

Committee Agenda



**Epping Forest
District Council**

CONSTITUTION WORKING GROUP Wednesday, 26th June, 2019

Place: Civic Offices, High Street, Epping
Room: Committee Room 2
Time: 7.00 pm
Democratic Services Officer V. Messenger Tel: (01992) 564243
Email: democraticservices@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Members:

Councillors S Jones (Chairman), M Sartin (Vice-Chairman), D Dorrell, S Heap, M McEwen, J Philip, C C Pond, C P Pond, S Rackham, J Share-Bernia and J H Whitehouse

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

To report the appointment of any substitute members for the meeting.

3. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 3 - 6)

To agree the notes of the meeting of the Working Group held on 28 March 2019.

4. TERMS OF REFERENCE & WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 7 - 10)

To review the terms of reference and progress with the achievement of the current work programme for the Working Group.

5. CONSTITUTION - REVISIONS & AMENDMENTS (Pages 11 - 12)

(Monitoring Officer) To note the report (attached).

6. MEMBER GUIDANCE ON GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY (Pages 13 - 22)

To consider the report (attached).

7. APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER CHAMPIONS (Pages 23 - 28)

To consider the report (attached).

8. PAPERLESS WORKING AND DIGITAL ROLL-OUT (Pages 29 - 32)

To consider the report (attached).

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note that the next meeting of the Working Group will be held on 24 September 2019 at 7.00pm.

**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
NOTES OF A MEETING OF CONSTITUTION WORKING GROUP
HELD ON THURSDAY, 28 MARCH 2019
IN COMMITTEE ROOM 2, CIVIC OFFICES, HIGH STREET, EPPING
AT 7.30 - 8.05 PM**

Members Present:	M McEwen (Chairman), M Sartin (Vice-Chairman), D Dorrell, S Heap, S Jones, J Philip, C C Pond, C P Pond and J H Whitehouse
Other members present:	None.
Apologies for Absence:	J Share-Bernia
Officers Present:	S Tautz (Democratic Services Manager), N Richardson (Service Director, Planning) and V Messenger (Democratic Services Officer)

17. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that there were no substitute members for this meeting.

18. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the notes of the meeting of the Working Group held on 3 December 2018 be agreed as a correct record.

19. TERMS OF REFERENCE & WORK PROGRAMME

- (a) The Terms of Reference were noted.
- (b) Work Programme
 - (i) Constitution – amendments (item 1) was a standing item.
 - (ii) Planning Delegations (item 2), Petition Scheme (item 3) and Honorary Alderman (item 4) had been completed at the meeting on 3 December 2018 and then approved by Council on 20 December 2019.
 - (iii) Section 106 and Section 278 Agreements (item 6) where a review of planning delegations and practise to examine the approach taken was scheduled for the next Working Group meeting in September 2019.

Councillor J Philip advised that as the Local Plan progressed, an additional meeting of the Constitution Working Group might be required in relation to this item, before the next scheduled meeting on 24 September 2019.
 - (iv) Gifts and hospitality (item 7) where a review of the existing guidance in the Constitution was due by members also had to be considered by the Standards Committee in the same cycle and would shortly be discussed by the Corporate Governance Group.

- (v) Reviews of Audit and Governance and Standards Committees (item 8), and the committee systems under the Planning Process Review 2017/18 (item 9) were outstanding items from this municipal year.
- (vi) Financial Regulations (item 10) to be advised by the Chief Finance Officer was also outstanding. The Democratic Services Manager, S Tautz, informed members that the current 151 Officer would be leaving the Council shortly. Therefore, this would need to be discussed with the new incoming 151 Officer. Councillor C C Pond asked if arrangements had been made as this was a statutory position required by law, to which S Tautz affirmed.

20. CONSTITUTION - REVISIONS & AMENDMENTS

S Tautz, Democratic Services Manager, was in attendance.

A revised version of the Constitution had been published on 21 December 2018, which had included revisions to the Scheme of Delegation (Part 3) (Delegation to Officers from Full Council). This was as a result of the ongoing Council restructure of senior management and the removal of a number of positions from the Council's establishment. This had also included the arrangement for the new Monitoring Officer, N Boateng, and the removal of references to the Staff Appeals Panel, which had been discontinued during 2018.

Any further revisions to the Constitution would be published after Council on 25 April 2019, but would incorporate the Members' Allowance Scheme for the 2019/20 municipal year that had been agreed by Council on 20 December 2018.

Members were advised that all forthcoming revisions to the Constitution would be publicised in the Council Bulletin.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted and agreed.

21. AREA PLANS SUB-COMMITTEES - SITE VISITS

S Tautz, Democratic Services Manager, and N Richardson, Service Director (Planning Services) were in attendance.

This proposal had originally been made to improve the efficiency of the Area Plans Sub-Committees to avoid speakers waiting lengthy times. It had given members the opportunity to identify and agree requirements for formal site visits to be held prior to consideration of planning applications at the Area Plans Sub-Committees. It had been in operation since the commencement of the 2018/19 municipal year on a 6-month trial basis, subject to being reviewed by the Constitution Working Group. Therefore, a review of the success of this arrangement was overdue.

This item had been discussed at the Joint Meeting of Development Management Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen on 4 March 2019. Members were of the opinion that this procedure should be adopted on a permanent basis and that site visits should be agreed with a minimum of debate. There was also concern that if a site visit had taken place at an Area Plans Sub-Committee but the application referred for determination by the District Development Management Committee (DDMC), for

consistency a further member site visit should be arranged prior to its consideration, which might delay an application coming before the next DDMC.

However, this did not preclude site visits being agreed by any planning committee, which could be achieved:

- by a resolution of a majority of members during consideration of an application prior to its determination; or
- that a formal site visit could be held on the approval of a Sub-Committee Chairman on the recommendation of the Service Director (Planning Services) under the Constitution (Article 10 – District Development Management Committee and Area Plans Sub-Committees).

However, to be consistent with the Area Plans Sub-Committees under Article 10 of the Constitution, a further suggestion was made at the Joint Meeting that a site visit could be held on the approval of the DDMC Chairman on the recommendation of the Service Director (Planning Services).

N Richardson said that this trial had seen an increase in the number of site visits being organised, even for Area Plans South. S Tautz added that the ideal situation was that a site visit would be voted on without debate, but this would also allow some further discussion on why a site visit was being requested. Nothing prevented a site visit being proposed during the debate of an application when that agenda item was reached and therefore, served to strengthen the opportunity to have site visits.

