

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT THE PLANNING COMMITTEE**

### **Executive Summary**

The Borough Council's arrangements for public participation at meetings of the Planning Committee have been reviewed with the purpose of allowing supporters and objectors equal opportunity to speak at the Committee meetings. The existing arrangements require 10 letters of objection before public speaking on an application is allowed. Under the proposals, this would change to a minimum of five representations, regardless of whether they support or object to an application.

Extracts from the minutes of both the Working Group and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, both of whom have received the amended section, are attached for information. In summary, both meetings supported the ambition of the proposals. The Working Group suggested that the possibility of removing the threshold entirely should be considered; concern over this suggestion and its potential impact on the workload of the Committee and Officers was however voiced at the Committee meeting. Officers advised both the Working Group and the Committee that additional planning delegation to Officers would be necessary in the event the Council chose to reduce the threshold further.

The Committee itself suggested changes to clarify the intentions of the new scheme and to allow for communication by email when responding to residents, agents and applicants.

The Committee is now invited to consider the proposed scheme together with the comments of the Corporate Governance Working Group and Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The comments of the Committee, together with those of the Working Group and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, will be submitted to the Standards and Audit Committee which is responsible for recommending any significant changes to the Constitution.

Attached to this report are:

Appendix 1 – Report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Appendix 2 – Draft Scheme for inclusion in the Constitution.

Appendix 3 – Extract from the minutes of the Corporate Governance Working Group.

Appendix 4 – Extract from the draft minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

### **Recommendations**

The Committee is requested to:

**RECOMMEND TO THE STANDARDS AND AUDIT COMMITTEE for recommendation thereon to Council That**

- (i) the amended Public Participation at Planning Committee section of the Constitution (Appendix 2 to the report) be adopted;**
- (ii) authority already delegated to the Monitoring Officer to make minor amendments to the Constitution, including**

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amendments to references within the document and section numbering, be noted; and

- (iii) the Monitoring Officer be instructed to make the agreed changes to the Constitution.

The items above will need to be dealt with by way of a recommendation to the Standards and Audit Committee for recommendation thereon to Council.

**Background Papers:** None.

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**Date Published:** 30 October 2023