

8. Proposed Minor Amendments to Constitutional Arrangements

Purpose of report

1. To approve proposed minor amendments to constitutional arrangements following the review of the Authority's Committee structure in September 2010.

Recommendation

The Clerk recommends that the Authority approves the changes proposed to the constitutional arrangements as set out in the report.

Introduction and Background

2. Members will recall that the Authority agreed the introduction of the revised committee structure at its meeting in September 2010. The changes appear to be working well at this time. However, there are a small number of amendments that it is suggested are made, following the experience of implementing the changes in the last 6 months.

The Scheme of Delegations to Officers and the Urgent Decisions process

3. The September changes replaced the Urgent Decisions Committee with a delegation to the Chief Fire Officer in consultation with Group Leaders. The delegation was subject to the requirement that any use of the delegation is reported back to the FRA. It is proposed this limitation be changed so that the use of this power is reported back to the actual decision-making committee or the FRA. This change reflects the fact that the Policy and Resources Committee now has limited decision-making powers.

Policy and Resources Committee Terms of Reference

4. The Policy and Resources Committee currently has a provision which provides:-
"in conjunction with the Audit Committee to scrutinise reports from the Authority's External Auditors (including the management letter) to determine where appropriate the Authority's response or appropriate action."
5. This provision was originally included to cover very limited situations where Members considered that it would be beneficial to obtain the views of the Policy and Resources Committee before agreeing a response to the External Auditor on behalf of the Authority.
6. In practice this provision is causing confusion at both Member and Officer level and it is suggested that this provision is removed. In any event the Audit Committee may still refer any item to the Policy and Resources Committee for their comment.

Conclusion

7. That the Authority consider and agree the proposals set out above.

Financial Considerations

Consideration	Yes/No	Reference in Report i.e. paragraph no.
There are financial issues that require consideration	No	

Legal Considerations

Consideration	Yes/No	Reference in Report i.e. paragraph no.
There are legal issues e.g. contractual and procurement, reputational issues that require consideration	Yes	The whole report

Additional Considerations

8. The table below sets out any additional issues arising from the proposals contained in this report and identifies the relevant paragraphs in the report where such issues are addressed.

Consideration	Yes/No	Reference in Report i.e. paragraph no.
Resources (e.g. Assets, ICT, Human Resources, Training & Development, Sustainability).	No	
Strategic Policy Links (e.g. IRMP, Authority Plan, Equality & Diversity, Partnerships, Environmental Impact).	No	
Risk Management / Health & Safety (e.g. risk management and control measures, risk register score).	No	
Consultation with Representative Bodies	No	

Supporting Information

Background Papers: Terms of Reference of Committees
Minutes of the meeting of the Authority on 28 September 2010.

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