

Comments from Standards Committee

7 October 2024

The Committee noted that there were a number of comments that had made by the Leader of the Council, since its last meeting. These were now included in the Member feedback log and would be assessed.

Part 1

Paragraph 2.8 Page 48 - Petitions

The reference to the petition scheme is required but the protocol should be held elsewhere but outside of the Constitution. Councillors requested the opportunity to comment on the draft procedure for the petition scheme.

This paragraph should be amended to include that the Council welcomes petitions in hard copy or via the Council's e-petition facility. ✓

Paragraph 2.11 Page 49 – Webcasting & Social Media

This paragraph should be changed to “Updates from the Council are also available on various social media platforms, which can be found on the Council's website” given the changing nature of the various platforms available. ✓

Paragraph 4.43 Page 59 – Record of Decisions

Visual record of votes – If meetings can be recorded/filmed, do we need procedures in place about recording votes when meeting in Part II confidential session? **Not a matter for the constitution**

Part 2

Pages 79-80 - Section 6 Hon Alderman and Freedom of the City

The section regarding Freedom of the City should be moved forwards before Honorary Alderman. ✓

10 years was agreed as the minimum term of eminent service in paragraph 6.9. ✓
deleted - already ten years stipulated at 6.7.

Clarification/Consistency is needed regarding “holding political office” (as mentioned in paragraph 6.8) and being a “Councillor” as mentioned in paragraph 6.12. ✓ **deleted at 6.8 and amended 6.12 as per Local Government Act 1972.**

Paragraphs 6.12 Page 80 – Withdrawal of Title/Rights and Privileges

If an Honorary Alderman is re-elected, their Title/Rights and Privileges and withdrawn permanently automatically. The word “automatically” should therefore be added at the end of the last sentence in this paragraph. ✓

A new application can be submitted, which would be considered again under this scheme. ✓

PART 2.5

Paragraph 4.22 Page 110

Reference to Political Groups should be removed. ✓

Paragraph 4.76 Page 116

The time-limit for responding to questions has been raised previously and not addressed/amended to reflect the comments made. ✓ see new 4.86
This includes appropriate wording for asking supplementary questions to the written questions submitted.

Paragraph 4.85 & 4.86 Page 117 – Motions on Notice

The timings and number of motions on notice needs amending. Each should be a maximum of 20 minutes for each motion with a maximum time limit of 60 minutes for motions on Notice; all motions should be voted on even if the time limit for motions has been reached; the Leader should not have a separate ability to submit a motion. The current procedures at Southend should be followed. Paragraphs 4.85 and 4.86 should be appropriately amended. ✓

Section 2.5– Budget & Policy Framework Procedure Rules Page 129

The Standards Committee noted that appropriate wording was to be supplied by the S.151 Officer. Carry forward

When draft Budget is published a reference to discussing with relevant Executive Director when developing budget amendments / alternative proposals within their respective service area should be added before consulting with the S.151 Officer. Carry forward

Part 3– Committees

Change of Development Control Committee to Planning Committee supported. ✓

A general reduction in the number of Councillors on Committees as a whole was supported. This should be reviewed and an appropriate reduction should further considered by the Standards Committee. Carry forward

Proportionality on Working Parties should be reviewed. Is this necessary? Outside the scope of Constitution

Paragraph 9.19 Page 175 – General Purposes Committee

This function should sit with Audit & Governance Committee not Standards Committee.

✓ - see 8.27

Paragraph 9.20 Page 175 – General Purposes Committee

Reference to nominations for Freedom of the City and Honoray Alderman should be added to the list of awards considered by the General Purposes Committee before submitting to full Council for determination. ✓ reference to Honorary Titles included.

Paragraph 9.21 Page 175 – General Purposes Committee

Member / Officer Protocol should be for Standards Committee not General Purposes Committee. ✓ moved to 7.20

Paragraph 10.14 Page 177 – Health & Wellbeing Board

The Chair should be the relevant Cabinet Member or such Cabinet Member as the Leader may appoint. ✓

Section 11 Page 180 – Senior Appointments and Disciplinary Committee

Need to be more specific about who chairs this body and how they are appointed. No change appointed by Full Council at AGM

Paragraph 11.6 (Table) Page 181

The words “where appropriate” should be added to Political Assistance in the last box. ✓

PART 4 – The Executive

Paragraph 4.11(d) Page 191

The removal of a Cabinet Member should take effect immediately after the effect of the notice to the Chief Executive. ✓

Page 191 – Deputy Cabinet Members

This needs to include a proviso that the Deputy Cabinet Members shall not be an appointment that attracts a special responsibility allowance; they do not have automatic speaking rights at meetings of Cabinet and Scrutiny Committees (unless they are also a member of the relevant Scrutiny Committee); and they may not also be a Chair or Vice-Chair of a Scrutiny Committee. ✓ Inserted in Part 5 para 1.6 Restrictions on Chair and Vice Chair in Scrutiny Rules.

Paragraph 4.23 Page 192

The number of portfolios should not be included as the number of portfolios can change. They are also set out in Section 6 starting on page 203 and seems unnecessary

to include them in the Constitution but could be included elsewhere as a separate document. ✓

Paragraph 5.55 Page 202

A trigger needs to be established to enable Group Leaders to be informed of any Cabinet Member Decisions by Democratic Services and the location of the report and decision to enable decisions to be scrutinised if requested. **Carry forward Part 5 debate**

Part 4

Paragraph 7.7 Page 207 – Joint Arrangements

The reference to South East Local Enterprise Partnership should be deleted as this is no longer in existence. ✓