REPORT OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE 03/2026/27

FULL COUNCIL 23 NOVEMBER 2026

Chair: Councillor Andrea Hodgson

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report arises from the Standards Committee meetings held on the 17 November 2026 and asks Full Council to consider the following:

1.1.1 Updates to the Constitution - Part 5 Section B - Member Officer Relations
1.1.2 Proposed Amendments to the Constitution – Alignment with Pensions Regulations
1.1.3 Updates to Non-Key Decision-Making for Highways and Traffic Schemes

2. UPDATES TO THE CONSTITUTION - PART 5 SECTION B - MEMBER OFFICER RELATIONS

2.1 The Committee considered proposed amendments to the Member Officer relations protocol within the Constitution following comments by the Constitution Working Group. The Committee requested the following additional minor changes:

- minor grammar update required to paragraphs 2.7(a)
- paragraph 2.7(k) to be rephrased make this clearer
- bullet point 4 at paragraph 5.1 was to be updated to remove the word 'reasonable' as the word 'necessary' captured the message of the paragraph on providing information to opposition members.

With the above amendments,

WE RECOMMEND THAT FULL COUNCIL:

2.2 Approve the proposed amendments to the Member/Officer Protocol set out at Appendix 2 and 3.

3. PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION – ALIGNMENT WITH PENSIONS REGULATIONS

3.1 The Committee were made aware of the need to amend the Constitution to bring it in line with new Pensions Regulations following the Fit for the Future amendments. It was explained that the amendments did not create new powers for the Head of Pensions & Treasury Management but instead consolidated existing responsibilities into one Statutory role.

WE RECOMMEND THAT FULL COUNCIL:

3.2 Approve the amendments to the Constitution outlined in appendices 5 , 6, 7 and 8

4. NON-KEY DECISION-MAKING FOR HIGHWAYS AND TRAFFIC SCHEMES

4.1 The Committee were made aware of an opportunity to clarify decision making guidance and also to make Non-Key decision-making on highways and traffic schemes simpler and quicker. This was to provide further efficiencies in the progress and delivery of schemes, whilst still retaining strong democratic oversight and accountability. It was proposed that the 2021 Report Text is revoked and not replaced. Non-Key decisions relating to highways and traffic schemes, including those requiring the making of an order, will instead be governed directly by the Constitution's existing Key/Non-Key test, for consistency with most other decisions by the council.

4.2 The Committee made some additional suggestions to the wording in the report presented to us that ensured that Ward Councillors would be kept informed, amending 6.7 of the report to state that “Officers will use their professional judgment and where a decision is Non-Key but appears significant due to factors such as the scale of the scheme or level of feedback, the matter will be raised with the relevant Cabinet Member and can be raised with the Ward Members prior to decision making.”

'the matter can be raised with the relevant Cabinet Member and Ward Members prior to decision making.

With the above amendment:

WE RECOMMEND THAT FULL COUNCIL:

4.3 Approve the revocation of the 2021 Report Text, including the cost and objection-count thresholds and the requirement for officers to consult the Cabinet Member with the relevant portfolio before taking certain Non-Key decisions, as set out at Appendix 9, without replacement. Officers will continue to raise individual decisions with the relevant Cabinet Member, as a matter of normal practice, and consistent with most other Non-Key decisions by the council, where they consider it appropriate to do so.

5. APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 Standards Report on Updates to the Constitution - Part 5 Section B - Member Officer Relations

5.1

Appendix 2 - Part 5 Section B - Member Officer Relations – track changes
Appendix 3 - updated version without track changes - Part 5 Section B - Member Officer Relations.

5.2 Appendix 4: Proposed Amendments to the Constitution – Alignment with Pensions Regulations
Appendix 5.1: Part Two Articles – with proposed amendments
Appendix 6 Part Three, Section B Responsibility for functions: Full Council & Non-Executive Bodies – with proposed amendments
Appendix 7: Part Three, Section E Officer Scheme of Delegation – with proposed amendments
Appendix 8: Part Three – Responsibility for functions Section E – Scheme of Delegation – Section 3 Delegations to the Chief Executive and Statutory Officers – with proposed amendments

5.3 Appendix 9: Non-Key Decision-Making for Highways and Traffic Schemes Extract of the 2021 report to Standards Committee.