

# Standards Committee



2 October 2024

<b>Title</b>	Amendments to the Constitution
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	To make a recommendation
<b>Report Author</b>	Karen Limmer, Interim Monitoring Officer
<b>Ward(s) Affected</b>	All Wards
<b>Exempt</b>	No
<b>Exemption Reason</b>	Not applicable
<b>Corporate Priority</b>	This item is not in the current list of Corporate Priorities but still requires a Council decision.
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Committee is asked to recommend Council to: Approve the proposed changes to the Constitution as set out in Appendix 1.</b>
<b>Reason for Recommendation</b>	<b>To ensure that the Constitution is an effective and up to date document and to support good governance.</b>

## 1. Summary of the report

What is the situation	Why we want to do something
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Committee System Working Group and Officers have raised some changes that they wish to see in the Constitution to provide clarity on decision-making and improve public engagement in the work of Committees.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure the Constitution facilitates efficient and effective decision-making, thereby supporting good governance.</li> </ul>
This is what we want to do about it	These are the next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommend the changes as set out in Appendix 1 for approval.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek Council approval for the proposals.</li> <li>Once approved, the Constitution will be updated and published on the website.</li> <li>Information about the change to public engagement in Committee meetings will be communicated on all appropriate channels.</li> </ul>

1.1 This report seeks a recommendation to Council to approve proposed amendments to the Constitution, which have the support of the Committee System Working Group.

## **2. Key issues**

2.1 The Committee System Working Group (CSWG) is responsible for considering whether any amendments are required to the Constitution to ensure the smooth operation of the Committee System and making recommendations on these to the Standards Committee.

2.2 Following the failed Motion at Council in December 2023 to amend Standing Orders in relation to public questions at Committee, the CSWG requested that these changes be brought back to Council and voted on individually rather than 'en bloc' as was the case previously.

2.3 Additionally, Officers have identified other amendments which are required to clarify responsibilities for decision-making.

2.1 The proposed changes to the Constitution were discussed with the Committee System Working Group on 10 September. The Working Group supported the proposed changes.

## **3. Constitutional amendments**

3.1 Attached at **Appendix 1** is a summary of all the amendments which are recommended for approval. The amendments relate to a number of the Parts which make up the Constitution. Clean copies of these amended Parts are attached as appendices. Tracked change versions of these documents are available to Members in the Mod.Gov app library.

## **4. Legal comments**

4.1 It is considered that the proposals in the Appendix to this report will meet two of the purposes of the Constitution as set out in Article 1:

- (a) to enable decisions to be taken efficiently and effectively;
- (b) to support and encourage the active involvement of the Spelthorne community in the decisions which affect them.

## **5. Timetable for implementation**

5.1 A recommendation from Standards Committee will be considered by Council at its meeting on 24 October 2024.

5.2 The amendments will take effect upon agreement by Council and the Constitution will be updated and published as soon as reasonably practicable.

## **6. Contact**

6.1 Gill Scott, Corporate Governance Support Officer (g.scott@spelthorne.gov.uk)

**Please submit any material questions to the Mayor and Officer Contact by two days in advance of the meeting.**

**Background papers: There are none.**

**Appendices:**

**Appendix 1 – Summary of proposed Constitution amendments**

**Followed by:**

**Part 3(b) Terms of Reference**

**Part 3(d) Delegations to Officers**

**Part 4(a) Council Standing Orders**

**Part 4(a) Rules of Debate flowchart**