MINUTES OF THE Standards Committee HELD ON Monday, 14th September, 2026, 7.00 - 7.26 pm

PRESENT:

Councillors: Scott Bentham-Emery, Mike Hodges, Andrea Hodgson (Chair), Edward Thacker and Elin Weston

13. FILMING AT MEETINGS

RESOLVED:

The filming at meetings notice was noted.

14. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were none received.

15. URGENT BUSINESS

There was none.

16. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

17. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting, 29 June 2026, were discussed.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on the 29 June 2026, were agreed as a correct record

18. CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION - REFORM OF PLANNING COMMITTEES

The Director of Built Environment and Highways and Head of Development Management and Planning Enforcement introduced the report. The rationale for the report and proposed changes to the Constitution were outlined.

It was noted that the proposed changes to the constitution were in line with changes in the national scheme of delegation from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

Councillor Emery joined the meeting at 7.06pm.

Councillor Weston joined the meeting at 7.12pm

Following questions from Councillors, the following information was shared:

- It was explained that there would be guidance available for what could be considered significance to the local area. It was additionally noted that if there were major objections from major bodies which were not overcome, these could also be considered significant. However, it was noted that this would likely require testing nationally within courts.

- It was explained that it was likely that the current method of reviewing Council applications and major applications within the Planning Committee, would be similar to how the Committee functioned currently.

- It was noted that any minor applications for trees would be generally considered schedule one and be determined by officers, whereas any major changes to trees would be considered a significant change and be submitted to Committee for consideration. It was additionally stressed that policies in the Local Plan and other Council policies would cover general policy towards advertisement and minor tree changes. It was additionally stressed that, while an application may not go to Committee, that Members would still be able to provide feedback. It was noted that the proposed new Local Plan would have a dedicated tree policy which would be comprehensive and ensure that these would be considered sufficiently.

- It was explained that there was flexibility to work within schedule two, which would allow additional nuance and local accountability for which applications would go to Committee.

- It was explained that there would be a record of discussion which would be circulated publicly which would document any consultation with Planning Members regarding enquiries. It was suggested that feedback to Members could be done similarly to the Member Enquiries system. It was noted that there were concerns with reporting publication of meetings with the Planning Chair, which may disadvantage anyone wishing to judicial review. It was noted that this could be an issue and would consider publishing information weekly, while it would additionally be published by the Planning Sub-Committee monthly.

- It was explained that feedback from residents on quality and timeliness of planning decisions could be brought back to the Strategic Planning Committee for consideration.

RESOLVED:

That the Standards Committee:

1. Agreed the changes to the constitution to implement the national delegations in the regulations and to recommend adoption of these changes to the next meeting of Full Council.

19. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

There was none.

CHAIR: Councillor Andrea Hodgson

Signed by Chair ……..

Date ……