



Audit & Governance Committee
5 June 2023

Constitution Review 2023

Purpose of the report:

For Audit & Governance Committee Members to consider and provide the Committee's view on the current proposals of the Constitution Review Group prior to any submission to Council.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

The Audit & Governance Committee consider the proposals of the Constitution Review Group (Annex 1) and provide the Committee's view on the current proposals.

Introduction:

1. Surrey County Council's Constitution was last reviewed in 2017. Significant change has occurred since then, including the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Council's move to Woodhatch Place, and the introduction of remote meeting technology and agile working.
2. A cross-party, broadly politically proportional Constitution Review Group (CRG) was established at the end of 2022 and has met three times since January 2023. The Group considered a number of issues which have been raised with Democratic Services in recent years by Members and officers.
3. The attached briefing note (Annex 1) has been provided to all political groups for their views and suggestions and to establish where there is broad agreement on the various proposals set out in the note.
4. As part of the process to establish the views of Members, the Audit & Governance Committee is also asked to consider the proposals and indicate its support or otherwise for the recommendations.

Proposed amendments

5. The proposed amendments are set out in Annex 1 to this report.

Conclusions:

Financial and value for money implications

6. None.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

7. The proposed amendments to Standing Orders 15.1, 23.2 and 28.1 (Proposal 6 in Annex 1 below) take into consideration the fact that some Members may not be able to stand due to mobility issues. Disability is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

Risk Management Implications

8. The Constitution Review Group has proposed amending the route of approval for the Council's Risk Management Strategy (Proposal 10 in Annex 1 below),

Next steps:

Proposed amendments to the Constitution will be submitted for approval by the County Council.

Report contact:

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Annexes:

Annex 1 – Proposals of the Constitutional Review Group

Sources/background papers:

Constitution of the Council