Councillor C C Pond said the (South) site visits he had attended had been very instructive for both members and officers, and had therefore been a worthwhile experience.

Councillor J H Whitehouse asked if topics to be discussed could be made known before a site visit.

Councillor J Philip wanted members to propose good reasons for holding a site visit. It would be up to the Chairman of a planning committee to ensure that a request for a site visit did not continue into a debate on the planning merits. He supported retaining the early site visit option and that for consistency, the DDMC Chairman should be able to recommend a site visit.

There was a consensus among members who supported and agreed with these comments and that it was preferable to have as many options as possible.

N Richardson commented that there was a very tight timeframe in which to arrange a site visit before an application came to committee once an agenda had been published, but it was an option for the chairman to request a site visit. Members could also visit sites themselves before the meeting.

Councillor S Jones acknowledged that planning officers had suggested site visits in the past.

Councillor M Sartin added that she had undertaken site visits herself but you couldn't always see onto a site.

Councillor C C Pond agreed that developers had a propensity to put high fences around sites and was disappointed over the demise of Bing Birdseye, which had been useful in this task.

Councillor C C Pond asked if it would be useful to hold site visits for important planning applications that were referred to Full Council for determination. Furthermore, public speakers were not allowed to speak on applications at Council, and suggested that these be added to the Constitution Working Group's Work Programme.

S Tautz commented on the practicalities of trying to arrange a site visit for 58 members. He also replied that there was no provision for the public to speak on a planning application at Council, except when an application had been submitted directly to Council without prior consideration by any planning committee. Also, if an Extraordinary Council meeting had been organised with the Chairman's consent to determine a planning application, the Constitution limited the type of business that could be considered. Therefore, the Working Group might want to look at those arrangements, to which members agreed.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That it be recommended to Council that the operation of the arrangements for the agreement of formal site visits, with regard to planning applications listed in agendas for meetings of the Area Plans Sub-Committees, be implemented on a permanent basis with effect from the commencement of the 2019/20 municipal year;
- (2) That when a formal site visit had been undertaken by an Area Plans Sub-Committee but the application then referred for determination by the District Development Management Committee (DDMC), for consistency, a further member site visit for DDMC members be arranged prior to its consideration;
- (3) That to be consistent with the Area Plans Sub-Committee under Article 10 of the Constitution, the option for DDMC to hold a site visit following a recommendation by the Service Director (Planning Services) and with the approval of the Chairman be allowed, to align with the Area Plans Committees; and
- (4) That the following matters be added to the work programme of the Working Group:
 - (a) To consider possible arrangements for formal site visits to be held with regard to planning applications referred to Council for determination; and
 - (b) To review the existing arrangements in the Constitution whereby planning applications, when referred to meetings of Council or Extraordinary Council for determination, were not generally subject to arrangements for public speaking.

22. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting of the Working Group would be held on 24 September 2019 at 7.00pm.

CONSTITUTION WORKING GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Title: Constitution Working Group

Status: Working Group

Terms of Reference:

- (1) To review any aspect of the authority's constitutional arrangements as requested by the Council;
- (2) To undertake general reviews of specific elements of the Constitution in order to ensure that the authority's constitutional arrangements complement current legislative requirements and decisions made by the Council; and
- (3) To consider any proposals of the Monitoring Officer for necessary revision to any element of the Constitution.

Reporting:

The Working Group shall report directly to the Council in connection with its Terms of Reference and the achievement of its work programme.

Chairman: Councillor S Jones

This page is intentionally left blank

Constitution Working Group
(Chairman – Councillor S Jones)
Work Programme 2019/20

Item	Timescale	Progress
(1) Constitution	Ongoing	To consider the ongoing review of the Constitution to ensure alignment with the Council's management structure.
(2) Gifts and Hospitality	June 2019	To review existing guidance for members.
(3) Member Champions	June 2019	To consider arrangements for the ongoing appointment of member 'Champions' (referral from Appointments Panel (9.5.19)).
(4) Paperless Working and Digital Roll-out	June 2019	To consider the proposed move to paperless working in respect of the publication and distribution of the Council's agenda and minutes etc.
(5) Section 106 and Section 278 Agreements	September 2019	To review planning delegations and practice to examine the approach taken to section 106 and section 278 agreements. (<i>Council Minute 69 – 20.12.18</i>).
(6) Site Visits	September 2019	To consider arrangements for formal site visits to be held with regard to planning applications referred to the Council for determination (<i>Constitution Working Group Min no 21 – 28.3.19</i>).
(7) Public Speaking	September 2019	To review existing arrangements within the Constitution whereby planning applications referred to the Council for determination are not generally subject to arrangements for public speaking (<i>Constitution Working Group Min no 21 – 28.3.19</i>).
(8) Disciplinary Arrangements for Relevant Officers	September 2019	To consider the extension of the Terms of Reference of the Standards Committee.
(9) Review of Audit & Governance and Standards Committees	September 2019 (TBC)	To review the possible merger of the Audit and Governance and Standards Committees (<i>Constitution Working Group Min no 25 – 16.04.18</i>).
(10) Planning Process Review	TBC	To consider any changes required to the current structure of the Area Plans Sub-Committees, arising from the 2017/18 Planning Process Review (<i>Constitution Working Group Min no 6 – 25.06.18</i>).
(11) Financial Regulations	TBC	To review the current Financial Regulations. Timescale for review to be advised by Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer).

This page is intentionally left blank

Report to Constitution Working Group

Date of meeting: 26 June 2019



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Subject: Constitution - Revisions & Amendments

Officer contact for further information: S. Tautz (01992) 564180

Democratic Services Officer: V. Messenger (01992) 564265

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

That recent revisions to the Constitution be noted.

1. A revised version of the Constitution was published on 7 May 2019. This included revisions to the appointment of the Council's Chief Finance Officer and the Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer for the Epping Forest District, as agreed by the Council at its meeting on 25 April 2019.
2. The update also included revisions to Article 10 (District Development Management Committee and Area Plans Sub-Committees) to reflect new arrangements for member site visits, also as agreed by the Council on 25 April 2019.
3. The latest edition of the Constitution also incorporated the Members' Allowances Scheme for the 2019/20 municipal year, which was agreed by the Council on 20 December 2018.
4. Members were advised of these revisions to the Constitution through the Council Bulletin of 10 May 2019.

