard to any representations made by you in determining whether he or she considers the relevant Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Local Non Pecuniary Interest should be treated as a Sensitive Interest and excluded from the published version of the Register of Members' Interests.

Part 1

Description of categories of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

1. Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on by you or a relevant person for profit or gain.
2. Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the Council) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred in carrying out your duties as a Member, or towards your election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 other than from a registered political party.
3. Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where –
 - (1) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the Council and,
 - (2) either:
 - (a) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or
 - (b) the beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of the share capital of that body, if of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class.
4. Any contract which is made between the Council and (1) you, (2) your spouse or civil partner, (3) a person with whom you live as husband and wife, (4) a person with whom you live as if you are civil partners (or a body in which you or they have a beneficial interest) –
 - (1) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and
 - (2) which has not been fully discharged.
5. A beneficial interest in any land in the Council's area.
6. Any tenancy where to your knowledge (a) the landlord is the Council and (b) the tenant is a body in which you or a relevant person has a beneficial interest.
7. A licence of any land in the Council's area (alone or jointly with others) that you or a relevant person occupy for a month or longer.

Part 2

Description of categories of Local Non Pecuniary Interests

1. Any Body of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management and to which you are appointed or nominated by the Council;
2. Any Body –
 - (1) exercising functions of a public nature;
 - (2) directed to charitable purposes; or
 - (3) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union);of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management;
3. The interests of any person from whom you have received a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £25.

Confidential Information Protocol

1. A Protocol to support Paragraph 4(a)(iv) of the Members' Code of Conduct which allows for the disclosure of confidential information by a Member where the disclosure is reasonable, in the public interest, made in good faith and complies with the reasonable requirements of the Council.
2. **This Protocol sets out the reasonable requirements of the Council:**
 - (1) That careful consideration is given to the question of whether to make the disclosure and if the disclosure is made, the Member retains a note of the main considerations in reaching that decision.
 - (2) That the content of Committee reports, minutes or appendices that are marked as confidential items will not be disclosed without the prior written agreement of the relevant officer on the Senior Leadership Team or author of the report who will re-consider the need to retain confidentiality under the provisions relating to exempt information under Schedule 12A of the LGA 1972 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
 - (3) That the detail of legal or other professional advice is not disclosed without the prior written agreement of the relevant officer of the Senior Leadership Team
 - (4) That the Council's [Whistleblowing Procedure](#) (found within the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy, and available on the Council's website) together with the guidelines for reporting concerns (also on the website) are considered.

- (5) That the current Member/Staff Protocol is considered.
 - (6) That the Members' Code of Conduct and associated guidance is considered.
 - (7) That the advice of the Monitoring Officer or Deputy Monitoring Officer is sought prior to disclosure of the information unless agreement has already been secured under (2) or (3) above.
3. Agreement to the disclosure of confidential information may be with or without conditions.
 4. In instances involving particularly sensitive or highly confidential information, a Member may be asked to sign a confidentiality notice before information is released to them. In such cases, it would be the Council's expectation that the information is not disclosed.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR EMPLOYEES

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The public is entitled to expect the highest standards of conduct from all employees who work in local government.
- 1.2 This Code is based on a model produced by the Local Government Management Board and the Local Authority Associations. The Babergh and Mid Suffolk branch of UNISON and the Mid Suffolk branch of Unite have been consulted on this Code and has given its full support.
- 1.3 Throughout the Council many of the professional groups, and others, will have their own codes of practice which will be complementary to this Code. In addition it may be necessary to introduce special procedures, rules etc for specific matters which will be issued to appropriate employees, as and when necessary.

2. Status of the Code

- 2.1 This Code has been adopted by Babergh District Council and Mid Suffolk District Council. It sets out the minimum standards that must apply. The aim of the Code is to lay down guidelines for employees which will help maintain and improve standards and protect them from misunderstanding or criticism.

