

CABINET

19 May 2005

MINOR AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION – SCHEME OF DELEGATION TO OFFICERS
(PART 3, SECTION 6)

REPORT OF CITY SECRETARY AND SOLICITOR

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RECENT REFERENCES:

None.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Appendix A contains a number of changes to the Scheme of Delegation to Officers (shown as tracked). The Scheme of Delegation to Officers is contained within the Council's Constitution Part 3, Responsibility for Functions, Section 6.

The changes are relatively minor in nature and are necessary to reflect the Council's new structure and Directorates. The Chief Executive has authorised these changes to take effect in the interim under his delegated powers, until the permanent changes are authorised by Cabinet and Council.

This report also seeks Members' approval for an increase in the amount that the Director of Development can release from the Open Space Fund under his delegated authority. At present a limit of £10,000 is set and this report proposes that this be raised to £20,000 in an effort to make the operation of the Funding System quicker and more responsive to the needs of the Parishes.

A change to the Portfolio Holder delegated powers is also proposed as outlined in paragraph 2.6.

RECOMMENDATIONS (TO COUNCIL):

1. That the changes to the Part 3 of the Constitution, Section 6, be approved as outlined in Appendix A.
2. That the Scheme of Delegation to Portfolio Holders be amended as outlined in paragraph 2.6 (Part 3 of the Constitution, Section 3).

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(PART 3, SECTION 6)REPORT OF CITY SECRETARY AND SOLICITORDETAIL:

- 1 Amendments to reflect the new Council Structure
 - 1.1 Following the recent changes to the Council's Structure, it is necessary to make some minor amendments to the Scheme of Delegation to Officers. The suggested changes are set out in Appendix A to this Report.
- 2 Suggested amendments regarding Open Space Funding
 - 2.1 The Open Space Project Officer spends approximately 50% of his time working on the Council's Open Space Funding System. This involves working with the Parish Councils, encouraging them to address the deficiencies in public open space, play and sport facilities in their area, as identified in the Open Space Strategy.
 - 2.2 Very often, when the parish are ready to utilise the open space funds on a large project, there is a delay while authority is sought to the release of the funds.
 - 2.3 Given the accelerated house building programme in the South East region, the rapid increase in the amount of money coming into the Open Space Fund and the rate at which it is now being spent, it is felt that the limit on the Open Space Project Officer of £10,000 needs to be increased to meet the increased demand.
 - 2.4 Currently if the amount being requested is over £10,000 a report must be prepared for the Portfolio Holder which must then be circulated for consultation. This can take time which can have a counterproductive effect on the enthusiasm and momentum of the parish.
 - 2.5 In view of the above it is proposed to grant the Director of Development delegated authority to release funds for Open Space projects up to a total of £20,000. Previously, the authority was exercised in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and Sport. However, it is proposed that the authority be amended to specify it is in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning as funding for projects comes from within the Planning Division.
 - 2.6 At the current time, the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and Sport has delegated authority to agree to the release of funds up to a limit of £50,000. However, it is proposed that this authority be transferred to the Portfolio Holder for Planning for the reasons stated above. .

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:3 CORPORATE STRATEGY (RELEVANCE TO):

None.

4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

None.

5 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

None.

6 APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Replacement Scheme of Delegation to Officers (Part 3 of the Constitution, Section 6)