

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL

20 JULY 2022

REPORT OF THE DEMOCRACY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
HELD ON 22 JUNE 2022

PRE-REVIEW CONSTITUTION CHANGES

Issue for Decision

To consider changes to the new Constitution that would benefit from being addressed immediately rather than waiting until the 6 month review point for the new model to operate effectively.

Recommendation Made

That Council be recommended to approve the following changes to the Constitution:

1. Part C2, 8.2 (Standing Items) be amended to:

“Before any substantive items are considered, *where appropriate*, the following items shall be considered at each meeting of any Committee”;

and

2. Part C2, 2.5.1 (Members as Substitutes on Committees) be amended to

‘For each Committee any Member who is not a Member of that Committee may act as a Substitute on that Committee for a seat allocated to their political group.’;

Reasons for Recommendation

The first recommended change was to amend part C2 8.2 to include the words ‘where appropriate’ such that if an item was inappropriate it did not need to be explicitly set out on the agenda. The examples given related to questions from local residents at Planning Committee and Licensing Sub-Committee hearings where other provisions are already in place. The Committee supported this change.

The Committee also requested that a second change be considered by Council, namely, to allow all Councillors who are not Members of a Committee to be available as Substitutes for their own political groups, where they are not otherwise restricted from doing so. It was noted that in recent years two changes had occurred to the operation of Members and Substitute Members. Restrictions on cross committee memberships between Planning and Licensing Committee had been removed, and Group Leaders could now change the lists of Members and Substitute Members at any time by writing to the Proper Officer.

Allowing all Members to be considered as Substitutes would remove an element of risk and the need for designated Substitutes to be changed.

Alternatives Considered and Why Not Recommended

The Council could decide not to approve these changes, or to make amendments to what is proposed. However, this is not recommended as those changes have not been considered by the Democracy and General Purposes Committee.

Background Documents

Report to the Democracy and General Purposes Committee, 22 June 2022: [Pre-Review Constitution Changes](#)