3. Interpretation

- 3.1 In this Code unless the context otherwise requires the following expressions have the following meanings:

"Employees" means all persons employed under a contract of employment by Babergh District Council and Mid Suffolk District Council.

"Council" includes both Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils

"Councillor" includes both Babergh and Mid Suffolk District councillors.

"Contractor" includes contractors engaged by Babergh or Mid Suffolk District Council or the two councils jointly."

4. Scope of the Code

- 4.1 The Code applies to all employees.
- 4.1 Inevitably some of the issues covered by the Code will affect senior, managerial and professional employees more than it will others. Activities carried out by employees acting on behalf of the Council as members of companies or voluntary organisations will be subject to the minimum standards within this Code.

5. Standards

- 5.1 Local government employees are expected to give the highest possible standard of service to the public, and, where it is part of their duties, to provide appropriate advice to councillors and fellow employees with impartiality.
- 5.2 Employees will be expected to report directly to the Chief Executive or the relevant officer in the Senior Leadership Team or in exceptional circumstances through their trade union, and without fear of any recrimination:-
- (a) any deficiency in the standard or provision of any service;
 - (b) any breach of the policies, procedures, standing orders or financial regulations of the Council;
 - (c) any favouritism or discrimination shown to any person;
 - (d) any impropriety or misconduct.
- 5.3 Employees shall immediately bring to the attention of the Director (or in the case of a Director the Chief Executive) if they believe that there is an actual or potential conflict of interest between Babergh District Council and Mid Suffolk District Council or between roles and responsibilities which the Employee undertakes for each Council.

6. Disclosure of information

- 6.1 It is generally accepted that open government is best. The law requires that certain types of information must be available to members, auditors, government departments, service users and the public. The Council may decide to be open about other types of information.

Employees must be aware of which information the Council is and is not open about, and act accordingly.

- 6.2 Employees must not use any information obtained in the course of their employment and which is not available to the general public, for personal gain or benefit, nor should they pass it on to others who might use it in such a way unless there is a legal requirement to do so. Any particular information received by an employee from a councillor which is personal to that councillor and does not belong to the authority must not be divulged by the employee without the prior approval of that councillor, except where such disclosure is required or sanctioned by the law.

7. Political neutrality

- 7.1 Employees serve the Council as a whole. It follows that they must serve all councillors and not just those of the controlling group (if there is one), and must ensure that the individual rights of all councillors are respected.
- 7.2 Subject to any rules approved by the Council, employees may also be required to advise political groups. They must do so in ways which do not compromise

their political neutrality. An Employee shall, therefore, be entitled to be accompanied by a colleague when advising any political group.

7.3 Employees, whether or not politically restricted, must follow every lawful expressed policy of the authority and must not allow their own personal or political opinions to interfere with their work.

7.4 Any Political Assistants appointed on fixed term contracts in accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 are exempt from the standards set out in paragraphs 7.1 to 7.3.

8. Relationships

8.1 Councillors

Employees are responsible to the Council through its senior managers. For some, their role is to give advice to councillors and senior managers and all are there to carry out the authority's work. Mutual respect between employees and councillors is essential to good local government. However close personal familiarity between employees and individual councillors can damage the relationship and prove embarrassing to other employees and councillors and, wherever reasonable and possible, should be avoided.

8.2 The Local Community and Service Users

Employees must always remember their responsibilities to the community they serve and ensure courteous, efficient and impartial delivery of services to all groups and individuals within that community as defined by the policies of the Council.

8.3 Contractors

If there is likely to be a conflict of interest, employees must make known in writing to their Director all relationships of a business or private nature with existing or potential Council contractors known to the employee. Orders and contracts must be awarded on merit, by fair competition against other tenders, where appropriate, and no special favour must be shown to potential contractors (particularly those run by, for example, friends, partners or relatives) in the tendering process. No part of the community should be improperly or illegally discriminated for or against.