Resource Implications:

The recommendations of this report seek to ensure that the Council's Constitution remains fit for purpose.

Legal and Governance Implications:

The Council's Constitution sets out procedures and rules for the operation of its functions and responsibilities.

Safer, Cleaner, Greener Implications:

There are no implications arising from the recommendations of this report in respect of the Council's commitment to the Climate Local Agreement, the corporate Safer, Cleaner, Greener initiative, or any crime and disorder issues within the district.

Consultation Undertaken:

The matters subject of recent revisions to the Constitution have been agreed by the Council.

Background Papers:

None

Risk Management:

The Council's Constitution sets out procedures and rules for the operation of its functions and responsibilities.

Equality:

There are no equality implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

Report to Constitution Working Group

Date of meeting: 26 June 2019



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Subject: Constitution - Member Guidance on Gifts & Hospitality

Officer contact for further information: S. Tautz (01992) 564180

Democratic Services Officer: V. Messenger (01992) 564265

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

That the Working Group consider revised member guidance in relation to gifts and hospitality.

1. As the Working Group will recall, a thorough review of the Council's constitution was undertaken during 2016/17. At that time however, the review of a number of elements of the Constitution were deferred for further consideration and consultation.
2. Guidance for members of the Council in relation to the declaration, receipt and acceptance of gifts and hospitality has traditionally been included within the Constitution, but was not subject to review during 2016/17. The most recent version of the guidance was adopted by the Council in 2007.
3. During 2018/19, the Internal Audit Unit undertook an assessment of the Council's existing arrangements for the management of gifts and hospitality for staff and Members. The audit identified that processes relating to the declaration of gifts and hospitality by members were generally operating well, as full details of any such gifts and hospitality were required to be recorded on the individual Register of Interests form for each member and members were reminded through regular training of the requirement to notify the Monitoring Officer of any amendments to their Register of Interests, including the receipt of gifts and hospitality. However, the audit identified that the existing gifts and hospitality guidance for members should be updated, published in the Council's Constitution and communicated to members to ensure full compliance with the Member Code of Conduct.
4. The audit also recommended that the guidance should be updated to make reference to the Bribery Act 2010 and that the value of gifts and hospitality specified in the existing guidance (£25.00) should be amended to match that specified by the Register of Interests declaration (currently £50.00). An analysis of guidance issued by a sample of other Councils undertaken as part of the audit, found that the value of gifts and hospitality declared typically ranged from £25.00 to £100.00, with the majority being set at £50.00. The Chief Internal Auditor considers that this suggests that the Council has, at £50.00, set an appropriate level for the declaration of gifts and hospitality.
5. The guidance included within the Constitution has therefore recently been reviewed to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and to address the recommendations arising from the internal audit report. The revised guidance document is attached as Appendix 1 to this report for consideration by the Working Group and also includes processes for the registration of gifts and hospitality declined by members and for the donation of gifts and hospitality to the Chairman's charity, alongside the consequences of non-compliance with the guidance in terms of the public perception of the acceptance of gifts and hospitality by members acting in the public interest.

6. The revised guidance document has been subject to consultation with the Council's Monitoring Officer and Chief Internal Auditor, who both support the content of the guidance document. The revised guidance has been circulated to all members of the Standards Committee and no adverse comment has been raised as to its content. The guidance has also been agreed by the Corporate Governance Group.
7. The Working Group is requested to consider the revised member guidance in relation to the declaration, receipt and acceptance of gifts and hospitality.

Resource Implications:

The recommendations of this report seek to ensure that the Council's Constitution remains fit for purpose.

Legal and Governance Implications:

The Council's Constitution sets out procedures and rules for the operation of its functions and responsibilities.

Safer, Cleaner, Greener Implications:

There are no implications arising from the recommendations of this report in respect of the Council's commitment to the Climate Local Agreement, the corporate Safer, Cleaner, Greener initiative, or any crime and disorder issues within the district.

Consultation Undertaken:

The revised gifts and hospitality guidance has been subject to consultation with the Monitoring Officer and the Chief Internal Auditor. The revised guidance has been circulated to the Standards Committee and has been agreed by the Corporate Governance Group.

Background Papers:

None

Risk Management:

The Council's Constitution sets out procedures and rules for the operation of its functions and responsibilities.

Equality:

There are no equality implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

GUIDANCE FOR COUNCILLORS

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Your role as a member of the Council means that you are brought into contact, as part of your work, with many people for many different reasons. From time to time you may encounter situations where individuals, or firms, companies and other public bodies will offer gifts or hospitality. The reasons for this will vary but such offers will usually be made as goodwill gestures, or for celebration or appreciation, or for helping networking or working together. Some Members who hold particular positions within the Council or who have to liaise with other public and private sector partners, may find themselves receiving offers of gifts and hospitality quite frequently.
- 1.2 The Council has adopted this guidance to regulate the acceptance of gifts and hospitality. This is because the acceptance of benefits such as gifts can affect the perception of whether Councillors and the Council are acting in the public interest. Councillors are in a position of significant influence over issues that affect people's lives and must always act in the best interests of the people of the Epping Forest District and not act in any way which undermines public trust in what they are doing.
- 1.3 Whilst most offers of gifts and hospitality are well meant and innocent, there have been, nationally, instances in the past of gifts and hospitality being offered to and accepted by Councillors for corrupt purposes to secure improper advantage. Whilst this is exceptional and rarely occurs, it is very damaging to public confidence in local government, damaging to the reputation of the authority and unlawful. Even in situations where there are no improper motives, the acceptance of gifts and hospitality can have a negative effect in terms of public perception.
- 1.4 This means that as a member of the Council you need to be very clear about the rules that apply to gifts and hospitality and you always need to bear in mind how the public might view your accepting them. Any offers should be treated with great care. You have a prime duty to ensure that there is no conflict of interest in the performance of your duties and this guidance aims to help you deal with situations where you are faced with offers of gifts and hospitality.
- 1.5 The acceptance of gifts and hospitality by Councillors is not merely an administrative issue. It reflects directly upon the perception of Councillors and of the authority as acting in the public interest or as acting for the personal advantage of friends and for what personal benefit Councillors can get out of their position.
- 1.6 The Council's Code of Conduct is underpinned by the Nolan principles of public life, some of which are particularly relevant to the receipt and declaration of gifts and hospitality:
 - **Integrity** - Members should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties
 - **Objectivity** - in carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits; choices should be made on merit;
 - **Openness** - Members should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take; and

- **Honesty** - Members should declare any private interests relating to their public duties and take any steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

1.7 This guidance for Councillors on the receipt of gifts and hospitality sets out:

- (a) the principles which should be applied whenever a Councillor has to decide whether it would be proper to accept any gift or hospitality;
- (b) a procedure for obtaining consent to accept a gift or hospitality when a Councillor considers that it would be proper to accept it;
- (c) a procedure for declaring any gift or hospitality received and for accounting for any gift to the Authority; and
- (d) circumstances where acceptance of gifts and hospitality is appropriate.

