

Constitutional Working Group

Draft Terms of Reference

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The Constitutional Working Group has been established by the Democracy and Standards Committee to assist the Monitoring Officer in reviewing the Constitution and ensure it is fit for purpose.
- 1.2 It is not a decision-making body but is intended to assist the Council and the Monitoring Officer in ensuring the Constitution and associated procedures are fit for purpose, and meet the Council's aims of clear, efficient and effective governance.
- 1.3 It will undertake this role by:
 - Reviewing areas of the Constitution to ensure that they are fit for purpose and put forward appropriate recommendations for change or amendment;
 - Receive requests from Members, officers and committees to consider changes and amendments;
 - Formulate recommendations for change(s) to the Constitution for consideration by the Democracy and Standards Committee.

2. MEMBERSHIP

Five North Northamptonshire Council Members comprising –

3 x Conservative Group

1 x Labour Group

1 x Green Alliance

Officer Membership

Monitoring Officer

Clerk to the Group

Interim Democratic Services Manager

Democratic Services Representative

3. APPOINTMENT

- 3.1 The Committee will confirm member representatives on the Group at its first meeting in each Municipal Year. In-year changes to member representation may be made by the Committee.

4. CHAIR OF THE GROUP

- 4.1 The Chair of the Group will be agreed by the Committee at the Committee's first meeting in each Municipal Year (see Appointment above). If the Chair is absent from a meeting the remaining NNC members shall elect a chair for the duration of that meeting only.

5. VOTING

- 5.1 The objective of the Group will be to obtain a general consensus to any recommendations made. Where a vote may be required, any vote will be subject to a simple majority. The Chair would have a casting vote.

6. QUORUM

- 6.1 The quorum of meetings of the Group shall be three NNC members and the Monitoring Officer (or their nominated deputy).

7. FREQUENCY AND CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

- 7.1 Proposed meetings of the Group will be included in the Committee Calendar of Meetings.
- 7.2 If it is felt there is insufficient business for discussion at a particular meeting the Chair, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer, shall agree to a cancellation. If it is felt that there is a requirement for additional meetings the Chair, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and other Group members, shall call an unscheduled meeting.
- 7.3 The Group is not a formal meeting of the Council and not subject to the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).
- 7.4 The Group shall normally meet via Zoom, MS Teams or some similar platform.
- 7.5 Whilst not a formal meeting, officers will seek to comply with normal committee administrative practise i.e. agendas and reports to be circulated 5-clear days before a meeting. Urgency reports or material may be circulated with the agreement of the Chair.
- 7.6 Notes/Action Points arising from discussion at Group meetings shall be taken and their accuracy agreed at the next subsequent meeting of the Group. These notes/action points will be made available to other Members and the public upon request.
- 7.7 The Group is an internal working group and is not open to the press, public or other Members unless by invitation. All recognised political groups have representation on the Group.