

NORTH DORSET DISTRICT COUNCIL

POLITICAL MANAGEMENT PANEL

Minutes of a meeting held on Wednesday 11 October 2006 at 2.00pm in the Council Chamber at North Dorset District Council Offices, Nordon, Blandford Forum

Present:

Councillors: JPL Tory (Chairman)
I A Campbell
S G Hitchings (until 2.45pm)
Mrs D L Jones MBE
D Milsted
P Webb

Apologies: Councillor Col D Whitehead

Also present: Councillor Mrs Lowe
Councillor Mrs Manley

Officers: Stuart Caundle (Solicitor to the Council)
Jo Williams (Democratic Services Manager)

1. **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN**

Resolved to appoint Councillor John Tory as Chairman for this meeting only, as the New Constitution, once adopted, would require that the Chairman of the Panel be appointed by full Council.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Hitchings declared a personal interest in Minute 5 below in relation to the Composition of the Standards Committee as he is the current Chairman of the Committee.

3. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING – 3 MARCH 2006**

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2006 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business to be considered.

5. **REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION**

Members considered the report of the Solicitor to the Council with proposed revisions to the Council's Constitution, Cabinet's comments on those proposed revisions and seeking the recommendation of a revised Constitution to Council.

Members of the Panel noted that the Scheme of Delegation relating to the Development Control Manager was the subject of a separate report to the Cabinet and would be included in the report to Council.

The Contract Management and Financial Regulations would be reviewed at a later date.

Recommended to Council the revised Constitution as circulated for the meeting with the following amendments/comments:

Summary and Explanation - the structure chart to be amended to show the correct reporting lines of the Scrutiny bodies and Political Management Panel (to include direct reports to Cabinet). The membership of Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be removed from the chart.

Article 2 – Members welcomed the addition of ‘the Role of a Councillor’ and highlighted it to the Independent Remuneration Panel that would shortly be reviewing the Members’ Allowances Scheme.

Article 3 – reference to be made to public speaking rights at Development Control Committee and the discretion of Chairmen of other Committees to allow the public to speak. Democratic Services to draw up a protocol to cover this.

Article 4 – Stuart Caundle to seek clarification from Janet Rees on whether the list of policies and strategies that make up the Policy Framework was complete. Members who wished to suggest any additions to feed them back to Stuart.

Article 5 – the title and text to be clarified to show that it refers to the ‘full’ Council.

Article 6 – following a discussion, the Panel decided to recommend that the number of Scrutiny bodies remain at three for the present, although the number of Overview and Scrutiny Committees could be reduced, especially during the Summer period. Their names to be the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Policy Review Committee and the Service Review Committee. As full committees, Policy and Service Review Committees would now need to give their own annual reports to Council.

Paragraph 16 to be amended to provide for up to two voting co-opted members at any one time on Policy and Service Review Committees for single issues and in accordance with a protocol to be drafted.

Article 7 – the Panel favoured giving some flexibility to the Leader of the Council in relation to the number of members on the Cabinet. It recommended to Council that the Constitution specify a that a standard Cabinet for the Council would be six members, but could be varied within the statutory limits of 3 -10 members (including the Leader).

Article 8 – in relation to the Committees of the Council, in order to bring consistency the Chairmen would be appointed by full Council and the Vice Chairman elected by the Committee concerned.

Article 9 – the Panel agreed amendments to Article 4 as tabled by Councillor Tory as follows:

- ‘2. The Committee has seven members. Three of these are members of the District Council. Two will be current parish or town councillors nominated by NDDAPTC. Two will be qualified electors who are completely independent of the Council (known as Independent Members) who will be appointed by the Council. Each Independent Member will serve from the date of his/her appointment until the next all-out election of council members, unless previously by resolution of the Council. The Council will generally appoint to the Committee people with experience in public life and in the management of ethical matters.
3. The Chairman of the Council and the Leader of the Council will not be members of the Committee. No more than one member of the Cabinet can be a member of the Committee.
4. The Chairman of the Committee will be one of the Independent Members and will be appointed by the Council. The Vice Chairman will be elected by the Committee.’

The Constitution to state that the requirement for an Independent Chairman of the Standards Committee would be from the Annual Council Meeting in 2007.

Meeting Procedure Rules – paragraph 24 to include a general formula for the quorum of a meeting to be one half of the total members of the body, rounded down if necessary, plus one. The Quorum Table at Annex A to be amended to reflect this.

Council Procedure Rules – paragraph 20 ‘application’ to be amended to ‘dis-application’.

Annex B, paragraph 9 – the times allowed for speakers to be increased by 1 minute each.

The meeting ended at 4.05pm

CHAIRMAN