8.4 Employees who, in the course of their job, engage or supervise contractors or have any other official relationship with contractors and have previously had, or currently have, a relationship in a private or domestic capacity with contractors (or their senior staff), must declare that relationship in writing to their Director.

9. Appointments and other employment matters

9.1 Employees involved in appointments must ensure that these are made on the basis of merit. There is a strong risk of illegality if an employee makes an

appointment based on anything other than the ability of the candidate to undertake the duties of the post. In order to avoid any possible accusation of bias, employees must not be involved in appointments where they are related to an applicant, or have a close personal relationship outside work with him/her.

- 9.2 Similarly, employees must not be involved in decisions relating to discipline, promotion or pay adjustments of any employee who is a relative, partner, etc.

10. Outside Commitments

- 10.1 The NJC Scheme of Conditions of Service for APT&C staff states at Section 7, paragraph 70(b) on Official Conduct:

"An officer's off-duty hours are his personal concern but he should not subordinate his duty to his private interests to put himself in a position where his duty and his private interests conflict. The employing authority should not attempt to preclude officers from undertaking additional employment, but any such employment must not, in the view of the authority, conflict with or react detrimentally to the authority's interests or in any way weaken public confidence in the conduct of the authority's business."

(This quotation applies equally to women).

The national conditions of service for chief officers and those for chief executives also mirror the above points.

- 10.2 All employees have conditions of service which require them to obtain written consent from their manager to take any outside employment. All employees must be clear about their contractual obligations and should not take outside employment which conflicts with either Council's interests. Employees can appeal their manager's decision in writing to the relevant Director.
- 10.3 The Council will not consent to employees engaging in any other business which would result in plans or drawings prepared by them outside their official duties with the Council, being presented with applications for determination by the Council or its Directors.
- 10.4 Employees must adhere to any Council rules on the ownership of intellectual property created during their employment - this could include patents, copyrights, trademarks and other intellectual property.

11. Personal interests

- 11.1 Employees must declare in writing to their Director any financial or non-financial interests which could reasonably be considered to conflict with the Council's interests.
- 11.2 Employees must declare in writing to their Director membership of any organisation not open to the public without formal membership, and with commitment of allegiance, and which has secrecy about rules or membership or conduct (eg. the freemasons, some friendly societies etc.).
- 11.3 The Director will treat any such declarations in confidence and will only disclose them in appropriate situations.
- 11.4 For the avoidance of doubt declarations must be made under clause 11.1-11.3 above if the interest conflicts with either or both Babergh or Mid Suffolk District Council's interests.

Note: The Local Government Act 1972 provides that if employees know that a contract in which they have a financial interest is before the Local Authority, they must give notice of that interest to the Local Authority.

12. Equality issues

- 12.1 Employees must ensure that any Council policies relating to equality issues are complied with in addition to the requirements of the law. All members of the community, customers and other employees have a right to be treated with fairness and equity.

13. Separation of Roles During Tendering

- 13.1 Employees involved in the tendering process and dealing with contractors must be clear on the separation of client and contractor roles in the Council. Senior employees who have both a client and contractor responsibility must be aware of the need for accountability, separation of activity as appropriate, and openness.
- 13.2 Employees in contractor or client units must exercise and display fairness and impartiality when dealing with all customers, suppliers, contractors and sub-contractors.
- 13.3 Employees who are privy to confidential information on tenders or costs for either internal or external contractors must not disclose that information to any unauthorised party or organisation.

- 13.4 Employees contemplating a management buyout, or otherwise considering tendering for Council work, should, as soon as they have formed a definite intent, inform their Director in writing and withdraw from the contract awarding processes.
- 13.5 Employees must ensure that no special favour is shown to current or recent former employees or their partners, close relatives or associates in awarding contracts to a business run by them or a business employing them in a senior or relevant managerial capacity.

Note: Attention is also drawn to the Council's Standing Orders on Contracts and the Financial Regulations.

