

AT A MEETING of the AUDIT COMMITTEE of the COUNTY COUNCIL held at The Castle, Winchester on 4 March 2011.

PRESENT:

p Councillor K. Evans (Chairman)

p F. Allgood
p J. Bryant
p V. Clarke
a B. Dash

p M. Geddes
p A. Gibson
p E. Neal
p C. Thomas

79 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor B. Dash.

80 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Members who believed they had a personal or prejudicial interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting were asked to declare that interest and, having regard to the circumstances described in paragraphs 9, 10, 11 and 12 of the County Council's Code of Conduct, consider whether to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with paragraph 12 of the Code. The declaration should be made at the time of the relevant debate.

No declarations of interest were made at the meeting.

81 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2010 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

82 REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION

The Committee considered the report of Chief Executive (Item 4 in the Minute Book) on a review of the County Council's Constitution.

The Monitoring Officer introduced the revised Constitution with the purpose of seeking the comments of the Audit Committee, prior to the item being presented to Cabinet and then onto County Council for approval.

At its meeting on 16 July 2009, the County Council had considered it appropriate as a matter of good governance to review the Constitution to ensure best practice and its continued fitness for purpose, and to ensure that the Constitution continued to meet operational needs. The County Council also agreed that following this review, there should thereafter be an annual review of the Constitution as part of the County

Council's Corporate Governance arrangements. The Chief Executive, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer, was instructed to carry out this task. It was made clear that the revised Constitution did not contain any of the changes proposed by Government in the Localism Bill. Therefore, it would require further revision, once such proposals became law and any consequential changes to the County Council's governance arrangements were determined.

The Monitoring Officer highlighted the main changes contained within the proposed new revised Constitution. Particular mention was made of the presentational and other main changes to the document, including those sections which had been either revised or newly included. These are set out in more detail in paragraph 3 of the covering report.

The Committee considered the contents of the proposed revised Constitution on a page by page basis. The individual and collective Members' comments raised at the meeting were noted by the Monitoring Officer for incorporation, if legally appropriate.

RESOLVED:

That, subject to the comments made by the Audit Committee, the revised Constitution be submitted to Cabinet and then to the County Council for approval.

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