

## **CONSTITUTION WORKING PARTY**

Meeting: 6 February 2024

At: 6.00 pm

### PRESENT

Councillor Mark Roberts (Chair) in the chair; Councillors Christine Carrigan, Anna Charles-Jones, Jilly Julian, David Meller and Matt Wynne.

### **1. MINUTES**

The Minutes (copies of which had been circulated) of the meeting held on 6 December 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors and officers were invited to declare any interests which they had in any of the items on the agenda for the meeting.

No declarations were made.

### **3. PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE SCHEME OF DELEGATION FOR DETERMINING PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND THE PLANNING PROTOCOL**

A representative of the Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) detailing proposals to make a number of changes to the scheme of delegation for the determination of planning applications in light of changes to the planning system and the increased emphasis placed on the speed and quality of planning decisions. In addition, the report outlined a review of the Planning Protocol to ensure that it accurately reflected long-standing custom and practice in how the council exercised its planning powers.

The following comments were made/ issues raised:-

- The government had agreed to increase the fees for planning applications, however the Secretary of State had simultaneously stated that this needed to be accompanied by an increase in performance.
- It was further highlighted that the Council would be required to refund planning fees on most applications that were not determined within the required timescale and the changes proposed to the planning scheme of delegation were designed to address that issue.
- The significant changes included an increase in the number of representations required for applications to be required to go to committee; an increase in the number of members required to 'call-up' an application for determination; and the full delegation of householder applications to officers.
- Further information was requested on the impact that would be made by the proposed increase in representations to applications from four to six for applications being submitted to committee.

## Constitution Working Party - 6 February 2024

- In response, it was stated that the figure had been arrived at by the experience of officers and practice from other local authorities. It was suggested that the impact of the proposals could be reviewed following its implementation.
- There was broad agreement that area committees and the Planning & Highways Regulation Committee should be consulted on these proposals.
- The proposals would have a greater impact on some area committees than others due to the nature of development in those areas.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted and approach to consulting relevant committees prior to a decision being taken be endorsed.

The meeting closed at 6.29 pm