

# Committee Agenda



**Epping Forest  
District Council**

## **CONSTITUTION WORKING GROUP Thursday, 28th March, 2019**

**Place:** Civic Offices, High Street, Epping  
**Room:** Council Chamber  
**Time:** 7.30 pm  
**Democratic Services Officer** V. Messenger Tel: (01992) 564243  
Email: democraticservices@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Members:

Councillors M McEwen (Chairman), M Sartin (Vice-Chairman), D Dorrell, S Heap, L Hughes, S Jones, J Philip, C C Pond, C P Pond, J Share-Bernia and J H Whitehouse

**MEMBERS ARE REMINDED TO BRING THEIR COPIES OF THE EXISTING CONSTITUTION DOCUMENT WITH THEM TO THE MEETINGS – FURTHER COPIES CAN BE SUPPLIED ON REQUEST.**

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**2. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

To report the appointment of any substitute members for the meeting.

**3. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 3 - 10)**

To agree the notes of the meeting of the Working Group held on 3 December 2018.

**4. TERMS OF REFERENCE & WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 11 - 14)**

To review the terms of reference and progress with the achievement of the current work programme for the Working Group.

**5. CONSTITUTION - REVISIONS & AMENDMENTS (Pages 15 - 16)**

(Monitoring Officer) To note the report (attached).

**6. AREA PLANS SUB-COMMITTEES - SITE VISITS (Pages 17 - 20)**

To consider the report (attached).

**7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

To note that the next meeting of the Working Group will be held on 24 September 2019 at 7.00pm.

**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL  
NOTES OF A MEETING OF CONSTITUTION WORKING GROUP  
HELD ON MONDAY, 3 DECEMBER 2018  
IN COMMITTEE ROOM 2, CIVIC OFFICES, HIGH STREET, EPPING  
AT 7.00 - 8.15 PM**

<b>Members Present:</b>	M McEwen (Chairman), M Sartin (Vice-Chairman), D Dorrell, S Heap, L Hughes, S Jones, J Philip (Planning Services Portfolio Holder), C C Pond, C P Pond, J Share-Bernia and J H Whitehouse
<b>Other members present:</b>	None.
<b>Apologies for Absence:</b>	None.
<b>Officers Present</b>	S Hill (Service Director (Governance & Member Services)), N Richardson (Service Director (Planning Services)) and V Messenger (Democratic Services Officer)

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## 8. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that there were no substitute members for this meeting.

## 9. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

### RESOLVED:

That the notes of the last meeting of the Working Group held on 25 June 2018 be agreed as a correct record, subject to the addition of "*before being referred to District Development Management Committee*", as amended below:

Planning Process Review 2017/18 Delegations to Planning Officers, Replacement Planning Delegations – CLD2 Replacement, 2. Applications made by the Council on land and / or property in its ownership which are for disposal, in accordance with the size of application set out in Article 10 of the Constitution (Min no 6) – *Councillor C C Pond asked if all Council land applications could go to the Area Planning Sub-Committees, before being referred to District Development Management Committee.*

## 10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(a) Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillor C C Pond declared a non-pecuniary interest in the following item of the agenda by virtue of being the Chairman of the Epping Forest Branch of the Association of Local Councils, and would remain in the meeting:

- Planning Process Review

## 11. TERMS OF REFERENCE & WORK PROGRAMME

(a) The Terms of Reference were noted.

- (b) Work Programme
- (i) The Service Director (Governance and Member Services) advised that the Working Group would review the site visit arrangements of the Area Planning Sub-Committees (item 5) at the March 2019 meeting. The trial where members could request formal site visits prior to determination of an application had commenced on 30 May 2018.
  - (ii) The review of the Audit and Governance and Standards Committees (item 6) would be secondary to the completion of the current review of the Overview and Scrutiny committees' framework, which should be in place for the new municipal year, 2019/20.
  - (iii) Gifts and hospitality advice (item 8) was still outstanding and might have to be rescheduled for the next municipal year 2019/20.
  - (iv) Whether to update the Financial Regulations (item 9) would be on the recommendation of the 151 Officer. Any review would not be undertaken until the new level 2 managers in the Council's management restructure were implemented.

## 12. CONSTITUTION - REVISIONS & AMENDMENTS

The Service Director (Governance and Members Services) reported that he had been asked by the Chief Executive to undertake revisions and amendments to the Constitution in relation to the:

- realignment of the Cabinet Portfolio Holder responsibilities to their new respective service directors; and
- changes to the statutory roles of the Monitoring Officer and Returning Officer and realignment to the new service director structure.

