



## OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE (TANDRIDGE)

### LOCAL COMMITTEE PROTOCOLS – ANNUAL REVIEW

20 June 2008

#### KEY ISSUE

To approve any amendments to the Tandridge Local Committee's Local Protocol.

#### SUMMARY

Local Committees have some flexibility in how they interpret the Constitution in order to improve engagement in their local areas. This is formalised in their local protocols, which are scrutinised by Democratic Services for legality and robustness and, if they meet Surrey County Council's legal requirements, are signed off and officially approved. As these flexible arrangements are tested throughout the year, they are reviewed on an annual basis and any further amendments suggested by Members in private discussion have to be formally adopted in public.

#### OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

**The Tandridge Local Committee is asked to:**

- (i) Approve the amendment to the local protocol, as previously discussed, and incorporated in Annex A at para 62.3.

## **1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 All Surrey County Council's committees are governed by its Constitution. However, when Local Committees were set up with the intention of meeting outside of County Hall in their local communities, it was felt that strict adherence to the rule would disadvantage local engagement.
- 1.2 Local Committees were therefore allowed some flexibility in how they interpret the Constitution in order to improve engagement in their local areas. This was formalised in their local protocols, which are scrutinised by Democratic Services for legality and robustness and, if they meet Surrey County Council's legal requirements, are signed off and officially approved.
- 1.3 In order to make it clear what the local differences are, Annex A is extracted from the Surrey County Council constitution and the local variations marked in bold. There have been no further alterations since 2004.
- 1.4 As these flexible arrangements are tested throughout the year, they are reviewed on an annual basis and any further amendments suggested by Members in private discussion have to be formally adopted in public.
- 1.5 One key amendment was proposed at the recent informal meeting of the Local Committee on 9 March 2008 and is now recommended for adoption.
- 1.6 This was to change the deadline for petitions from 2 working days prior to a meeting to 5 clear working days. (See Annex A para 6.3) Although this does not necessarily allow time for a response to be researched, it does allow the Committee clerk to discuss the process with a petitioner and to facilitate the flow of the subsequent meeting.
- 1.7 Should this be adopted, petitions arriving on the day of a meeting may be received by the Chairman outside of the meeting but will not be tabled for discussion.

## **2 OPTIONS**

- 2.1 The Local Committee has the flexibility to adopt or alter the amendments suggested in the previous informal meeting.

## **3 CONSULTATIONS**

- 3.1 Members may make amendments without reference to any outside body but must gain the permission of the County Council through Democratic Services.

#### **4 FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are none in this case.

#### **5 EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Local Committee meetings are open to the public and any amendments to the Local Protocol are applied to all Members, officers and members of the electorate in Tanridge equally.

#### **6 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are none in this case.

#### **7 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 Members have expressed a view in a private meeting that these amendments will improve the running of Local Committee meetings. However, in order to implement them, this must be formalised in a public meeting. The Local Committee is therefore asked to approve the amendment and to adopt the local protocol at Annex A.

#### **8 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8.1 The reason for reviewing the Local Protocol is so that it is effectively monitored on an annual basis and any amendments incorporated in a timely manner to improve the running of committee meetings and provide an operational framework that is unambiguous. Based on the experience of the last year, an increase in the lead-in time to Committee would enable communication between the Committee clerk and petitioners that would benefit all parties and improve the facilitation of public meetings.

#### **9 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT**

- 9.1 If approved by the Local Committee, the revised protocol will be lodged with Democratic Services as the working version. It will be formally adopted as soon as Democratic Services acknowledge the changes, normally within 48 hours.

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