

COUNCIL, 28 JANUARY 2015

REPORT OF THE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Governance Committee at its meeting on 14 January considered amendments required to the Constitution, predominately to the financial regulations, finance policy and budget and policy framework.

1. While the Monitoring Officer has the power to make amendments to the Constitution in certain limited circumstances, other amendments are dealt with under Part 1 Article 4.02 paragraph (a) of the Constitution, which provides that only the Council will exercise the function of adopting and changing the Constitution.
2. Part 3 Section 1 paragraph 1.2 of the Constitution provides that this Committee will
 - a. Monitor and review the operation of the Constitution to ensure that the views and principles of the Constitution are given full effect.
 - b. Make recommendations to the Council about amending the Constitution
3. Following the establishment of the shared service between Havering and Newham Councils, officers have been reviewing the formal governance arrangements and associated policies and procedures. The aim being to both rationalise and standardise these to make them, as far as possible, consistent. This brings a number of benefits including ease of maintenance, consistency, simplification and portability between the two councils, and should ensure that all detailed procedures, including the operation of the Oracle suite of systems, takes place in a consistent manner.
4. It is recognised that the overarching governance arrangements between the two councils do differ, and this has been reflected in carrying out this review. The basic principles to be applied however, do not currently differ in any substantive way, and this has therefore facilitated bringing two sets of rules together into a single set.
5. The areas dealt with in this report are the Financial Regulations, a new Finance Policy to provide the platform on which the Regulations will operate, and the Budget and Policy Framework. The Council is asked to note that further work is underway on the delegations to the Joint Committee created to oversee the operations of the shared service, and a further report on this will be brought forward in due course.

The Governance Committee accordingly recommends to Council that:

The revised Financial Regulations, Finance Policy and Budget and Policy Framework as attached, be adopted.