14. Corruption

- 14.1 It is a serious criminal offence for employees corruptly to receive or give any gift, loan, fee, reward or advantage for doing, or not doing, anything or showing favour, or disfavour, to any person. If a substantiated allegation is made it is for the employees to demonstrate that any such rewards, given or received, have not been corruptly obtained.

15. Use of Financial Resources

- 15.1 Employees must ensure that they use public funds entrusted to them in a responsible and lawful manner. They should strive to ensure value for money to the local community and to avoid any action, which by its nature, could lead to a legal challenge against the Council.

16. Hospitality and Gifts

- 16.1 The NJC Scheme of Conditions of Service for APT&C staff states at paragraph 70(a) on Official Conduct:

"The public is entitled to demand of a local government officer conduct of the highest standard and public confidence in his integrity would be shaken were the least suspicion to arise that he could in any way be influenced by improper motives."

(This quotation applies equally to women).

- 16.2 Employees should only accept offers of hospitality if there is a genuine need to impart information or represent the Council in the community (including the business community). Offers to attend purely social or sporting functions should be accepted only when these are part of the life of the community or where the Council should be seen to be represented. They should be properly authorised and recorded in the Council's Gifts and Hospitality Register.
- 16.3 When hospitality has to be declined those making the offer should be courteously but firmly informed of the procedures and standards operating within the Council.

- 16.4 When receiving authorised hospitality employees should be particularly sensitive as to its timing in relation to decisions which the Council may be taking affecting those providing the hospitality.
- 16.5 Acceptance by employees of hospitality through attendance at relevant conferences and courses is acceptable where it is clear the hospitality is corporate rather than personal; such hospitality does not need to be recorded. In receiving such corporate hospitality employees must ensure that any purchasing decisions are not compromised. Where visits to inspect equipment, etc. are required, employees should ensure that the Council meets the cost of such visits to avoid jeopardising the integrity of subsequent purchasing decisions.
- 16.6 Employees should only accept gifts in accordance with the following guidance:
- (i) There can be little doubt that the acceptance of gifts by Council employees from persons who have, or may seem to have, dealings with the Council would be viewed with suspicion by the general public and would make the employee concerned and the Council extremely vulnerable to criticism. Therefore an employee should tactfully refuse any personal gift which is offered to him/her or to a member of his/her family by, or indirectly attributable to, any person who has, or may have, dealings of any kind whatsoever with the Council.
 - (ii) The only exception to this rule is small gifts; i.e. items of a value up to £10.00. In such cases, however, whilst the gift may be accepted, it must be entered into the Gifts and Hospitality Register.
 - (iii) If there is any doubt about whether a gift may be accepted, the gift should be politely and tactfully refused.
 - (iv) Employees are reminded that, under the provisions of Section 117 of the Local Government Act 1972, Officers employed by a Local Authority are forbidden under the colour of their office and employment to accept any fee or reward other than their proper remuneration and any person who contravenes this provision would be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £2,500 (currently). It is also an offence under the Bribery Act 2010 to offer, promise or give a financial or other advantage in respect of the award or performance of a contract.

- (v) In the event of an employee receiving a gift without warning (this would include bequests under a will for example) which does not fall within the exception mentioned in (ii) above, this should be reported immediately to the Chief Executive who, in consultation with the Chairman of the appropriate Committee, will decide whether the gift should be retained by the employee, returned or forwarded to some charitable or other deserving cause.

17. Sponsorship - Giving and Receiving

- 17.1 Where an outside organisation wishes to sponsor or is seeking to sponsor a Council activity, whether by invitation, tender, negotiation or voluntarily, the basic conventions concerning acceptance of gifts or hospitality apply. Particular care must be taken when dealing with contractors or potential contractors.
- 17.2 Where the Council wishes to sponsor an event or service, special care must be taken to ensure that if any benefit accrues to employees, partners, spouses or relatives, full disclosure is made under the hospitality procedure above before the venture is pursued. Similarly, where the Council through sponsorship, grant aid, financial or other means, gives support in the community, employees must ensure that impartial advice is given and conflicts of interest avoided.

