
THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL**MINUTES**

Of a virtual meeting of the Constitution Sub-Committee on Wednesday, 6 September 2023 from 7.00 – 9.45 pm

Present: Councillors

1. Stephen Giles-Medhurst (Chair)
2. Sarah Nelmes (Vice Chair)
3. Oliver Cooper
4. Stephen Cox
5. Tony Humphreys
6. Chris Lloyd
7. Philip Hearn (substitute for Cllr Debbie Morris)
8. Ciaran Reed
9. Chris Whately-Smith

Officers in Attendance:

Jo Wagstaffe, Chief Executive
Stephen Rix, Associate Director Legal & Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer)
Sarah Haythorpe, Principal Committee Manager

Also in Attendance:

Hoey Ainscough Associates Ltd.

Miranda Carruthers-Watt
Paul Hoey

1. APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIR OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE

Councillor Sarah Nelmes nominated Councillor Giles-Medhurst for the Chair of the Sub-Committee. Councillor Chris Lloyd seconded the nomination.

As there were no other nominations, Councillor Giles-Medhurst was duly elected Chair of the Sub-Committee for the Local Government Year 2023/24.

2. APPOINTMENT OF THE VICE-CHAIR OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE

The Chair nominated Councillor Sarah Nelmes for Vice Chair of the Sub-Committee. Councillor Chris Lloyd seconded the nomination.

As there were no other nominations, Councillor Nelmes was duly elected Vice Chair of the Sub-Committee for the Local Government Year 2023/24.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Debbie Morris who was substituted by Councillor Philip Hearn.

4. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of 7 March 2023 were approved and the Chair authorised to sign them as a correct record.

5. NOTICE OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Sarah Haythorpe, Principal Committee Manager, notified the Sub-Committee that an additional document had been circulated after publication of the agenda. The document was an addendum to Appendix 5: Part 4 – Rules of Procedure and related to the Standards Complaints Procedure.

The Chair stated that, as the addendum formed part of the Procedure Rules that were under consideration at this evening's meeting, he would **AGREE** to the Sub-Committee considering the late item as an urgent item.

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

7. AMENDMENTS TO THE COUNCIL CONSTITUTION

The Chair stated that Ms Miranda Carruthers-Watt, Consultant, on behalf of the Council, had been working on changes to the Council's constitution. Accordingly, he proposed that she introduce the overarching report and the reasons for the review before the Sub-Committee considered the various appendices that were before the Sub-Committee for consideration.

Ms Carruthers-Watt introduced the report, noting that this was the final version of the amended Constitution for the Sub-Committee's consideration. In preparing the document, the Leader, Deputy Leader, Chief Executive, and the Council's previous and current Monitoring Officer had been consulted.

As well as stylistic changes that had been made, Ms Carruthers-Watt stated that there had been some changes to the Scheme of Delegation to reflect the restructuring of the Council's Senior Leadership Team which had been approved at the meeting of Annual Council in May 2023. There had also been some changes to the Rules of Procedure in relation to meetings to bring them in line with "Best Practice"; more detailed definitions of the roles of Committee Chairs and Lead Members; and changes to the Standards framework to bring it in line with the Local Government Association's guidance on Best Practice. In addition, a section entitled "General Principles on Delegation to Officers" had been included to cover sub-delegations by senior officers.

Regarding the Rules of Procedure, the proposed changes had been made to reflect "Best Practice" and the efficient and effective running of meetings, including amendments which had been made with the intention of striking a better

balance between the time allowed for Questions and the time allowed for Substantive Business, including the use of time limits.

Part 2 of the Constitution, set out the roles of Full Council, Committees, and Lead Members. Where, an authority, like Three Rivers District Council, operated a Committee system, it was not possible to delegate matters to individual Members. However, Three Rivers District Council designated certain responsibilities to Lead Members. Therefore, Articles 6 and 7 of the Constitution had been redrafted to make clear the respective roles of Committees, Chairs, and Lead Members, and how decisions were made.

Article 9 of Part 2 was a new framework for handling complaints against Members which was in accordance with the Local Government Association (LGA) guidelines, and which gave the Monitoring Officer a greater deal of autonomy in dealing with matters at an early stage while maintaining a Panel of Members who would make a final determination on any possible breach of the Council's Code of Conduct.