1.8 This guidance does not apply to the acceptance of any facilities or hospitality, which may be provided to a Councillor by Epping Forest District Council. The guidance is intended to assist members to comply with their obligations and also to help them to avoid any situation where their integrity or objectivity might be called into question as a result of gifts and hospitality issues.

1.9 If you are unsure on the interpretation of any aspect of this guidance, you should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer.

2. GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

(a) Gifts

2.1 A gift could be any item or service you receive free of charge, or which you are offered at a discounted rate or on terms not available to the general public. The general principle is that gifts should be refused.

2.2 However, when deciding whether or not to accept an offer of a gift, the context is very important. An offer of a gift from a company seeking to do business with the Council is unlikely ever to be acceptable and cash or monetary gifts should always be refused and the Monitoring Officer should be notified. Examples of gifts that, depending on the specific circumstances, it would be appropriate to accept, are set out later in Section 4(a) of this guidance.

2.3 If you receive any unsolicited gifts where it is not appropriate to accept them, but it would be impracticable to return them, or where refusal in the circumstances would cause offence, you must as soon as practicable after receipt of the gift, pass it to the Monitoring Officer together with a written statement explaining where it came from and the circumstances. The Monitoring Officer will record the details of the offer of the gift and will write to the person or organisation thanking them for the gift and informing them that it has been donated to the Chairman of Council's Charity or a charitable organisation nominated by the Chairman.

(b) Hospitality

2.4 Hospitality is the offer of food, drink, accommodation or entertainment or the opportunity to attend any cultural or sporting event on terms not available to the general public. Common hospitality includes meals, refreshments, and tickets for cultural or sporting events. The general principle is that hospitality should ordinarily be refused other than on a modest scale. Examples of hospitality that, depending on the specific circumstances, it might be appropriate to accept, are set out later in this guidance.

2.5 Offers of complimentary or reduced-price tickets for concerts, the theatre, or sporting events should be treated with caution and accepted only when these are part of the life of the community or where the Council should be seen to be represented. It is important to ensure that there is a proper reason for acceptance of hospitality and it is particularly important to consider how the public, when viewing your Register of Interests might perceive your acceptance of this type of hospitality. The advice of the Monitoring Officer should always be sought before hospitality of this type is accepted. The following are examples of hospitality which it would not be appropriate to accept:

- (a) a holiday or business trip paid for by a business contact of the Council;
- (b) the use of a flat/hotel suite provided by a business contact of the Council;
- (c) paid for corporate invites for evenings out or similar, with representatives from a company or organisation who have dealings with the Council, or who are likely to in the future.

3. GENERAL GUIDANCE ON THE ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

3.1 You are only required to register and declare gifts and hospitality that you have received in your official capacity as a Member of the Council. The following are examples of when you are acting in such official capacity:

- (a) when you conduct the Council's business;
- (b) when you conduct the business of the office of Councillor;
- (c) when you act as a formal representative of the Council on another body.

3.2 In considering any offer of gifts and hospitality, you should always ask yourself, would I have been offered this if I was not a Councillor? If you are in any doubt, it is recommended that you register the offer of gifts and hospitality or speak to the Monitoring Officer. You do not need to register gifts and hospitality which are not related to your role as a Councillor, such as Christmas gifts from your friends and family. However, you should always register a gift or hospitality if it could be perceived as something given to you (or a member of your family) because of your position.

3.3 The registration of gifts or hospitality does not automatically mean that it is appropriate or advisable to accept the gift or hospitality in the first place. The need to consider whether it is appropriate to accept a gift or hospitality always applies, whatever the value of the gift or hospitality.

3.4 You should always treat with extreme caution any offer of a gift, favour or hospitality that is made to you personally in your capacity as a Member of the Council. The person or organisation making the offer may be doing business or seeking to do business with the Council, might be applying to the authority for planning permission or could be involved in some other kind of decision. The appearance of impropriety can be just as damaging to the Council and to you as a Councillor, as actual impropriety. Therefore, a helpful question in deciding whether any gift or hospitality should be accepted, is whether a member of the public knowing the facts, would think that you might be improperly influenced by the gift or hospitality.

3.5 Regardless of whether a gift or hospitality is above or below the value threshold set by the Council, you must first consider whether it is appropriate for you to accept it at all. After you have considered whether it is appropriate for you to accept it, you then need to consider the requirements and guidance in relation to the registration of the gift or hospitality.

3.6 In deciding whether it is proper to accept any gift or hospitality, Councillors should apply the following principles. Even if the gift or hospitality comes within one of the general consents set out below, such an offer should not be accepted if to do so would be in breach of one or more of these principles:

(a) Principle 1 - Never accept a gift or hospitality as an inducement or reward for anything you do as a Councillor

3.7 Councillors must act in the public interest and must not be swayed in the discharge of their duties by the offer, prospect of an offer, or the non-offer of any inducement or reward for discharging those duties in a particular manner.

3.8 The Bribery Act 2010 creates offences of bribing another person and of being bribed. In summary, the offences consist of promising, offering or giving, or, requesting, agreeing to receive or accepting an advantage (financial or otherwise) in circumstances involving the improper performance of a relevant function or activity. A relevant function for the Council's purposes is any function of a public nature, where there is an expectation that the function/activity is carried out in good faith, or an expectation that the function/activity is performed impartially, or where the person performing it is in a position of trust by virtue of performing it. Individuals can be fined or imprisoned, or both, for offences under the Bribery Act 2010.

3.9 The Council's Code of Conduct for Members provides that Councillors must act in the public interest, serving the authority and the whole community, rather than acting in the interests of any particular individual or section of the community, and that it is a breach of the Code improperly to confer any advantage or disadvantage on any person.