PROTOCOL ON MEMBER/STAFF RELATIONS

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The relationship between Members and Staff is essential to the successful working of the organisation. This relationship within the authority is characterised by mutual respect, informality and trust. Members and Staff must feel free to speak to one another openly and honestly.

The purpose of this Protocol is to help Members and Staff to perform effectively by giving guidance on their respective roles and expectations and on their relationship with each other. The Protocol also gives guidance on what to do on the rare occasions when things go wrong. Responsibility for the operation of this protocol lies with the Head of the Paid Service.

- 1.2 The Protocol must be read and operated in the context of any relevant legislation and national and local Codes of Conduct and any procedure for confidential reporting.

2. Roles of Members and Staff

- 2.1 The respective roles of Members and Staff can be summarised as follows:

Members and Staff are servants of the public and they are indispensable to one another however. Their responsibilities are distinct. Members are responsible to the electorate and serve only so long as their term of office lasts. Staff are responsible to the Council. Their job is to give advice to Members and to the authority, and to carry out the authority's work under the direction and control of the Council, the relevant committees and Panels. Mutual respect between Members and Staff is essential to good local government.

2.2 Members

Members have four main areas of responsibility:-

- (a) determining the policy of the authority and giving it political leadership;
- (b) monitoring and reviewing the performance of the authority in implementing that policy and delivering services;
- (c) representing the authority externally; and
- (d) acting as advocates on behalf of their constituents
- (e) in relation to cabinet members, to discharge executive functions in line with the constitution.

It is not the role of Members, other than cabinet members, to involve themselves in the day to day management of the authority's services. Cabinet members contact in the main will be with senior staff connected to their

portfolios.

2.3 **Staff**

The role of Staff is to give advice and information to Members and to implement the policies determined by the authority.

In giving such advice to Members, and in preparing and presenting reports, it is the responsibility of the Officer to express his/her own professional views and recommendations. Whilst an Officer may report the views of individual Members on an issue, if the Member wishes to express a contrary view he/she should not seek to pressure the Officer to make a recommendation contrary to the Officer's professional view.

Certain Staff e.g. Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer, Section 151 Officer have responsibilities in law over and above their obligations to the authority and to individual Members, and Members must respect these obligations, must not obstruct Staff in the discharge of these responsibilities, and must not victimise Staff for discharging these responsibilities.

3. **Expectations**

3.1 **Members can expect from Staff:-**

- (a) A commitment to the authority as a whole, and not to any political group.
- (b) A working partnership.
- (c) An understanding of and support for respective roles, workloads and pressures.
- (d) Timely response to enquiries and complaints.
- (e) Professional advice, not influenced by political views or preference, which does not compromise the political neutrality of Staff.
- (f) Regular, up to date information on matters that can reasonably be considered appropriate and relevant to their needs, having regard to any individual responsibilities that they have and positions that they hold.
- (g) Awareness of and sensitivity to the political environment.
- (h) Respect, dignity and courtesy.
- (i) Training and development in order to carry out their role effectively.
- (j) Integrity, mutual support and appropriate confidentiality.

- (k) That employees will not use their relationship with Members to advance their personal interests or to influence decisions improperly.
- (l) That Staff will at all times comply with the relevant Code of Conduct.
- (m) Support for the role of Members as the local representatives of the authority.

3.2 **Staff can expect from Members:-**

- (a) A working partnership.
- (b) An understanding of and support for respective roles, workloads and pressures.
- (c) Political leadership and direction.
- (d) Respect dignity and courtesy.
- (e) Integrity, mutual support and appropriate confidentiality.
- (f) Not to be subject to bullying or to be put under undue pressure. Members should have regard to the seniority of Staff in determining what are reasonable requests, having regard to the power relationship between Members and Staff, and the potential vulnerability of Staff, particularly at junior level.
- (g) That Members will not use their position or relationship with Staff to advance their personal interests or those of others or to influence decisions improperly.
- (h) That Members will at all times comply with the relevant Code of Conduct.

