

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL

11 DECEMBER 2013

REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY COORDINATING COMMITTEE

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**VISITING MEMBERS AT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY –
AMENDMENT TO PROCEDURE RULES**

1. Introduction

- 1.1 On 28 November 2013 the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee considered the current Visiting Member procedure rules for overview and scrutiny.

2. Background

- 2.1 At their meeting on 28 November 2013, the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee considered, in view of experiences this municipal year, the role of Visiting Members at Overview and Scrutiny Committees.
- 2.2 In addition, the Committee reviewed the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, set out in Part 4 of the Constitution.

These state:

"Visiting Members should be allowed to speak as of right at any Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on a given agenda item (for example where they have an interest or expertise in a particular manner) subject to the following conditions:-

- that Visiting Members can appear before the Committee but that Visiting Members limit their comments to the specified item or items; and*
- that Visiting Members are not allowed to vote or to be involved in the general discussion of the Committee."*

- 2.3 The Committee agreed that as well as having the right to speak on any item, Visiting Members should also be allowed to be involved in discussions at Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings at the discretion of the Chairman. The Committee identified that it needed to be clear at scrutiny meetings that Visiting Members could not vote or

take part in decision making for example formulating recommendations.

- 2.4 The amendment proposed at 3.1 allows Visiting Members to participate in discussion at the discretion of the Chairman whilst making it clear they cannot vote or make decisions.

3. RECOMMENDED:

- 3.1 That the Constitution be amended as follows:-

Second bullet point, paragraph 3, of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules be deleted and replaced with the following:

- *"that Visiting Members may be involved in the general discussion of the Committee at the discretion of the Chairman but are not allowed to vote and it should be clearly indicated prior to any decision that they are not taking part in the vote".*