These amendments to the Constitution would be reported at Council on 20 December 2018, as the statutory positions needed to be preserved. The Monitoring Officer would be asked to bring the Constitution up to date, which would be ongoing.

## 13. PLANNING PROCESS REVIEW

The Service Director (Governance and Member Services), S Hill, reminded the Working Group that it had looked at the existing arrangements by which planning applications were considered at the Area Planning Sub-Committee. This report dealt with issues that had arisen as a result of the updated Scheme of Delegation, Appendix 3, CLD2 for the Service Director (Planning Services). In particular, 3 (a) *"Applications recommended for approval where an objection from a Local Council, material to the planning merits of the proposal is received and confirming in writing their intention to attend and speak at the meeting where the proposal will be considered"*.

Democratic Services officers had been monitoring the non-attendance of local councils at the Area Planning Sub-Committees in relation to 3(a) above and since 26 September 2018, ten applications had come before members. On four occasions local councils had not turned up to meetings, one of which only had two items on the agenda solely because of two local councils objecting, who had indicated they would attend, but this had not happened. The meeting had been very short as members

had agreed these applications should be referred to the Service Director (Planning Services) to be dealt with under delegated powers, but the meeting could have been cancelled. As the Monitoring Officer, S Hill, had not wanted items withdrawn from agendas in these instances once they had been published, the Working Group was requested to consider the following options to address this unforeseen situation:

- (a) that relevant applications be automatically referred (without any consideration of the merits of the development proposal) to the Service Director (Planning Services) for determination in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation; or
- (b) that the Area Plans Sub-Committees be authorised to consider and determine relevant applications on the basis of the information set out in the report of the Service Director (Planning Services) and presented at the meeting by the Principal Planning Officer (and external speakers where relevant).

There was general consensus in favour of option (a), but discussion between the Working Group raised the following points.

- Local councils had raised their concerns at the Local Councils' Liaison Committee because when they had made their objections to Planning Services they would not have been aware they were the only objector.
- It was frustrating when a local council read out the same objection that had been published in the agenda report.
- Parish councils were not clear about what they should be doing, and were not putting an objection forwards because they did not want to address a planning committee.
- A local council could object but if it did not intend to register to speak then delegation 3(b) should hold sway, in that the local council objection would have to be *"supported by at least one non-councillor resident, with material planning reasons"*.
- Option (b) wasn't the intended outcome.
- If (a) was the preferred option that words to the effect of 'but stand referred to officers on the non-attendance of that local council at an Area Planning Sub-Committee' be added.
- Local councils should be informed by the Service Director (Governance and Member Services) when this delegation scheme had been updated.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) That option (a) below be recommended to Council for approval at the meeting on 20 December 2018 to clarify and resolve the non-attendance of local councils at 3 (b) of the Scheme of Delegation CLD 2, relevant to the Service Director (Planning Services):
  - (a) that relevant applications be automatically referred (without any consideration of the merits of the development proposal) to the

Service Director (Planning Services) for determination in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation;

- (ii) That the Service Director (Governance and Member Services) would also update the Council Rules in the Constitution to reflect (i) above; and
- (iii) That the Service Director (Governance and Member Services) write and advise local councils of the latest updates to the Constitution, especially the Scheme of Delegation CLD2, upon adoption by Council.

#### 14. PETITION SCHEME

The Council's Petition Scheme, adopted on 14 December 2010 in accordance with the requirements of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 as part of a duty to promote democracy, was reviewed by the Governance Select Committee (GSC) on 23 October 2018. Feedback from neighbouring local authorities on the handling of petitions and signature thresholds used suggested that generally a low number of petitions were received. Therefore, no changes were made to the current threshold levels.

The existing guidance for the Petition Scheme was also reviewed to ensure it was clear and consistent with the revised scheme that had incorporated previous separate guidance on the creation of e-petitions. However, as a result that many of the petitions received related to services provided by other authorities, e.g. Essex County Council (highway issues) and North Essex Parking Partnership (parking enforcement), which would not meet some of the acceptance criteria, the revised scheme also included a list of the main functions of local authorities and was appended to the agenda.