(b) Principle 2 - Hospitality should only be accepted if there is a commensurate benefit to the Authority

3.10 The only proper reason for accepting any hospitality is that there is a commensurate benefit for the Council, which would not have been otherwise available. Acceptance can confer an advantage on the authority, such as an opportunity to progress the business of the authority expeditiously through a working lunch, or to canvass the interests of the authority and its area at a meeting. However, acceptance of hospitality for a member's own benefit or advantage, rather than for the benefit to the Council, would be a breach of the Code of Conduct.

(c) Principle 3 – You should only accept gifts in very limited circumstances

3.11 Acceptance of a gift is much less likely to confer such an advantage to the Council, the presumption being that the gift is purely for the member's personal benefit. Acceptance by a Councillor of a gift for their own benefit or advantage, rather than for the benefit to the Authority, would be a breach of the Code of Conduct.

3.12 The only gifts which may be accepted, are listed in Section 4(a) below.

(d) Principle 4 - Never accept a gift or hospitality if acceptance might be open to misinterpretation

3.13 Members must therefore consider whether the acceptance of the gift or hospitality is capable of being interpreted as a sign that they or the Council favours any particular person, company or section of the community or is placing them under any improper obligation to any person or organisation. The gift or hospitality must be refused unless appropriate steps can be taken to ensure that such a misunderstanding does not arise.

3.14 Members must be careful in any of the following circumstances:

- (a) where the Council is going through a competitive procurement process, so as to avoid any indication of favour for a particular tenderer;
 - (b) the determination of planning applications or planning policy, in respect of any person or organisation which stands to gain or lose from the determination; and
 - (c) funding decisions including cases where the authority is determining a grant application.
- (e) Principle 5 - Never accept a gift or hospitality which puts you under an improper obligation**

3.15 It is recognised that some commercial organisations and private individuals see the provision of gifts and hospitality as a means of buying influence. If a gift or hospitality is accepted improperly, it is possible that they may seek to use this fact to persuade to determine an issue in their favour. Equally, if others note that a Councillor has been prepared to accept a gift or hospitality improperly, they may feel that they will no longer be able to secure impartial consideration from the authority.

(f) Principle 6 - Never solicit a gift or hospitality

3.16 Councillors must never solicit or invite an offer of a gift or hospitality in connection with their position as a Councillor unless the acceptance of that gift or hospitality would be permitted under this Guidance. They should also take care to avoid giving any indication that they might be open to such any improper offer.

4. GENERAL CONSENT TO ACCEPT GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

(a) Cases where there is a general consent to accept

4.1 Members may accept gifts and hospitality in the following circumstances:

- (i) civic hospitality provided by another public authority;
- (ii) modest refreshments in connection with any meeting, such as tea, coffee, soft drinks and biscuits;
- (iii) tickets for sporting, cultural and entertainment events which are sponsored by the authority;
- (iv) small gifts of low intrinsic value below £25.00, branded with the name of the company or organisation making the gift, such as pens, pencils, mouse pads, calendars and diaries. (Note: a Councillor should take care not to display any such branded items when this might be taken as an indication of favour to a particular supplier or contractor, for example in the course of a procurement exercise);
- (v) a modest alcoholic or soft drink on the occasion of an accidental social meeting, such as a pint of beer from an employee of a contractor or party with whom a Councillor has done business on behalf of the Authority who is met accidentally in a public house, cafe or bar. (Note: a Councillor should make reasonable efforts to return the offer where this is practicable);
- (vi) a modest working lunch not exceeding £15.00 a head in the course of a meeting in the offices with any organisation or individual with whom the authority has an existing business connection in order to facilitate the conduct of business. (Note: Councillors should not make such arrangements themselves, but request officers to settle the detailed arrangements, and officers are under instruction, when arranging any such meeting, to make it clear to the other party that such a lunch must not exceed a value of £15.00 per person);

- (vii) modest souvenir gifts with a value below £25.00 from another Council or similar public body during a visit;
- (viii) hospitality received in the course of an external visit or meeting which has been duly authorised by the authority. (Note: Councillors should request officers to settle the detailed arrangements, with officers under an instruction to make it clear that any such hospitality is to be commensurate with the occasion; and
- (ix) other unsolicited gifts, where it is impracticable to return them to the person or organisation making the gift, provided that the Councillor deals with the gift strictly in accordance with the procedure set out in (b) below.

(b) Cases where special consent to accept can be obtained

- 4.2 If a member wishes to accept any gift or hospitality, which is in accordance with the General Principles set out in Section 3 of this guidance, but is not within any of the general consents set out at paragraph 4.1 above, they may only do so if they have previously obtained specific consent in accordance with the following procedure.
- 4.3 The Councillor must make an application in writing to the Monitoring Officer, setting out full details of the offer and must not accept the gift or hospitality until they have received the appropriate consent.
- 4.4 The Monitoring Officer will enter details of any approval in a register which will be available for public inspection on the occasion of the public inspection of the authority's accounts for the relevant year. This does not however relieve the Councillor of the obligation to register the receipt of gifts and hospitality in accordance with Section 5 of this guidance.
- 4.5 You must always consider whether it is appropriate to accept a gift or hospitality, regardless of the value. While gifts and hospitality with an estimated value of above £50.00 must be registered, you may wish to declare the receipt of gifts and hospitality where the value is under this amount. While it may be appropriate to accept a token gift or gift of low value on one occasion, it is recommended that you should refuse repeated gifts from the same source, even if these are individually not of a significant value.

What if I do not know the value of a gift or hospitality?

- 4.6 The general rule is, if in doubt as to the value of a gift or hospitality, you should register it, as a matter of good practice and in accordance with the principles of openness and accountability in public life. You may have to estimate how much a gift or hospitality is worth, by considering how much you reasonably think it would cost a member of the public to buy the gift or provide the hospitality in question.

What do I need to do if I have declined a gift or hospitality?

- 4.7 It is recommended that you should register any offer of a gift or hospitality which you have declined, as this helps to protect both your position and that of the Council.

5. REGISTRATION OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

- 5.1 The receipt of any gift or hospitality with an estimated value of £50.00 or more that you have received in connection with your official duties as a Member must be registered in writing with the Monitoring Officer within 28 days.
- 5.2 Any such registration must be notified to the Monitoring Officer as an amendment to your Register of Interests declaration. It is best to get in the habit of registering your

personal interests, including the receipt of gifts and hospitality, as soon as possible. Only gifts and hospitality in connection with official duties of councillors should be registered.