It was proposed that the Sub-Committee consider the new Constitution with a view to recommending that the revised Constitution be referred to the Policy and Resources Committee for consideration prior to adoption by Full Council.

The Chair then invited Mr Stephen Rix, as the Monitoring Officer, for any comments he might wish to make on Ms Carruthers-Watt's presentation. Mr Rix stated that the only thing he wished to draw to the attention of the Sub-Committee was in relation to the Standards Framework, noting that Part 2, Article 9 provided a summary of the process, the detailed process being set out in an addendum to Appendix 5.

The Chair then invited the Members of the Sub-Committee to comment on the amendments to the Constitution that were before them. In the subsequent discussion, the following points were raised.

In response to concerns by Members that there were some inconsistencies in the tracked changes in the documents that were before them, the Chair proposed, and it was **AGREED** that, in going through the proposed amendments to the Constitution, that Ms Carruthers-Watt would address the tracked changes that were in the documents before Members, and that she would refer to other proposed changes in the documents that may not have been highlighted by way of tracked changes.

The Sub-Committee then considered the proposed changes to the Constitution, as follows.

APPENDIX 2

Part 1: Summary and Explanation

The Chair noted that the principal changes were in relation to the structure of the Council, including changes to the names of Council Committees. In the subsequent discussion, the following points were raised.

- a) Regarding “Citizens’ Rights”, it was proposed that this should be amended to reflect the fact that all citizens did not hold this right e.g. convicts.

It was **AGREED** that, for the present, the terminology remain unchanged.

In response to concerns about changes to the Council’s Constitution proposed by the Sub-Committee being made apparent by way of tracked changes, it was **AGREED** that the existing tracked changes and any subsequent tracked changes would be updated to provide a contemporary document containing all the changes proposed and agreed by the Sub-Committee

- b) Regarding the tracked change reference under the subheading “Policy and Resources Committee, Service Committees and other Decision-Making Committees” stating “*The full Council structure is provided in Appendix 1 to the summary*”, it was noted that Council officers made this change.

Chair stated that the key issue was that, where Committees were referred to in this Part of the Constitution, it was essential that the Constitution detailed all the responsibilities of the various Committees. Rather than go through the responsibilities of each Council Committee, the Chair proposed that, if any Member of the Sub-Committee had any concerns in this regard, that they contact Mr Rix to alert him about their concerns.

APPENDIX 3

Part 2: Articles of the Constitution

Ms Carruthers-Watt stated that certain provisions within the Constitution had been removed as they were already provided for in other recognised provisions.

Article 1 – The Constitution

Paragraph 1.01

Ms Carruthers-Watt noted that the last sentence in Paragraph 1.01, which stated: “*The Leader of the Council can attend all the Service Committees as of right but has no vote (not being a Member of those Committees).*”

had been removed as it was otiose.

The Chair proposed that this provision should be retained to avoid any uncertainty as to the right of the Leader of the Council to attend meetings.

Ms Carruthers-Watt stated that it had been proposed to take out this provision as there was a general right for any Member of the Council to attend any meeting of the Council.

After discussion, it was **AGREED** to retain the last sentence of Paragraph 1.01, suitably amended, if necessary, to reflect the position at Law.

Paragraph 1.04: Purpose of the Constitution

Ms Carruthers-Watt noted that there had been a change to this Paragraph in that the following words had been removed from the Paragraph: *“The Council exists to serve the people who live and work in the district of Three Rivers”*.

This sentence had been removed as it did not reflect the fact that people visited the District for any number of reasons and not simply because they lived or worked in the District.

Paragraph 1.05: Interpretation and Review of the Constitution

Ms Carruthers-Watt noted that the language had changed in that it had been simplified.

In response to a Member’s concerns about the legal implications of the revised wording, it was proposed that the Council’s Monitoring Officer would alert any Members who might be acting ultra vires.

Article 2 – Members of the Council

Paragraph 2.01: Composition and Eligibility

Regarding boundary changes and/or any other changes that might affect the number of Members on the Council, it would be for the Council’s Monitoring Officer to make an administrative amendment to the Council’s Constitution.

Paragraph 2.02: Election and Terms of Councillors

Ms Carruthers-Watt stated that this Paragraph had been simplified. The Chair suggested, and it was **AGREED** that, as an amendment, the following words be added to this provision: “... unless otherwise determined by Parliament”.