The Service Director (Governance and Member Services) indicated that a petition on a matter that was the responsibility of another statutory provider might be accepted if it sought the District to put pressure on that authority, in terms of its community leadership role. He also advised of a further amendment to the Petition Scheme at 2.1 'that the proper officer for petitions should state the *Service Manager (Governance)*' to replace Service Director (Governance and Member Services), as he would be leaving the Council at the end of December 2018, which was agreed.

Once agreed, the revised Petition Scheme would be publicised on the Council's website to increase public, member and officer awareness, since Democratic Services often received these indirectly from ward members or other officers.

Members raised the following points about the Petition Scheme, which were agreed:

- Header at (4), Exceptions to Petitions, would be better described as 'Areas on which Petitions will not be excepted' or 'Petitions can only be accepted on...'
- (4c) appeared cumbersome and it would be better to put the section in brackets at the end of the sentence, possibly without the brackets.
- At (3.2), (5.1) and (6.), perhaps use 'lead petitioner' in these sentences as that would be aimed at the person submitting the petition.

- At (6.6) a full stop was required in the opening sentence after 'days'.
- A request that (6.8) was observed and petitions went into the Council Bulletin to keep members informed and that Portfolio Holders would also report as shown at (7).
- That the Democratic Services Manager, S Tautz, be informed of these amendments.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Council be requested to adopt the revised version of the Petition Scheme for inclusion within the Constitution.

**15. APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY ALDERMEN AND ALDERWOMEN**

Following a motion moved by Councillor J Philip and seconded by Councillor C Whitbread, which was adopted by Council on 1 November 2018, the Working Group was asked to consider a proposed scheme to confer the title of Honorary Alderman or Alderwoman.

The Service Director (Governance and Member Services) reported that there was currently no formal method of recognising past eminent or notable service. Presently the only formal method of recognising the past service of a former councillor was by length of service and the issuing of a lapel badge when a member stood down or was not elected. The issuing criteria was used below:

- Bronze lapel badge for 10 years' service;
- Silver lapel badge for 15 years' service; and
- Gold lapel badge for 20 years' service.

The Local Government Act 1972, under section 249, allowed the Council to confer the title of Honorary Alderman (or Alderwoman) on persons who had, in the opinion of Council, rendered 'eminent services' to the Authority as past members of the Authority but who were not then members of the Authority.

It was a Council decision to confer the title which had to be passed at a meeting specially convened for the purpose (i.e. an extraordinary meeting) and approved by vote by not less than two-thirds of the members present. An Honorary Alderman could attend and take part in such civic ceremonies as the authority might from time to time decide but, as such, had no right to:

- (i) attend meetings of Council, Cabinet or Committee other than as a member of the public,
- (ii) receive any of the allowances or other payments to which Councillors were entitled.

Section 249(2) provided that such an honour could only be held by someone who was not a serving Councillor of the Council. As such, were a recipient to be re-elected or co-opted back onto the Council, they would lose the title bestowed.

Members might wish to add further criteria, but the suggestion was that there should be some criteria by which an application could be judged, which were listed below:

- (i) No longer a serving Councillor; **and**
- (ii) To have served at least five consecutive terms of office (i.e. above the level of Gold service); **or**
- (iii) Had held a significant position of public responsibility within the Council, for a minimum period of one year; **or**
- (iv) Had provided demonstrable eminent service to the Council throughout a long and distinguished period of public service; **and**
- (iv) The proposed recipient must be willing to accept their nomination.

The recipient would need to be willing to accept the honorary title before Council. It was an honour to receive this title and should therefore not become a political matter. Appropriate consultations with Group Leaders on nominations would be required. The Alderman / Alderwoman would be presented with a Badge of Office and their name entered into the Roll of Honour, which would be maintained by the proper officer.

Honorary Aldermen were entitled to wear the badge of 'Honorary Alderman' at Civic events within the District, but only at civic events outside the District at the specific request of the organiser. Those elected to the Roll of Honorary Alderman/ Alderwoman were entitled to use the title of 'Honorary Alderman of the District of Epping Forest'.

Following notification of the death of an Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman, the District flag would be flown at half-mast over the Civic Offices on the day after the date of notification of death and on the date of the funeral.

Officers had also suggested a mechanism where the award could be removed from a former member. The law required its suspension should the member come back onto the Council.

The Council, had approached Fattorinis', Birmingham, and two options (using the existing Council design) were shown in the agenda report and the costs this would involve. It was recommended that the Council be asked to approve a DDF sum of £3,500 to purchase the initial stock of badges. However, any costs would only be applied when the stock was used.