- 5.3 The appropriate Register of Interests declaration form can be obtained from the Democratic Services Manager, who administers the Register of Interests on behalf of the Monitoring Officer. The information contained within your form will be published on the Council's website as part of your Register of Interests, which is open to public inspection.
- 5.4 If you are dealing with any Council business, (for example, you are part of a Council meeting and you have a personal interest in that business, because it relates to or is likely to affect the interests of any person from whom you have received a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £50.00 and you have not already declared that gift/hospitality to the Monitoring Officer on your Register of Interests, you must do so within 28 days. You should also declare your interest to the meeting.
- 5.5 Any gift or hospitality that is registered in accordance with the above requirements will automatically constitute a personal interest in any matter considered by the Council, which is likely to affect the person who gave the gift or hospitality. The personal interest must be declared at all meetings and consideration given to whether the interest is a prejudicial one. After a period of two years from the date of receipt of the gift or hospitality, the duty to disclose ceases.
- 5.6 If the value of the gift or hospitality is less than £50.00, but you are concerned that its acceptance might be misinterpreted, particularly where it has been offered a contractor or tenderer, you may make a voluntary declaration in the same manner to ensure that there is nothing secret or underhand about the gift or hospitality.

6. GIFTS TO THE COUNCIL RATHER THAN A COUNCILLOR

- 6.1 Councillors should not solicit any gift on behalf of the authority except where it has formally identified the opportunity for participation by an external party, for example in relation to sponsorship of public musical and theatrical performances and developers' contributions under Section 106 Agreements.
- 6.2 If Councillors receive such offers on behalf of the authority, they must first consider whether it is appropriate for it to accept and report the offer to the Monitoring Officer together with their recommendation. The Monitoring Officer will then write to the person or organisation making the offer, to record the acceptance or non-acceptance of the gift, record the gift for audit purposes and ensure that the gift is properly applied for the benefit of the authority. If a Councillor has any concerns about the motives of the person or organisation making the offer, or whether it would be proper for the authority to accept the gift, they should consult the Monitoring Officer directly.

7. MONITORING OFFICER

- 7.1 The Monitoring Officer can be contacted at:

monitoringofficer@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

Report to Constitution Working Group

Date of meeting: 26 June 2019



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Subject: Constitution - Member Champions Protocol

Officer contact for further information: S. Tautz (01992) 564180

Democratic Services Officer: V. Messenger (01992) 564265

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

That a report be made to the Council, recommending the adoption of the proposed Member Champions Protocol.

1. The Council has on occasion, designated Member 'Champions' to act as an advocate or spokesperson for a specific area of its business and activities and to encourage communication and positive action in relation to specific areas of interest.
2. At its meeting on 9 May 2019, the Appointments Panel requested that arrangements for the ongoing appointment of Member Champions and the development of an appropriate protocol for the appointment and role of champions, be referred to the Constitution Working Group for consideration.
3. A draft Member Champions protocol is therefore attached as an appendix to this report. The draft protocol is based to a significant extent on a template protocol that appears to be in use by a number of other local authorities.
4. The Working Group is requested to consider the draft protocol and to recommend its adoption to the Council.

Resource Implications:

The recommendations of this report seek to ensure that the Council's Constitution remains fit for purpose.

Legal and Governance Implications:

The Council's Constitution sets out procedures and rules for the operation of its functions and responsibilities.

Safer, Cleaner, Greener Implications:

There are no implications arising from the recommendations of this report in respect of the Council's commitment to the Climate Local Agreement, the corporate Safer, Cleaner, Greener initiative, or any crime and disorder issues within the district.

Consultation Undertaken:

The draft Member Champions protocol has been subject to consultation with the Monitoring Officer.

Background Papers:

None

Risk Management:

The Council's Constitution sets out procedures and rules for the operation of its functions and responsibilities. The Member Champions protocol will be incorporated within the Constitution, once it has been adopted by the Council.

Equality:

There are no equality implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

MEMBER CHAMPIONS PROTOCOL

1. INTRODUCTION

Member Champions act as an advocate or spokesperson for a specific area of the Council's business and activities. The main responsibility of each Member Champion is to encourage communication and positive action over the issue they represent.

Member Champions have evolved in the Council as a result of:

- legislation and national initiatives in relation to the development of services, and
- initiatives undertaken by the Council in wishing to focus member activity on certain aspects of the Council's business and functions.

2. APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER CHAMPIONS

Member Champions are appointed by the Council, except where the 'champion' role is identified as part of an Executive function. Each political group will be made aware of proposals to appoint Member Champions and given the opportunity to submit nominations.

Member Champions will be appointed at the annual Council meeting each year. Champions will remain in position (assuming they remain an elected Councillor) until a new appointment is made.

Although there is no legal requirement to apply the political balance rules to the appointments, there will be an expectation that the roles will normally be shared proportionately to reflect the political balance of the Council. However, any appointment should have due regard to the suitability for the role and relevant national and local guidance.

A Member Champion may be removed from office at any time by resolution of the Council (in the case a Council function), or by the Leader (in the case of an executive function). A Member Champion may resign from office by giving written notice to the Chief Executive.

3. ROLE OF MEMBER CHAMPIONS

The role of a Member Champion is to:

- promote their area of interest both within and outside the Council;
- contribute to the review and development of policies pertaining to the area of interest;
- challenge and question the Council, the Leader and Cabinet Members on issues affecting their area of responsibility;
- attend meetings of the Council, its Committees and the Cabinet and speak on issues (when permitted by the Chairman) relevant to their area of responsibility;
- act as a catalyst for change and improvement in service delivery;
- monitor the Cabinet Forward Plan and seek information from the Leader, Cabinet Members and officers about forthcoming business and exert influence on behalf of the interest;
- monitor overview and scrutiny work programmes, work plans and activity and seek information and offer views on relevant review subjects and exert influence on behalf

S. Tautz (June 2019)

of the interest;

- keep other Councillors up-to-date with activities relevant to the area of interest;
- network with member champions from other local authorities with the same interest to keep up-to-date with current developments;
- provide positive support, and on occasions, constructive challenge to officers in driving forward the Council's agenda on relevant issues; and
- act as the Council's representative on relevant external bodies where appointed to by the Council.