Paragraph 2.03: Roles and Functions of All Councillors

Ms Carruthers-Watt noted that, in this section, that there were a few grammatical errors that would be corrected.

In addition, under Paragraph (b) Rights and Duties, there was an amendment regarding referrals to the Monitoring Officer.

Paragraph 2.04: Conduct

There were no proposed changes to this Paragraph.

Paragraph 2.04: Allowances

There were no proposed changes to this Paragraph.

Article 3 – Citizens and the Council

Ms Carruthers-Watt noted that, other than a consequential change to the Paragraph numbering in this Article, there were no significant amendments to Article 3.

Article 4 – The Full Council

Ms Carruthers-Watt stated that the provisions of the Council's current Constitution had been amended to reflect the status of Full Council and its decision-making powers and the decision-making powers of the Council's Committees. It was noted that this was a change in emphasis and language rather than a substantive amendment to the existing wording of the Council's Constitution.

Paragraph 4.01 – Meanings

- a) Policy Framework: Ms Carruthers-Watt stated that this Paragraph had been added by way of exposition of the meaning and contents of the Council's Constitution.
- b) It was noted that "*Housing and Homelessness Strategy*" had been added to the bullet point list under the subheading Policy Framework.

Paragraph 4.02 – Council Meetings – Functions

The Chair noted that there had been considerable reworking of this Paragraph. Therefore, there should be a side-by-side copy of the original and the amended document to highlight the changes.

Ms Carruthers-Watt stated that many of the Council's functions listed under this provision were catered for by various statutory provisions and, therefore, there was no need to repeat these provisions in the Council's Constitution.

It was proposed that it would be helpful to retain the background information to the various rules and regulations in the Constitution if only to inform Councillors and others of the background and statutory provisions that underpinned the various provisions set out in the Council's Constitution.

The Chair stated that, to avoid any confusion on the part of the public, it had to be made clear which matters were reserved only for Full Council.

Regarding powers associated with carrying out Council functions, it was noted that some functions, powers, and titles had changed, and this had to be reflected in the revised Constitution. It was also noted that the Constitution referred to functions that were not Council functions, including electoral matters and the functions of the District.

It was proposed that, if there were to be substantive changes to matters that were delegated, then it was necessary to make clear which matters were reserved for Full Council. The Chair proposed that a more detailed version of Paragraph 4.02 was required to ensure that it was clear which functions were reserved to Full Council whether it be an ordinary or Annual meeting of Council.

The Chair proposed, and it was **AGREED** that, as the section required significant additional work to reflect changes to Powers, Functions and Titles, including matters reserved to Full Council and Annual Council, that a revised draft,

incorporating the current Paragraphs 4.02 and 4.03 of the Constitution, be submitted to the Sub-Committee for consideration.

Paragraph 4.04 – Responsibility for Functions

Ms Carruthers-Watt noted that the notable change in the section related to the dismissal, in accordance with regulatory provisions, of the following statutory officers: the Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer and the Director of Finance. Accordingly, these changes had to be highlighted.

In response to a question by Councillor Cox, Ms Carruthers-Watt stated that Section 28(7) (sic) of the Localism Act 2011 required the appointment of independent persons to any Panel appointed to consider the dismissal of a statutory officer.

Article 5 – Chairing the Council

Ms Carruthers-Watt noted that the proposed changes entailed a simplification of the language used.

Paragraph 5.01 – Role and Function of the Chair

Regarding the points system used at Three Rivers District Council for the election of the Chairman of the Council, Ms Carruthers-Watt stated that that she did not believe there was any reference in the Constitution to the points system and that, in her view, it was not necessary to refer to this in the Constitution.

[Sarah Haythorpe noted that the points system was referred to in the Appendices to Part 2 Articles of the Constitution under the heading “Election of Chairman of the Council – Method of Election”].

The Chair proposed, and it was **AGREED** that –

- a) There should be a reference to the points system for electing the Chair of the Council; and
- b) That there should be a hyperlink to the relevant appendix setting out the points system.

Article 6 – Policy and Resources Committee

Ms Carruthers-Watt stated that the proposed changes were at the behest of Stephen Rix and, therefore, she would defer to Mr Rix regarding the changes.

