

CONSTITUTION AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 14 December 2021
6.00 - 6.57 p.m.

Present: Councillor P Gilchrist (Chair)

Councillors	C Cooke	S Williams
	T Cox	J Williamson
	C Jones	P Hayes
	S Foulkes	P Stuart
	K Greaney	

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Moira McLaughlin, Professor Ronald Jones and Mr Grahame Kerr.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Members were asked to consider whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in connection with any item(s) on this agenda and, if so, to declare them and state what they were.

No declarations were made.

3 MINUTES

Resolved – That the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 30 September 2021 be agreed.

4 PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS

The Chair reported that there had been no public questions, statements or petitions submitted.

5 REVISION OF THE PETITION SCHEME

The Director of Law and Governance introduced the report which provided the Committee with a proposed revised petition scheme for consideration and adoption. The scheme as presented to the Committee provided members with a range of options for inclusion in the final scheme to be recommended to Council, these included:

- The time allowed to present a petition
- The required notice period for a petition to be considered by a Committee or Council

- The inclusion of a call for evidence for officers and members and if so the number of signatories required to trigger it
- The inclusion of a full council debate and if so the number of signatories required to trigger it
- The inclusion of an option to prevent repetitive petitions
- The inclusion of a right to review
- Options for how the Council will respond

The Chair sought the views of members on each of the options presented for discussion within the proposed scheme. Following detailed discussions on the various options, the Committee agreed that –

- Petitions should be presented 10 working days in advance of a meeting, with Chairs having final discretion
- 3 minutes be permitted for the introduction of petitions
- Call for evidence was not required
- A petition with 5,000 signatures triggers a debate at Council
- Council should not consider a matter further if a petition has been received on the same issue within the previous 6 months
- No right to review be included

It was proposed by Councillor Phil Gilchrist, seconded by Councillor Paul Stuart, that the Director of Law and Governance be authorised to amend the revised petition scheme to reflect the comments of the Committee and the updated scheme be referred to Council for decision. The motion was put and agreed by assent. It was therefore –

Resolved – That the Director of Law and Governance be authorised to amend the revised petition scheme to reflect the comments of the Committee and the updated scheme be referred to Council for decision.