

# **Report to Overview and Scrutiny**

**Date of Meeting: 6 October 2005**



**Portfolio:** People First

**Subject:** Constitutional Affairs Standing Panel - Work Programme

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## **Recommendations:**

**(1) To agree the following changes to the Work Programme for the Constitutional Affairs Standing Panel:**

**(a) Council Meetings - Review of Future Role**

**That the deadline for submission of this report be put back to April 2006.**

**(b) Relationships with External Organisations and Partnerships**

**That the deadline for submission of this report to Council be deferred to December 2005.**

**(c) Protocol and the Use of Services by Members/Contract Standing Orders Review**

**That the deadline for submission of a new protocol be deferred to the December 2005 meeting of the Council.**

**(2) To note that the Protocol on Member Services and the Review of Contract Standing Orders will be submitted to the next meeting of the Standing Panel on 3 November 2005 for consideration.**

**(3) To consider the addition to the Work Programme for the current year of a response to a new Electoral Commission consultation paper on periodic electoral reviews; and**

**(4) To note that there have been no further developments in relation to the review of parliamentary constituencies, on the question of future electoral pilots and new arrangements for postal voting at the present time but that these should remain in the Work Programme for consideration later in the year.**

## Report

1. (Councillor R Morgan) This report details the current position concerning the Constitutional Affairs Panel's Work Programme. Other items in the work programme are subject of reports in this agenda, namely the review of the May 2005 Elections and the Protocol on external organisations and partnerships. The remaining items in the Work Programme are set out in the recommendations at the commencement of this report. In summary, the review of the future role of Council meetings is likely to take longer than originally anticipated as the Standing Panel are interested to research best practice elsewhere in local authorities. It is likely that this will not be completed until April 2006. The Contract Standing Orders review is scheduled to be submitted to the next meeting of the Panel in early November as is the new Protocol being prepared by the Standards Committee which will be submitted to this Panel for consultation purposes. We are therefore recommending changes in the report deadlines for these items.
2. Our recommendations also new issues on elections which have emerged recently. This relates to periodic electoral reviews and relates to an Electoral Commission consultation document with a very tight deadline for responses. A periodic electoral review is the process by which the number of Councillors and electorate ratios are with electors. The Electoral Commission is proposing new arrangements for the conduct of these reviews. The Committee may wish this Panel to undertake a review of the proposals and submit observations on behalf of the Council. Alternatively, members could determine not to respond.
3. We recommend accordingly.