

Meeting	Audit and Governance Committee
Date	20 March 2024
Present	Councillors J Burton (Vice-Chair, in the Chair), Melly, Rose and Whitcroft Mr Binney (Independent Member)
Apologies	Councillors Hollyer (Chair), Fisher and Mason Mr Leigh (Independent Member)
Officers in Attendance	Bryn Roberts, Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer

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#### **59. Declarations of Interest (5:32 pm)**

Members were invited to declare at this point in the meeting any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, any prejudicial interests or any disclosable pecuniary interests they might have in the business on the agenda. None were declared.

#### **60. Public Participation (5:32 pm)**

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

#### **61. Proposed Changes to the Composition and Quorum of Staffing Matters and Urgency Committee (5:33 pm)**

The Committee considered a report that proposed amending Article 11 of the Constitution by the introduction of the following paragraph:

1.3 The Committee shall comprise five members and shall have a quorum of three members.

The Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer noted the recent difficulties in organising a Staffing Matters and Urgency Committee (SMUC) which had highlighted a flaw in the Council's Constitution relating to SMUC and its quoracy. This position had impacted on the ability of the Council to conduct its

business in a lawful and timely manner, and in order to remedy this, it was proposed that Article 11 be further amended.

During discussion, it was acknowledged that it was preferable for committee places to be comprised of odd numbers to minimise the need for the Chair's casting vote. It was also noted that the political balance and number of places across all the remaining committees would continue to be reviewed by the Constitution Working Group prior to consideration by the Audit and Governance Committee and Full Council.

The operational issues and the urgency element of the change was acknowledged and it was confirmed that this issue had also been considered by the Constitution Working Group who had agreed that the proposed amendment would ensure that urgent business of the Council would be conducted more effectively, and it would allow for the quoracy of meetings to become more explicit in the Constitution.

The political balance calculation was discussed and the Committee noted that due to the quoracy change the overall seats would increase from 107 to 108. This would result in SMUC changing to three Labour and two Liberal Democrat places and overall there would be a political change to a scrutiny committee, where Labour would reduce its seats from six to five and the Liberal Democrats would rise from four to five.

Having being put to the vote, it was unanimously:

Resolved: That the proposed additional wording, as set out in paragraph 6 of the report and above, be endorsed, and remit the matter for consideration at the Council meeting to be held on Thursday, 21 March 2024.

Reason: In order to remedy an error in the Constitution, to ensure that the Council can lawfully and expeditiously carry on its business.

Cllr J Burton, Vice-Chair in the Chair  
[The meeting started at 5.32 pm and finished at 5.47 pm].