As there were no comments from Members of the Sub-Committee, the Chair proposed, and it was **AGREED**, that Members of the Sub-Committee refer any questions they might have on this section to Mr Rix.

Article 7 – Service Committees

Paragraph 7.05 – Membership

Ms Carruthers-Watt noted there was an amendment in respect of Lead Members and this change had been made to reflect current practice.

Article 8 – Regulatory and Other Committees

There were no changes.

Article 9 – The Standards Framework

Paragraph 9.03 – When dealing with complaints it was proposed the following stages take place:

Ms Carruthers-Watt described the three stages of dealing with complaints, noting that changes had been made in accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 and the Local Government Association (LGA) Best Practice guidance on Standards that had been made. These changes addressed the issue of a perception of potential political involvement which had been the subject of criticism of other local authorities and case law.

The Chair noted that there had been a further change that had not been highlighted i.e., the provision that the Panel would consist of the three Group Leaders or their nominated representatives had been changed such that the Panel would now consist of 3 Members appointed by the Monitoring Officer from the Policy and Resources Committee.

Councillor Cox stated that, from the Labour Group's perspective, the proposed change would create an inherent injustice should he be the subject of a complaint as he was the only Labour Group Member on the Policy and Resources Committee.

In response to a request by the Chair for clarification on the reasons for this change, Ms Carruthers-Watt stated that the change had been made in accordance with the LGA's Good Practice guidance on Standards. She stated that the wording of the proposed change could be amended to reflect the circumstances affecting Three Rivers District Council.

In response to various concerns raised by Members of the Sub-Committee regarding the way in which Panel Members would be appointed and the political composition of the Panel, the Chair proposed, and it was **AGREED**, that Ms Carruthers-Watt be asked to advise on –

- a) The risk of judicial review should the current Stage 2 of the complaints procedure be retained; and
- b) What would the law permit regarding the number of Panel Members.

Article 10 – Area Arrangements

Ms Carruthers-Watt summarised the proposed changes. The Chair noted that it would be necessary to amend some of the references to "fellow Ward Members" and "Ward Councillors" to reflect the fact that most Local Area Forums covered more than one ward.

Composition/Membership

It was noted that Local Area Forums, although reflective of, did not correspond with parished or unparished areas. Therefore, any such reference should be removed.

It was also proposed that, under the subheading "Composition/Membership", if the Local Area Forum were intended to reflect the local community rather than an extension of the District Council, the Chair & Vice Chair of the various Local Area Forums should reflect the political membership of the local Ward Councillors. Therefore, as it was a matter for Annual Council to appoint the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Local Area Forums, a change in the way in which Chairs and Vice Chairs of Local Area Forums should form part of the review of the Constitution.

It was proposed that the mechanism for the election of Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Local Area Forum could be included in the Appendices to the Constitution.

It was noted that County Councillors were also invited to Local Area Forum meetings, and this could be included in the Constitution under the section headed "General Procedures".

The Chair noted that Parish Councillors were also invited to meetings of Local Area Forum. He stated that there was scope for an addendum listing the current Local Area Forums and the geographical areas that they covered. He noted that it would be for Three Rivers District Council to provide that information.

In response to further points raised by Members, the Chair proposed, and it was **AGREED**, that there be an addendum stating that both County Councillors and Parish Councillors were invited to the Local Area Forums, and identifying the geographical areas covered by the Local Area Forums.

Regularity of Meetings

Regarding the "Regularity of Meetings", the Chair stated that a decision had been taken to remove the requirement that Local Area Forum have a fixed number of meetings, and that it should be for the Members of the Local Area Forum to decide how often they wish to meet.

It was proposed that it should be for all the Ward Councillors, and not just the Chair of the Local Area Forum, to decide when a meeting of the Local Area Forum should be called.

It was noted that the purpose of the Local Area Forums, which did not have any decision-making powers, had never been defined and, therefore, it was not known why they were meeting and what they were meant to be doing. In addition, if meetings were to be held on a very regular basis, would the District Council pay for the hire of a room(s) for Local Area Forum meetings.

In response, the Chair proposed reverting to the wording in the current Constitution regarding the regularity of meetings as this stipulated a minimum and maximum number of meetings.

