

Report to the Council

Committee: Audit and Governance Committee.

Date: 30 October 2007.

Chairman: Councillor J Knapman.

Item: 10

Recommending:

(1) That Section (11) of the Terms of Reference for the Audit and Governance Committee, 'Decision Making', be amended to read as:

"Only the Councillors and Co-opted Members serving on the committee shall be entitled to vote.

All members of the Committee shall be entitled to all documents, advice and facilities relevant to their membership of the Committee, regardless of their status as either a Councillor or Co-opted Member."

Report:

1. The current Terms of Reference for the Audit and Governance Committee was agreed by the Council at its meeting on 20 February 2007. Section (11) dealt with matters of decision-making, and it was agreed by the Council that:

"Only the Councillors serving on the Committee shall be entitled to vote.

Co-opted Members shall not be entitled to vote but, in all other respects, shall be entitled to all documents, advice and facilities relevant to their membership of the Committee."

2. At the last meeting, held on 13 September 2007, the Committee considered whether the Co-opted Members should be entitled to vote at its meetings. The Committee felt that it would not be perceived as a truly independent body unless the Co-opted Members were given the same status as the Councillors serving on the Committee (Minute 15 refers).
3. Thus the Committee resolved that, provided that non-elected members were permitted to vote at the Council's Committee meetings, the Committee's Terms of Reference should be amended at the next available Council meeting to entitle the Co-opted Members to vote at future meetings of the Audit and Governance Committee.
4. The Assistant to the Chief Executive has subsequently confirmed that there is no such prohibition on voting by non-elected members of the Council's Committees, and consequently, the Audit and Governance Committee's recommendation stands referred to the Council.