

Suggested Changes to the Constitution

Part of the Constitution	Suggested Change	Proposed Response
Part 3, Section 2 – responsibility for Council functions	Remove references to West Suffolk in the name of the Standards Committee, Health and Safety Panel, and Staff Consultative Committee – these were previously stated to reflect the committees spanned both Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury	<p>AGREED in respect the Health and Safety Committee and Staff Consultative Committee</p> <p>NOT AGREED in respect of the Standards Committee, as this Committee also considers complaints against Parish / Town Councils and the title “West Suffolk” reflects it has a wider role</p>
Part 3, Section 2 – responsibility for Council functions	The Financial Resilience Sub-Committee should be called the “Treasury Management Sub-Committee”	NOT AGREED. The role of the financial resilience sub-committee is wider than monitoring the Council’s treasury management, and the name has been changed to reflect this is a wider role than the previous St Edmundsbury Treasury Management Sub-Committee
Part 2, Article 11 – Decision Making	In 11.3.2.1(f)(i), remove the words “(more than 5 years)”. This will mean that any decisions that have a long term, lasting impact on a community will be treated as being key, and must be subject to local member consultation, not just those that are likely to have a more than 5 year impact	AGREED. The 5 year suggestion was added to try to define what a long term, lasting impact may constitute; however it is accepted that it will be fairly evident if a decision will have a lasting impact and the 5 year suggestion is unnecessary.
Part 2, Article 11 – Decision Making	The definition of a key decision includes: “Comprises or includes the making, approval or publication of a draft or final scheme which may require, either directly or in the event of objections, the approval of a Minister of the Crown.”	<p>AGREED. Key decisions should be important decisions that have an impact on our Council or its community, not routine day-to-day decisions.</p> <p>“Comprises or includes the making, approval or publication of a draft or final scheme which <i>is</i></p>

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	<p>Routine, minor repairs and maintenance work on historical sites such as Abbey Gardens require approval from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport – the definition should be clarified to accommodate for this</p>	<p><i>not a routine business decision and may require, either directly or in the event of objections, the approval of a Minister of the Crown.”</i></p> <p>Although there may be some area of judgement on what is a routine business decision, in practice such cases tend to be reasonably self-evident – for example, it would have covered the referral of the Single Council business case to the Secretary of State.</p>
<p>Part 2, Article 11 – Decision Making</p>	<p>The proposed definition of a key decision includes a change in service provision that results in compulsory redundancies being made.</p> <p>It is proposed to remove this aspect</p>	<p>AGREED. The original rationale for this was that any such change would likely arise as a result of a significant change in the way that services are delivered. However, such changes are already covered elsewhere in the key decision definition – for example, the definition includes where we make additional expenditure / savings of more than £100k, and where we make changes to the way services are delivered in local communities.</p>
<p>Part 4b, Committee Procedure Rules</p>	<p>10.3 states that a member may be invited to speak at committee by the Chair where the business affects their ward. Further, 10.4 allows for members who are not on the committee to speak at the committee if they indicate in advance to their Chair that they wish to do so.</p> <p>It is suggested this is amended so that local members should have a right, by default, to speak at a Committee.</p>	<p>PARTLY AGREED. It is recognised local member speaking is important, but there are some concerns regarding practical arrangements on this point, so it suggested that 10.3 is amended so that instead of:</p> <p><i>“A Member may be invited by the Chair to attend the meeting specifically to comment on an item of business or because the item of business affects their Ward”</i></p> <p>It now reads:</p>

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		<p><i>"Local members have the right to speak at a committee meeting which is discussing matters that affect or relate to their ward, however must comply with any requirements that are set out in these procedure rules or as may be agreed by the Committee in question"</i></p> <p>This gives local members the right to speak, but also gives committees the right to set any requirements on registration or notification by the local member.</p>
Part 4b, Committee procedure rules	Only those members who have participated in the previous meeting may vote on the minutes of the meeting	<p>PARTLY AGREED. After much debate, the Constitution Review Group accepted both suggestions in principle but recognised there are some practical implications – for example, being able to cross-reference who can, and cannot vote on minutes. As such, section 17.1 of the Committee Procedure Rules, has been amended to allow a more informal process for agreeing the minutes, and sets an expectation that members should have been present at the previous meeting without placing absolute requirements.</p>
Part 4b, Committee procedure rules	Minutes should not need to be proposed and seconded; they can simply be agreed where no-one raises objection	
GENERAL	All Committee meetings must be recorded	<p>ACCEPTED IN PRINCIPLE, BUT NOT AMENDED. We accept that this may be helpful, and not only is there the potential for recording meetings, but also broadcasting them. At the moment, there are some practical implications as the equipment to do so is not available in all Council meeting rooms, and so we have requested the Service Manager – Democratic Services investigate this matter further.</p>

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GENERAL	Those putting forward views at Development Control Committee should be able to play video clips and other material to support their statements	REFERRED TO THE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER The Development Control Committee consider their own arrangements for public speaking, which will need to be reconsidered at their first meeting in the new Council.
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