The honorary scheme was, overall, favourably received by the Working Group and the following points were raised:

- Five terms or 20 years was generally considered a long time, even though that mirrored the gold service length, but it was noted this was not the sole criteria that could be used.
- Essex County Council had reduced its length of service from 20 years to 15 years. This might have been because people were becoming councillors later on in life and it should not just be about length of service. A councillor's research into other authorities' schemes had shown the average service length was between 12 – 15 years.
- The removal of 'consecutive' was proposed, that four terms or 16 years in office was more appropriate, and use of 'years' instead of terms'.

- If the Council was to merit eminent service then 20 years was out of kilter with modern trends and a reduction on length of service was favoured.
- The use of 'eminent service' was in the legislation, but it should be left to the proposer and seconder to give the information to qualify this.
- To have held a significant position of public responsibility within the Council for a minimum period of one year was considered too short by some, but specifying a minimum period seemed sensible.
- A proposal that the badge was retained by the family in the event of the death of a recipient.
- A suggestion was made that perhaps the Group Leaders could be involved in the initial checking of nominations received that they met the criteria, rather than by the Chairman and Leader.
- A flag flown at half mast following the death of an honorary alderman the day after the 'notification of death until the funeral had taken place' could become a lengthy time, which was agreed. The Council observed the national flag protocol on when and which flags could be flown.
- As the Council only used chairman and not chairwoman was there a requirement to use alderwoman. It was noted that the use of alderwoman was added subsequently to the LGA 1972 Act s249, but recipients could be asked what they wanted to be called.
- The use of 'suspend' rather than 'remove' the honorary award was suggested, but it was noted that the Act specified that an alderman / alderwoman could not also be a serving councillor.

It was agreed that the Service Director would redraft the terms of the scheme incorporating the above points.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) That the Working Group support the motion referred from Council on the establishment of a scheme to confer the title of Honorary Alderman or Alderwoman.
- (ii) That the proposed terms of such a scheme be approved, subject to suggested alterations made at the meeting.
- (iii) That the amended scheme be recommended for adoption by Council on 20 December 2018.
- (iv) That a DDF budget sum of £3,500 be recommended to Council to fund the implementation of the scheme, purchase a supply of badges of Office and a Roll of Honour Book.

**16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next meeting of the Working Group would be held on 28 March 2019 at 7pm.

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## CONSTITUTION WORKING GROUP

### TERMS OF REFERENCE

**Title:** Constitution Working Group

**Status:** Working Group

**Terms of Reference:**

- (1) To review any aspect of the authority's constitutional arrangements as requested by the Council;
- (2) To undertake general reviews of specific elements of the Constitution in order to ensure that the authority's constitutional arrangements complement current legislative requirements and decisions made by the Council; and
- (3) To consider any proposals of the Monitoring Officer for necessary revision to any element of the Constitution.

**Reporting:**

The Working Group shall report directly to the Council in connection with its Terms of Reference and the achievement of its work programme.

**Chairman: Councillor M McEwen**

S. Hill (July 2018).



## Constitution Working Group (Chairman – Councillor M McEwen)

### Work Programme 2018/19

Item	Starting Dates	Progress
(1) Constitution – amendments	Ongoing	To review the Constitution and align with the Council restructure.
(2) Planning Delegations	December 2018	<b>COMPLETED</b> To review the operation of the revised Scheme of Delegation requirements for local councils to present objections at the Area Plans Sub-Committees. (CLD 2 (Constitution (item 26), Pt 3 Scheme of Delegation, Appendix 3)
(3) Petition Scheme	December 2018	<b>COMPLETED</b> To consider the revised scheme following a review by the Governance Select Committee (GSC Note 17 – 23.10.18)
(4) Honorary Alderman	December 2018	<b>COMPLETED</b> To consider a proposal for a scheme to enable the Council to confer the title of Honorary Alderman (Under S249 of Local Government Act 1972) on any person who, in the opinion of the Council has rendered eminent services to the Authority (Council Min no 52 – 1.11.18)
(5) Area Planning Sub-Committees – site visit arrangements	March 2019	To review the trial that commenced on 30 May 2018, where members identify and agree formal site visits prior to consideration/determination of that application.
(6) Section 106 and Section 278 Agreements	September 2019	To review planning delegations and practise to examine the approach taken to section 106 and section 278 agreements. (Re: Motion from Council 20.12.18 – Min no 69)
(7) Gifts and Hospitality	September 2019	To review the existing guidance for members, contained within the Constitution. The review of the Gifts and Hospitality guidance will also be considered by the Standards Committee.
(8) Review of Audit & Governance and Standards Committees	TBC	To consider if a review is required after two years. (NB: Deferred by members: CWG Note 25 – 16.04.18)
(9) Planning Process Review 2017/18	TBC	To review the Committee systems for members considering planning applications. (CWG Notes: 6 – 26.06.18 & 17 – 20.02.18)
(10) Financial Regulations	TBC	To be advised by the Chief Finance Officer (151 Officer)

