

Council – 12 May 2025

Amendments to the Constitution

Purpose	For Decision
Classification	Public
Executive Summary	This report outlines amendments to the Council's Constitution to ensure it is consistent with the reviewed financial regulations; to provide explicitly for electronic signing and sealing of documents and to update the officer's scheme of delegation to be consistent with the revised officer structure.
Recommendation	That Council approves the amendments to the Constitution as set out in the report and attached appendices.
Reasons for recommendation	To ensure the Constitution is updated to reflect revised staffing structures and financial regulations.
Wards	All
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Jill Cleary – Leader
Strategic Director	Alan Bethune – Corporate Resources and Transformation
Officer Contact	Tanya Coulter Assistant Director - Governance 02380 285532 tanya.coulter@nfdc.gov.uk

Introduction and background

1. The Monitoring Officer is responsible for ensuring the Council's Constitution is reviewed regularly so that it is kept up to date.
2. A review has been undertaken by the Monitoring Officer and Democratic Services and there are several amendments that are proposed to ensure consistency with the financial regulations that have recently been approved by Council and with changes to the

staffing structure so that it is absolutely clear which officer is able to make a specific decision.

Proposed Amendments

3. The proposed amendments are summarised as follows:
 - a. Amendment to the officer's scheme of delegation to primarily make it clear that a Senior Manager is able to make decisions in respect of all areas as set out in their Service Plan, as at 2(b) of the revised scheme at Appendix 1.
 - b. Amendment to section 13 of the Council's Standing Orders for General Procedures, relating to the sealing and signing of documents. The amendment makes it absolutely clear that documents can be signed and sealed by electronic means. Although it may not be necessary to spell this out, it is considered helpful to make this absolutely clear to avoid any doubt.
 - c. Amendments to section 1 of the Council's Executive Decision Making (Responsibility for Functions, Cabinet) to clarify that a decision is within the budget framework, unless the financial regulations provide for it being a Full Council decision. In addition, the inclusion of the key decision definition in this section, to provide alignment with recent changes to the financial regulations.

Corporate plan priorities

4. This supports the priority of being an efficient council and it provides clarity in respect of decision making.

Options appraisal

5. The changes provide clarity and consistency. The alternative option is not to make the changes which would then mean the Constitution is not updated and could arguably be inconsistent with other provisions and lack clarity in certain aspects. This would make for more time-consuming decision making.

Consultation undertaken

6. Consultation has been undertaken with Executive Management Team, Leadership Team and Group Leaders. They have supported the proposed changes.

Financial and resource implications

7. There are no financial or resource implications arising from this report.

Legal implications

8. The proposed changes ensure additional clarity and consistency in decision making which provides added assurance of the legality and transparency of decision making by the Council.

Risk assessment

9. No formal risk assessment is required. There are risk associated with not making the changes as highlighted above in the body of the report.

Environmental / Climate and nature implications

10. None identified.

Equalities implications

11. None identified.

Crime and disorder implications

12. None identified.

Data protection / Information governance / ICT implications

13. None identified.

New Forest National Park / Cranborne Chase National Landscape implications

14. None identified.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Delegation of Powers to Officers
Appendix 2 – Extract from Standing Orders for General Procedures
Appendix 3 – Executive Decision Making

Background Papers:

None.