4. THE PARAMETERS OF THE MEMBER CHAMPION ROLE

All Member Champions must act reasonably in their role and recognise and work effectively within the political management and working arrangements adopted by the Council.

A Member Champion cannot make decisions (unless they otherwise have executive responsibilities) and must not commit the Council in any way or in a manner that could be interpreted as being contrary to established policy and practice. They may, however, confirm a position as stated in a published policy.

Member Champions will be consulted on any press release relevant to their particular area of interest. A Member Champion may however only be a recognised media contact with the prior approval of the Leader. In all other circumstances, the Champion must make it clear when communicating with the media that he/she is speaking on behalf of a political group (if affiliated to a group) or in a personal capacity and not as the Council's Champion.

5. LEADER AND CABINET - WORKING RELATIONSHIP

The Leader and members of the Cabinet will normally:

- acknowledge the right of Member Champions to be consulted on matters relating to their area of interest;
- take full account of any views offered by Member Champions prior to any decision taken on matters within their area of interest;
- co-operate with Member Champions in the formulation of action plans agreed with the relevant Service Director; and
- consider nominating the relevant Member Champion to represent the Council at a relevant conference/seminar on the subject matter of the champion's interest.

6. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY - WORKING RELATIONSHIP

Overview and Scrutiny will normally:

- acknowledge the right of Member Champions to be consulted and to participate in discussions on matters relating to their interest;
- ensure there is appropriate engagement or consultation with Member Champions in the formulation of policy;
- ensure Member Champions are specifically invited to be contributors to any reviews that have a direct bearing on their interest; and
- ensure an opportunity is provided for Member Champions to contribute or to comment on relevant work programmes.

S. Tautz (June 2019)

7. OFFICER SUPPORT TO MEMBER CHAMPIONS

Member Champions play an important role in promoting their area of interest on behalf of the Council. In recognition of the importance of the respective roles of Member Champions, officer support will be provided at a senior level.

Each Member Champion will be advised by an appropriate Service Director, who will meet with the relevant Member Champion on a regular basis to discuss action plans, current activities, national developments or any other matters relating to the interest being championed.

The relevant Service Director will give reasonable support to the Member Champion, including the provision of Council information, government communications and national publications within their remit.

8. ACCOUNTABILITY

At the beginning of each municipal year, each Member Champion shall agree a programme of activity, taking into account the Council's priorities, with the relevant Portfolio Holder and Service Director.

Each Member Champion will, with the assistance of the relevant Service Director, prepare an annual report for submission to Council (in the case of a Council function) and the Cabinet (in the case of an executive function) setting out the actions taken during the course of the year. The main measure of performance will be through the annual report.

9. TRAINING

All Member Champions will be able to attend appropriate training courses contained in the Council's Member Training Programme.

The attendance of Member Champions at conferences and seminars relevant to their roles will be in accordance with requirements of the Council's Members' Allowances Scheme.

10. ALLOWANCES

Member Champions will not be entitled to receive a Special Responsibility Allowance for carrying out their role.

11. REVIEW OF PROTOCOL

This protocol will be reviewed as required by the Constitution Working Group.

S. Tautz (June 2019)

This page is intentionally left blank

Report to Constitution Working Group

Date of meeting: 26 June 2019



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Subject: Paperless Working & Digital Roll-Out (Councillor S. Kane (Customer Services Portfolio Holder))

Officer contact for further information: S. Tautz (01992) 564180

Democratic Services Officer: V. Messenger (01992) 564265

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) That the Working Group note current progress with regard to the proposed move to paperless working in respect of the publication and distribution of the Council's committee agenda and minutes etc.;**
 - (2) That a report be made to the Council recommending that:**
 - (a) in order to complete the roll-out of mobile devices and appropriate training for all members of the Council, the general cessation of the publication and distribution of committee agenda and minutes etc. in hard copy, take effect from 30 August 2019; and**
 - (b) that, subject to the receipt of appropriate consent from members of the Council to the publication and distribution of committee agenda and minutes etc. by purely electronic means, such arrangements commence with effect from 2 September 2019; and**
 - (c) that, until the commencement of arrangements for the publication and distribution of committee agenda and minutes etc. to members by purely electronic means, such publication and distribution continue to be made concurrently in both hard-copy and electronic forms; and**
 - (3) That pursuant to Recommendations 2(a), (b) and (c) above, the Monitoring Officer be authorised to make any necessary revisions to the Council's Constitution to give effect to the publication and distribution of committee agenda and minutes etc. by purely electronic means, from 2 September 2019.**
1. In light of ongoing financial pressures, the Council continues to look at identifying ways of doing more with less. Part of the Council's strategy to achieve this is through the implementation of smarter ways of working in a digital age. A number of Councils have completed a transition to paperless meetings over recent years and it is anticipated that this will become standard practice in local government.
 2. Across a wide number of service areas, the Council is increasingly encouraging residents to access services electronically. The opportunity to move to paperless meetings provides members with an opportunity to lead by example in this regard and demonstrate that they are prepared to embrace new forms of technology to deliver savings, embrace more efficient working practices and reduce the Council's carbon footprint.