4. **Relations between Members and Staff**

- 4.1 Mutual respect between Members and Staff is essential to good local government. Personal relationships or close personal familiarity between individual Members and Staff can damage this relationship and prove embarrassing to other Members and Staff.
- 4.2 It is not enough to avoid actual impropriety. Members and staff should at all times avoid any occasion for suspicion and any appearance of improper conduct.
- 4.3 Where there is a close relationship, it should be declared by both the Member and Officer to the Chief Executive who will treat them as confidential. The Member should also advise their Group Leader.
- 4.4 A close relationship includes any family business or close personal relationships. It is not possible to define exactly the range of relationships that

would be considered close or personal. Examples however would include a family or sexual relationship and regular social mixing such as holidays or evening meals together.

- 4.5 In their dealings with Staff (especially junior Staff) Members need to be aware that it is easy for Staff to be overawed and feel at a disadvantage. Such feelings can be intensified where Members hold official and/or political office.
- 4.6 A Member should not pressure an Officer to do something he/she is not authorised to do and which is against his professional judgement. A Member should also not require an Officer to do something which is outside his normal duties or working hours.
- 4.7 An Officer must not seek to influence a Member to do something that may be advantageous to the member of staff personally or professionally or injurious to another Officer. Any approaches of this nature should be reported to the Managing Director.
- 4.8 No Member or Officer shall criticise or otherwise undermine the other at Council or other public meetings.
- 4.9 Members will take no part in the appointment or dismissal of staff below Chief Officer, nor should they seek to influence in any way the appointment or dismissal of a particular person.

5. Staff relationships with Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Group Leaders

- 5.1 It is important that there are close working relationships between senior staff and senior members. However, such relationships should never be allowed to become so close or appear to be close, so that the ability of a staff member to deal impartially with other Members or groups is questioned.
- 5.2 The Chief Executive and S151 Officer are expected to work closely with the Leaders and Chairmen of the Committees and to meet regularly with them.
- 5.3 A Chairman should not seek to influence a member of staff to reduce the options or withhold information which should properly be reported to the appropriate Committee.
- 5.4 Any issues arising relating to such reports that cannot be resolved will be referred to the Chief Executive for resolution. The Chief Executive has the ultimate responsibility for the content of the agenda.
- 5.5 Staff are accountable to the Head of Service and whilst Staff should always seek to assist any Member, they should not go beyond the limits of whatever authority they have been given by their manager.
- 5.6 Prior to the Council and Committee meetings, it is normal for the appropriate Staff to meet informally with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman in the case of the Council and other group spokesmen to discuss matters on the agenda, answer any questions that Members have which might improve the running of

the meeting and also to enable specific issues to be highlighted for which Staff and members may need to prepare. These meetings should be regarded as confidential meetings.

6. Political Groups

6.1 The operation of political groups is an integral feature of local government, and such political groups have an important part to play in the development of policy and the political management of the authority.

6.2 Staff serve the Council as a whole and not exclusively any political group, combination of groups or any individual Member of the Councils.

6.3 Officer Attendance

- (a) Any political group may request the Chief Executive to attend a meeting of the group, consisting of Members of the Councils only, to advise on any particular matter relating to the authority.
- (b) The Chief Executive may arrange for the attendance of a representative in their stead, or may decline to attend or to provide a representative where they are of the opinion that the particular issue is of such a political nature that it would be inappropriate to attend.
- (c) Staff' advice to political groups will be limited to a statement of material facts and identification of options and the merits and demerits of such options for the authority. Advice will not deal with any political implications of the matter or any option, and Staff will not make any recommendation to a political group.
- (d) Staff will respect the confidentiality of any matter which they hear in the course of attending a political group meeting.