After further discussion, the Chair proposed, and it was **AGREED**, to defer further consideration of **Article 10 – Area Arrangements**, to a special meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee or a future meeting of the Constitution Sub-Committee.

General Procedures

It was noted that the proposal that it be “the responsibility of the Chair and Vice Chair in consultation with fellow Ward Members to formulate the agenda for a meeting” downgraded the role of Ward Councillors.

NOTED

Article 11 – Joint Arrangements

There were no proposed changes to Article 11.

Article 12 – Officers

Ms Carruthers-Watt noted that the changes in Article 12 had been made to reflect changes in the organisation of Three Rivers District Council. The changes identified the statutory officers and their amended titles.

Paragraph 12.01 – Management Structure

It was noted that, in the current Constitution, in the table at Paragraph (b): Chief Officers, some but not all of the functions and areas of responsibility of the Chief Executive set out under the subheading “Service Role”, such as Election and Electoral Registration and Committee Administration had not been carried over into the amended version of the Constitution.

Ms Carruthers-Watt stated that the “Functions and Areas of Responsibility” reflected the way in which the Council operated and had been prepared by the Council’s officers.

Mr Rix confirmed that some of the changes had been made as part of a tidying up exercise of the various functions and areas of responsibility of the Statutory Officers.

The Chair stated that it was not necessary to have the details of various posts and their respective functions and areas of responsibility in the Constitution. However, they had to be available for anyone who wished to see this information. Therefore, he proposed that this information could be included in an Appendix to the Constitution and/or on the Council website.

The Chair proposed, and it was **AGREED**, that officers review whether the information on the Council’s Statutory Officers and their respective functions and areas of responsibility could be made available elsewhere and not in the main text of the Council’s Constitution.

Article 13 – Decision-Making

There were no significant, if any, changes to Article 13.

It was **AGREED** that Ms Carruthers-Watt would check to see if there were any incidental changes to Article 13.

Article 14 – Finance, Contracts and Legal Matters

It was noted that there were no substantive changes to Article 14 and the changes that had been made referred to changes to titles of Council officers.

Article 15 – Review and Revision of the Constitution

Paragraph 15.02 – Changes to the Constitution

Ms Carruthers-Watt highlighted the proposed changes to Paragraph 15.02 (c)

Article 16 – Suspension, Interpretation and Publication of the Constitution

Paragraph 16.03 – Publication

Regarding Paragraph (b) which stated that Members of the Local Press and Public could purchase a copy of the Constitution and/or its constituent parts for a reasonable fee, it was **AGREED** that this provision be reworded to make clear that:

- a) A “reasonable fee” would be the cost to the Council of printing and making the documents available (including officer time); and
- b) That a copy of the Constitution and its constituent parts could be viewed or free on the council’s website.

APPENDIX 4

Draft General Principles Relating to Officer Delegation

Ms Carruthers-Watt stated that this was a new document and that it did not make any changes to the existing Constitution. The amendments highlighted in the document reflected changes to job titles and rewording of parts of the document.

Ms Carruthers-Watt then summarised the main provisions in Appendix 4. She noted that not all the Council’s scheme of delegation was contained in Appendix 4. However, the scheme of Delegation to Officers was set out in its entirety in the Appendix.

In response to a question, Ms Carruthers-Watt stated that there were changes to the existing Scheme of Delegation, notably regarding sub-delegations. Accordingly, Appendix 4 was a tidying up and codification of the Scheme of Delegation.

The Chair noted that, as well as being a codification and tidying up of the Scheme of Delegation, there were additional provisions requiring any changes to the Scheme to be reported in the Members' Bulletin and to Annual Council.

Regarding the powers of the Chief Executive to delegate, it was noted that the Chief Executive could only delegate a function which had already been delegated to the Chief Executive.

Joe Wagstaffe, Chief Executive, noted that it had been necessary to make changes to the Scheme of Delegation when it was realised, following the retirement of a Director of the Council, that there was no scheme of delegation in place to allow another officer to take over that Director's functions. In addition, it was not possible to delegate those functions to a more senior officer, including the Chief Executive.

It was noted that the reason for markups in Appendix 4 was because, when work started on reviewing this document, several Council officers had different job titles. These job titles then had to be updated by way of tracked changes to make it apparent to Members and officers where changes had been made to updated versions of Appendix 4.

