

REPORT OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE 02/2025/26

FULL COUNCIL 24 November 2025

Chair: Councillor Ibrahim Ali

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report arises from the Standards Committee meetings held on the 13 November 2025 and asks Full Council to consider the following:

- 1.1.1 Consider the proposed changes to the Planning Protocol in Annex 1, Appendix 2.
- 1.1.2 Consider the proposed changes to the Financial Regulations in Annex1 Appendix 1.
- 1.1.3 Consider the proposed changes to Part Four of the Constitution, Section J Contract Standing Orders in Annex 3 , Appendix 3.

At the meeting of the Standards Committee on the 13 November 2025, the Committee were asked to consider proposed changes to the Planning Protocol which were put forward to ensure good practice was followed when Members determine planning applications, that processes would be transparent and would assist resident involvement in those determinations. It was noted that general changes to the Planning Protocol were outlined, which included a removal of duplications, clarified the Committee running order, stressed that decisions were not to be made on a party-political basis, rename the Development Management Forum to the Planning Forum for clarity, and other administrative changes. These changes had been previously endorsed by the Strategic Planning Committee and Constitution Working group

The Committee additionally considered changes Financial Regulations within the Council's Constitution, noting that the changes proposed would bring additional financial rigour. It was explained that the Council would look to undertake extensive engagement with budget holders to ensure that they align with the proposed new finance regulations and requirements within the Constitution. It was stressed that there was a requirement within the proposals to strengthen the accountability for budget managers, including a requirement for budget holders to remain within budget and for Corporate Directors to notify the Section 151 Officer of all underspends, over-recovery of income or windfall benefits arising within revenue and capital budgets. It was noted there were also some administrative changes which were included within the report.

The Committee additionally reviewed proposed changes to Contract Standing Orders (CSO's) were intended to address some minor omissions following the revised CSO's introduced in March 2025 and some audit recommendations. It was noted that the prosed changes would allow Directors to be able to vary or extend a contract, where the aggregated value of the award, variation or extension is less than £500,000. This would be consistent with Delegated powers afforded to Directors elsewhere in the Constitution. It was also noted that the provisions would

tighten rules around contract Letters of Intent and that the Chief Procurement Officer is advised of all contract novation's.

WE RECOMMEND FULL COUNCIL

- 1.1.4 Approve the proposed changes to the Planning Protocol in Annex 1, Appendix 2.
- 1.1.5 Approve the proposed changes to the Financial Regulations in Annex 2, Appendix 1.
- 1.1.6 Approve the proposed changes to Part Four of the Constitution, Section J Contract Standing Orders in Annex 3, Appendix 3.
- 1.1.7 Approve the following key amendments outlined in Annex 3, Appendix 3:
 - 1.1.7.1 Directors may approve extensions and variations of contracts with an aggregated value of less than £500,000;
 - 1.1.7.2 Letters of Intent would be restricted to 50% of the contract value, where the contract value is £100,000 or less.
 - 1.1.7.3 Directors would record decisions to novate contracts and notify the Chief Procurement Officer of such decisions.

Appendices

Standards Committee report Planning Protocol – Annex 1

Appendix 1 - Existing Planning Protocol 2017, 13/11/2025 Standards Committee

Appendix 2 - Proposed Planning Protocol 2025 tracked changes, 13/11/2025 Standards Committee

Appendix 3 - Proposed Planning Protocol 2025 clean, 13/11/2025 Standards Committee

Standards Committee Report Financial Regulations – Annex 2

Appendix 1: Part Four Financial Regs as 13/11/2025 Standards Committee

Standards Committee report Contract Standing orders – Annex 3

Appendix 1 - CSO Nov 2025 v1.1, 13/11/2025 Standards Committee

Appendix 2 - Summary of Proposed CSO Amendments Nov 2025 v1.1, 13/11/2025 Standards Committee

Appendix 3 - CSO March 2025 vs Nov 2025 v1.1 Comparison, 13/11/2025 Standards Committee