7. When things go wrong

7.1 Procedure for Staff

From time to time the relationship between Members and Staff may break down or become strained. Whilst it will always be preferable to resolve matters informally, through conciliation by an appropriate senior Manager or Members, Staff will have recourse to their Head of Service or to the Council's Monitoring Officer, as appropriate to the circumstances. In the event of a grievance or complaint being upheld, the matter will be referred to the Chief Executive, who, having advised the Leader of the Council and the appropriate group leader will decide on the course of action to be taken.

7.2 Procedure for Members

In the event that a Member is dissatisfied with the conduct, behaviour or performance of a member of staff, the matter should be raised with the appropriate Head of Service. Where the member of staff concerned is a Head

of Service, the matter should be raised with the Chief Executive. If the matter cannot be resolved informally, it may be necessary to invoke the Council's Disciplinary Procedure.

8. Members in their ward role

- 8.1 Staff should inform Members about major issues concerning the Council and more specifically about issues affecting the wards that Members represent.
- 8.2 Whenever the Council undertakes any form of consultative exercise on a local issue, the Ward Members should be informed and involved, as appropriate. Similarly whenever a public meeting is organised by the Council to consider a local issue, all the Members representing the Ward or Wards affected should as a matter of course, be invited to attend the meeting.

9. Support services

- 9.1 The only basis on which the Council can lawfully provide support services (e.g. stationery, typing, printing, photocopying room bookings etc) to Members is to assist them in discharging their role as a Member of the Council. Such support services should only be used for Council business. They should never be used in connection with party political or campaigning activity or for private purposes.
- 9.2 All Members are required to agree to adopt and abide by the Council's Corporate Internet and E-mail Policy.

10. Members' access to information and Council documents

- 10.1 If a Member requires information or advice from a member of staff they should approach a senior member of staff. It is not usually appropriate for Members to deal directly with a junior member of staff.
- 10.2 Members have a statutory right to inspect any Council document which contains material relating to business which is to be transacted at a Council or Committee meeting. This right applies irrespective of whether the Member is a member of the Committee and extends not only to reports which are to be submitted to that meeting, but to any relevant background papers. This right does not apply to certain documents which disclose exempt information.
- 10.3 A Member does not have a right to request information out of curiosity. They must demonstrate a need to know the contents of a document to enable them to carry out their duties as a member. It is for the Chief Executive or Head of Service to determine whether a Members' request for information is justified and can be met from within existing resources.
- 10.4 Any information provided to a Member must only be used for the purpose for which it is provided and a Member must never disclose or use any confidential information.

11. Correspondence

- 11.1 Members must not normally communicate in the name of the Council with any

outside body or person. All such communications should be carried out by the appropriate member of staff.

- 11.2 It may be appropriate in some circumstances for a letter to be sent in the name of a Member, for example in response to a letter of complaint sent direct so that Member, but this should be the exception rather than the norm and it should only be done following consultation with the Chief Executive or Head of Service.
- 11.3 Letters which create contractual, legal or other obligations or which give instructions on behalf of the Council must never be sent out in the name of a Member.
- 11.4 Staff should consider when providing information to one Member, whether others should be informed e.g. in relation to a Ward or local matter, unless there are good reasons for not making the information more widely available.

12. **Media**

- 12.1 In general Members provide comment and views while Staff provide factual information. If a Member is unsure about the circumstances of a particular issue he should contact the appropriate Officer concerned or ask the Press Office to do so.

13. **Redress and breach of this protocol**

- 13.1 If a Member considers that they have not been treated with the proper respect and courtesy or that a member of staff is otherwise in breach of this protocol, they should raise the matter with the member of staff's Head of Service or the Chief Executive.
- 13.2 If a member of staff has similar concerns about a Member, they should raise the matter with their Head of Service or the Chief Executive. In such circumstances the Chief Executive will take appropriate action by approaching the individual Member or group leader.