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## **Report to Constitution Working Group**

**Date of meeting: 28 March 2019**



**Epping Forest  
District Council**

**Subject:** Constitution - Revisions & Amendments

**Officer contact for further information:** S. Tautz (01992) 564180

**Democratic Services Officer:** V. Messenger (01992) 564265

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### **Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

**That recent revisions to the Constitution be noted.**

1. A revised version of the Constitution was published on 21 December 2018. This included revisions to the Scheme of Delegation (Part 3) (Delegation to Officers from Full Council) arising from the ongoing senior management restructure and the removal of a number of positions from the Council's establishment.
2. The update to the Constitution also included the removal of references to the Staff Appeals Panel, which was discontinued during 2018.
3. Further revisions to the Constitution will be published shortly, to incorporate the Members' Allowances Scheme for the 2019/20 municipal year, which was agreed by the Council at its meeting on 20 December 2018.
4. Members will be advised of these forthcoming revisions to the Constitution through the Council Bulletin.

### **Resource Implications:**

The recommendations of this report seek to ensure that the Council's Constitution remains fit for purpose.

### **Legal and Governance Implications:**

The Council's Constitution sets out procedures and rules for the management of its services and functions.

### **Safer, Cleaner, Greener Implications:**

There are no implications arising from the recommendations of this report in respect of the Council's commitment to the Climate Local Agreement, the corporate Safer, Cleaner, Greener initiative, or any crime and disorder issues within the district.

### **Consultation Undertaken:**

The matters subject of recent revisions to the Constitution have been agreed by the Council.

### **Background Papers:**

None

**Risk Management:**

The Council's Constitution sets out procedures and rules for the management of its services and functions.

**Equality:**

There are no equality implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

## **Report to Constitution Working Group**

**Date of meeting: 28 March 2019**

**Portfolio:** Planning Services (Councillor J. Philip)

**Subject:** Area Plans Sub-Committees - Site Visits

**Officer contact for further information:** S. Tautz (01992 564180)

**Democratic Services Officer:** V. Messenger (01992 564265)



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### **Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

**That the Working Group review the operation of trial arrangements for the agreement of formal site visits with regard to planning applications listed in agenda for meetings of the Area Plans Sub-Committees.**

1. The Council has longstanding arrangements whereby formal member site visits may be undertaken in respect of any site subject of a current planning application, where this offers a substantial benefit to the decision-making process. Site visits are undertaken at an agreed time and are subject to the presence of a representative of the Service Director (Planning Services). Site visits are managed by the Chairman (or Vice-Chairman) of the relevant Area Plans Sub-Committee, or the Planning Officer in attendance. No discussion with interested parties as to the merit of the development proposal is permitted at any time during a site visit.
2. At its meeting on 20 February 2018, the Working Group agreed that trial arrangements be introduced for the agreement of formal site visits in respect of any planning application listed in an agenda for meetings of the Area Plans Sub-Committees, prior to the consideration of the application.
3. This arrangement was introduced with effect from the meeting of Area Plans Sub-Committee South held on 30 May 2018 and has since been operated on a trial basis, subject to the review of the operation and management of the process by the Working Group. All agenda for meetings of the Area Plans Sub-Committees since May 2018 have contained a standard item relating to the identification and agreement of potential site visits.
4. This report seeks to review the operation of the trial arrangements for the agreement of formal site visits by the Working Group. The Working Group may wish to consider the adoption of the trial arrangements on a permanent basis

### **Site Visits - Area Plans Sub-Committees**

5. The operation of the trial arrangements for the identification and agreement of requirements for formal site visits to be held with regard to any planning application listed in agenda for meetings of the Area Plans Sub-Committees, prior to consideration of the application, has recently been considered at a joint meeting of the chairmen and vice-chairmen of the sub-committees and the District Development Management Committee.