3. Each year the Council publishes around 20,000 pages of agendas, minutes and reports. The cost of providing each paper agenda to all members, based on an average number of meetings and report pages, has previously been estimated at over £5.00 per agenda. The frequency of Council and committee meetings and the size of agenda can vary significantly and, with the addition of ad-hoc and extraordinary meetings, sub-committees and Working Groups etc., it is difficult to project a definitive cost saving that paperless meetings would offer. However, it is considered that the paperless initiative would deliver cost savings. The removal of the need to print, envelope and process hard-copy agenda papers for messenger or postal distribution will result in service efficiencies that can be reallocated to other areas.
4. The Council has published its committee agenda and minutes online for many years using the Modern.Gov committee management system, through the publication of agenda and minutes to the Council's website and the issue of relevant hyperlinks to members by electronic mail.
5. In 2015, the concept of 'paperless' committee meetings was encouraged by the then Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government through the introduction of new legislation that enabled local authorities to hold entirely paperless committee meetings and to issue the agenda (or summons) to meetings, to an email address specified by each member. The Local Government (Electronic Communications) Order 2015 came into force in January 2015, which modified provisions in Schedule 12 to the Local Government Act 1972 for the purpose of enabling and facilitating the use of electronic communications in the sending of meeting summonses to members of the Council. However, the Order provided that members may only receive summonses electronically where they consent to agenda being transmitted by email and that they may at any time withdraw their consent for purely electronic publication.
6. In addition to the likely significant cost savings, the benefits of holding paperless meetings include a reduction in the Council's carbon footprint, improved member access to data at any time, improved data security and the saving of time and resources (printing, paper and production costs). Since the introduction of the 2015 Order, all members have therefore been regularly encouraged to consent to the receipt of agenda for meetings by electronic means wherever possible, as part of the incremental adoption of a paperless approach to meetings. As part of this approach, members have been able to choose to receive committee papers electronically, or remain with traditional paper copies (or a combination of both). For those agendas that members have chosen to receive electronically, no physical copy of the documents have since been provided.
7. The Modern.Gov app for the committee management system allows agenda, minutes and reports etc. to be downloaded to mobile devices and enables members to access other relevant information during meetings, thereby allowing them to more effectively and efficiently undertake duties. The Modern.Gov app also has a range of annotation tools to allow members and officers to make notes and highlight sections of agenda and reports etc. as required. The app allows anyone to download publicly available meeting papers, which saves the Council time and money when coordinating meetings and reduces the need to print and distribute significant volumes of hard-copy documentation.
8. Through the Modern.Gov app, members are able to access meeting papers from any place, at any time to suit their personal commitments. The app can be set to retain twelve months' worth of committee papers which can be accessed and referred to at any time (including during meetings), improving access to information. The app can be configured to provide members with access to any Council meeting papers they wish to receive, not just for those committees etc. that they are a member of.
9. The Modern.Gov app also allows the authority to push Private or Restricted (Exempt Information) papers securely only to those members of a committee that should have

access to the information. This also saves the Council time and money, but has the added benefit of ensuring that only the people who should see the papers have access to them. This 'restricted' version of the app allows members to access exempt or non-public Committee papers on their device through the Council's internal network. The security settings within the Modern.Gov app allow for all common types of information to be published securely, safeguarding sensitive documents and applying where necessary the exemption criteria relevant to Access to Information legislation.

10. Regular training in the use of the Modern.Gov app has been provided for members as part of the annual Member Development Programme, since 2016. Since the introduction of the power to hold paperless meetings, a 'dual running' arrangement has been in place for most members, whereby they have received paper copies of agenda packs for meetings alongside an electronic copy. It is anticipated that this arrangement has helped to build member confidence in paperless arrangements and the use of the Modern.Gov app, over the last few years.
11. It is recognised that the introduction of paperless working would increase the effectiveness of members by enabling information to be accessed more quickly, alongside the generation of ongoing cost savings. The Customer Services Portfolio Holders for 2018/19 and 2019/20 have therefore been keen to accelerate the roll-out of paperless working arrangements, through the issue of suitable mobile devices to all members of the Council during the early part of the current municipal year. Such aspiration has been supported by the recent launch of an enhanced version of the Modern.Gov app, which brings significant additional functionality to the concept of paperless working.
12. A project was therefore initiated early in 2019, to provide members with appropriate mobile devices (iPad Pro), pre-configured with the new version of the Modern.Gov app, to assist them in undertaking their official duties. Alongside this roll-out of mobile devices, the Council also adopted a standardised approach to the issue of '@eppingforestdc.gov.uk' domain email accounts for all members, to address concerns around the security of personal data regulated by the General Data Protection Regulation, which had been identified as part of an Internal Audit assessment undertaken during 2018. The mobile devices issued to members were also pre-configured with the new email addresses.
13. It is likely that a move to paperless meetings would result in the upskilling of members' IT skills. Going paperless provides an incentive to embrace new technologies and, at a time when most councils are adopting a 'digital first' approach for their communities, it will be beneficial for members to have an understanding of technology and how it can transform service delivery.
14. At the time of the preparation of this report, nearly all members have been supplied with a mobile device for the use of the Modern.Gov app and the management of official email. Alongside the completion of the roll-out, the Customer Services Portfolio Holder, in liaison with the Leader of the Council and the Service Director (Customer Services), identified that the phasing-out of the hard-copy publication and distribution of agenda, should commence with effect from the meeting of the Cabinet to be held on 13 June 2019.
15. The roll-out of the mobile devices commenced in May 2019 to all members that formally gave consent to the receipt of published committee agenda and minutes etc. by email, in accordance with the provisions of the 2015 Order. However, a small number of members have declined the offer of a mobile device and at least one member that originally accepted the offer of a device, has since indicated a wish to withdraw their consent for the electronic receipt of committee agenda etc. Although some members initially experienced issues with the functionality of the devices supplied, these have been addressed by the Service Director (ICT and Business Support).

16. The Portfolio Holder has also recognised that the introduction of paperless working would mean a fundamental change to the way in which members access information and acknowledges that training and support will need to be provided to all members to assist with the transition to the new way of working. As some Members will adapt more quickly than others to a transition to paperless meetings, the level of support provided will be critical.
17. It is intended that (at least initially), technical support for the mobile devices issued to members will be provided at committee meetings by the Service Director (ICT and Business Support). In addition, support for members in the use of the Modern.Gov app will be provided by the Democratic Services Manager and infrastructure facilities in the Council Chamber have been enhanced to provide power supplies to each seating position. The roll-out of purely electronic publication of committee agenda and minutes etc. is not limited just to members of the Council and such arrangements are also being applied to officer and other internal meetings in the Council.
18. The Customer Services Portfolio Holder has recently considered a number of representations that have been made by members with regard to the paperless working initiative. In order that such matters can be fully addressed, the Portfolio Holder has agreed that the cessation of the publication and distribution of committee etc. agenda in hard copy, be delayed to 30 August 2019. Some hard-copy publication of agenda etc. will continue after this time, to address requirements for agenda to be available for public inspection at the Civic Offices and to enable copies of reports to be available to public attendees at meetings.
19. In the meantime, the full publication of all committee agenda and minutes etc. in hard-copy will continue concurrently with the existing arrangements for electronic publication, alongside the completion of the roll-out of mobile devices and the provision of appropriate member training. The Portfolio Holder intends that, subject to the receipt of appropriate consent from members of the Council, the publication and distribution of committee agenda and minutes etc. by purely electronic means and the Council-wide transition to paperless working, will now commence with effect from 2 September 2019.
20. The proposed delay in the move to full paperless working arrangements will not affect the issue of Epping Forest District Council domain email accounts for all members, which will continue over the coming months.