Proposal to Adjourn the Meeting

In response to a proposal to adjourn the meeting, the Chair noted that it would not be possible to complete consideration of all the proposed amendments to the Council Constitution at this evening's meeting. However, as there were a few items that did not require lengthy consideration, he proposed, and it was **AGREED**, that those items be taken before the meeting was adjourned.

APPENDIX 6

Part 5 – Codes and Protocols

Members' Code of Conduct

Ms Carruthers-Watt noted that, in support of the commitment to transparency, a hyperlink to Councillors' profile pages had been included but the Members' Code of Conduct remained unchanged.

It was proposed, and **AGREED** that, instead of including a hyperlink to the Council webpage with Member's profiles, which would necessitate a minor amendment to the Council Constitution each time the URL changed, that a suitable form of words be added to this Part stating that links to individual Members' profile pages could be found on the Council website.

Planning Matters Guidance Note

Site Visits

Ms Carruthers-Watt noted that, under the subheading "Site Visits" there was an additional Paragraph relating to the principles to be adopted during site visits by District Councillors who were Members of the District Council's Planning

Committee and, in addition, Members of a Parish and/or Community Council Planning Committee.

It was proposed that there be a reference to those principles applying to County Councillors who were Members of the District Council's Planning Committee and who may have voted on a County Council matter that subsequently came before the District Council's Planning Committee.

It was further proposed to remove the references to Members being Members of a Parish and/or Community Council Planning Committee, or the ATC Development and Control Committee, to make it clear that no Councillor or officeholder was beholden to any decisions taken by another authority of which they were a member when considering Planning applications that came before the District Council.

It was noted that the additional Paragraph under the subheading "Site Visits" had been reproduced in similar wording under the subheading "Applications by Members or Officers". Ms Carruthers-Watt stated, and it was **AGREED** that she would review these Paragraphs with a view to rewriting them in such a way as to avoid any unnecessary repetition.

Protocol on Member/Officer Relations

Ms Carruthers-Watt noted that, throughout the section, changes had been made to update various official titles.

Paragraph 6 – Relationship between the Leader and the Lead Members and Officers

- a) In response to a question by Councillor Cox regarding Paragraph e) i.e. the sharing of information as soon as possible with Group Leaders, Jo Wagstaffe, Chief Executive, stated that she could not recall when this had last been done.
- b) In response to a question by Councillor Sarah Bedford regarding Paragraph h) i.e. advice given in confidence, Jo Wagstaffe, Chief Executive, stated that there were various rules and regulations, including Freedom of Information (FOI) requests governing the confidentiality of information.

Paragraph 10 – Procedure for Consultation

Paragraph 10(b) i.e., urgent decisions to be taken under Part 3 of the Council Constitution. It was suggested that the reference in this Paragraph to Section 8, Paragraphs 8.1 to 8.3 of Part 3 of the Council Constitution may be incorrect.

Further, that the way in which it was proposed that urgent decisions should be taken was less efficient than the existing means for taking urgent decisions.

It was **AGREED** that Jo Wagstaffe, Chief Executive, discuss the contents of this Paragraph with Ms Carruthers-Watt.

Ms Carruthers-Watt noted that the Urgent Action provisions were currently set out in Part 3 of the Constitution under the heading "Responsibility for Functions" on Page 3/26 which has yet to be updated.

The Chair stated that any use of telephone calls or email for the purposes of taking urgent decisions had to be clarified, even if these were to constitute an informal part of the process.

Paragraph 22 – Website and Social Media

The Chair noted the changes that had been made in Paragraph b) relating to the Code of Conduct and the use of social media by Councillors in their capacity as a Councillor, and in their capacity as a private citizen.

Paragraph 23 – Reporting Elections

The Chair noted the prohibition on using social media on the floor of an election count, as set out in Paragraph c).

Ms Carruthers-Watt also noted Paragraph g) in which it was stated that reporting on elections was the duty of the Returning Officer.

The Chair stated that this brought consideration of Part 5 to an end and that, given the late hour, he did not propose to go on to consider **Part 6: Members' Allowance Scheme**, which he recommended be deferred to the next meeting of the Sub-Committee.

The Chair proposed, and it was **AGREED** that the meeting be adjourned and reconvened on a date and at a time to be confirmed.

Meeting adjourned at 9:45 PM

CHAIR