6. The chairmen and vice-chairmen of the sub-committees consider that, in general, the operation of this arrangement has worked effectively since May 2018. Members consider that the trial arrangements have assisted in ensuring the timely management of meetings of the sub-committees and that, as a result, registered speakers and other persons present at meetings have not had to await the consideration of specific applications through often lengthy agenda, for the determination of development proposals to be deferred for the holding of a site visit. The Service Director (Planning Services) also considers that the trial arrangements have led to increased efficiency in the conduct of business by the Area Plans Sub-Committees.
7. However, the chairmen and vice-chairmen of the sub-committees have indicated that on occasion, lengthy debate has arisen around the appropriateness of site visits proposed under the trial arrangement, that has served to negate the operational effectiveness of the identification of site visit requirements prior to the consideration of the relevant planning application. Should the Working Group wish to recommend the adoption of this arrangement on a permanent basis, it is considered that proposals for site visits should be voted upon without debate as to the specific merits of such site visit.
8. Subject to the above, the adoption of the trial arrangements for the identification of site visit requirements on a permanent basis is supported by the respective Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the Area Plans Sub-Committees and the Service Director (Planning Services).

#### **Site Visits - District Development Management Committee**

9. The trial arrangements for the identification of site visits agreed by the Working Group in February 2018 apply only to agenda for meetings of the Area Plans Sub-Committees and not to the District Development Management Committee.
10. However, in circumstances where an application that has been subject to a formal site visit by members of one of the Area Plans Sub-Committees is subsequently referred to the District Development Management Committee for determination (either by minority reference or other constitutional requirement), it is suggested that a further site visit should be arranged for members of the District Development Management Committee prior to its consideration of the application. Dependent on the period of time arising between the consideration of relevant applications by an Area Plans Sub-Committee and the District Development Management Committee, it is recognised that the holding of such further site visits might present a delay in the determination of applications.
11. The adoption of this approach as part of the review of the trial arrangements for the identification of site visit requirements is supported by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the District Development Management Committee and the Service Director (Planning Services).
12. It is not intended that the trial arrangements for the identification of site visits be extended to the District Development Management Committee. It should be noted however that the holding of site visits on any application before the Committee for determination, can still be agreed by resolution of a majority of members of the Committee present at a meeting.

#### **Other Site Visits**

13. The Constitution (Article 10 (District Development Management Committee and Area Plans Sub-Committees)) provides that, in addition to being agreed at a meeting of a Sub-Committee in respect of any planning application listed in an agenda for a meeting,

the holding of formal site visits may also be approved by the Chairman of the Sub-Committee on the recommendation of the Service Director (Planning Services).

14. In order to ensure consistency of approach, it is suggested that this arrangement should also apply to applications to be considered by the District Development Management Committee and that Article 10 of the Constitution should be revised appropriately.
15. The Service Director (Planning Services) has identified a small increase in the overall number of site visits requested by the Area Plans Sub-Committees since May 2018. The noticeable changes in this respect have been in relation to Area Plans Sub-Committee South, which previously very rarely requested member site visits.
16. In considering whether the trial arrangement should now be applied on a permanent basis, the Working Group should recognise that there are resource implications arising from the holding of site visits, particularly as such visits are most usually held at weekend periods to ensure maximum member attendance.
17. All formal site visits will continue to be undertaken in accordance with the guidance set out at Appendix 2 to Article 10 of the Constitution.

**Resource Implications:**

The revisions to the arrangements for site visits will enable the District Development Management Committee and Area Plans Sub-Committees to operate more effectively.

**Legal and Governance Implications:**

None.

**Safer, Cleaner, Greener Implications:**

There are no implications arising from the recommendations of this report in respect of the Council's commitment to the Climate Local Agreement, the corporate Safer, Cleaner, Greener initiative, or any crime and disorder issues within the district.

**Consultation Undertaken:**

The review of the operation of the trial site visit arrangements was reviewed at a joint meeting of the chairmen and vice-chairmen of the District Development Management Committee and Area Plans Sub-Committees on 4 March 2019.

**Background Papers:**

None

**Impact Assessments:**

**Risk Management** There are no risk management implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

**Equality:** There are no equality implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

**Key Decision Y/N** No

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