

Revision of the Council's Standing Orders

Report by John Blair, Director, Resources

1 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present the proposals for the revision of the Council's Standing Orders to the Council. Further the Council is recommended to approve the proposed revisions to the Standing Orders.

2 Background

2.1 The Council's Standing Orders and associated documents provide the governance for the way the Council operates.

2.2 An interim review of the Council's Organisational Governance (Standing Orders, Scheme of Administration and Scheme of Delegation) was completed in 2016 with formal approval of the updated Standing Orders, Scheme of Administration and Scheme of Delegation provided by Council in September 2016.

It was recognised at that point that a further, more comprehensive review of the Council's Organisational Governance would be required. It was agreed that this review would be recommended to the new Council following its election in May 2017. At the first meeting of the new Council on 23 May 2017, the Council approved that a full review of the Council's governance arrangements take place which would include input from the Political Group Leaders.

2.3 A Project Group consisting of the Group Leaders of each of the Council's political parties, the Corporate Management Team, Monitoring Officer and Democratic and Document Services Manager was set up to review the governance arrangements and agreed that it would be best to take a phased approach to the review.

2.4 It was agreed by the Project Group that the first phase of the project would review the Standing Orders with a proposal to be presented to the Council on 19 December 2017. Phase two would review the Scheme of Administration with a proposal to be presented to the Council at its meeting on 27 March 2018. Phase three would review the Scheme of Delegation with a proposal to be presented to the Council at its meeting on 26 June 2018.

2.5 The Project Group has met to discuss and agree the proposed changes to the Standing Orders and Elected Members were invited to a briefing on 11 December to discuss the proposals.

2.6 The Council are recommended to approve the revised Standing Orders and associated documents.

3 Report Implications

3.1 Resource Implications

There are no Resource implications in relation to this report.

3.2 Risk Implications

The Standing Orders provide the fundamental governance arrangements of the Council. If these are not reflective of the current ways of working, there is a potential for challenges to be made to decisions made by the Council, Cabinet and Committees.

3.3 Policy Implications

Strategy

There are no strategy implications arising from this report.

Consultation

No consultations have been undertaken in connection with this report, however, a Project Group including the Group Leaders of each of the political parties and the Corporate Management Team have been actively involved in the design of the revised Standing Orders and a briefing was provided to all Elected Members in respect of the proposed changes.

Equalities

An equalities impact assessment is not required in connection with this report.

Sustainability

There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.

4 Recommendations

The Council is invited to:

- (a) Review and approve the revised Standing Orders;
- (b) Instruct the Director, Resources to publish the revised Standing Orders; and
- (c) Instruct the Director, Resources to bring forward a review of the Council Standing Orders to the Council meeting prior to the summer recess on an annual basis commencing in 2019.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Midlothian Council Standing Orders

11 December 2017

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