

REPORT TO CABINET

Open/Exempt		Would any decisions proposed :			
Any especially affected Wards	Mandatory/	Be entirely within Cabinet's powers to decide		YES/NO	
	Discretionary/	Need to be recommendations to Council		YES/ NO	
	Operational	Is it a Key Decision		YES/NO	
Lead Member: Brian Long E-mail: <i>cllr.brian.long@west-norfolk.gov.uk</i>			Other Cabinet Members consulted: n/a		
			Other Members consulted: n/a		
Lead Officer: Alexa Baker E-mail: <i>alexa.baker@west-norfolk.gov.uk</i> Direct Dial:			Other Officers consulted: n/a		
Financial Implications YES/NO	Policy/ Personnel Implications YES/NO	Statutory Implications YES/ NO	Equal Impact Assessment YES/NO If YES: Pre-screening/ Full Assessment	Risk Management Implications YES/ NO	Environmental Considerations YES/NO

Date of meeting: 30 June 2020

AMENDMENTS TO STANDING ORDERS RELATING TO REMOTE MEETINGS

Summary

This report presents draft amendments (attached as Appendix 1) to the Standing Orders within the Borough Council's Constitution to reflect recent legislation enabling local authority meetings to be conducted remotely. The draft amendments were presented to the Corporate Performance Panel on 3 June 2020 which resolved the amendments be submitted to Cabinet with three identified changes, which are incorporated into Appendix 1.

Recommendation

To consider the draft amendments to the Standing Orders attached as Appendix 1 and approve the changes to be recommended to Full Council.

Reason for Decision

To ensure that the Borough Council's Standing Orders reflect the most up-to-date legislation and capture the key requirements for how the Borough Council will conduct its remote meetings.

1 Background

1.1 The Covid-19 outbreak and Central Government's response in March 2020 had a significant impact on local authority meetings. The key piece of legislation surrounding local authority meetings, the Local Government Act 1972, meant that in order for a valid local authority meeting to take place, all those attending had to be present in the same location. This resulted in cancellation of all Borough Council meetings due to an inability to fulfil this legislative requirement.

- 1.2 On 4 April 2020 the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 (the “2020 Regulations”) came into force. These 2020 Regulations contain provisions which enable local authorities to hold valid meetings remotely <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2020/392/contents/made>

2 Options Considered

- 2.1 Do nothing. The 2020 Regulations apply to the Borough Council’s Constitution automatically (at the moment, until 6 May 2021). However this means that the Standing Orders will not reflect current legislation, which may lead to confusion and misdirection. The 2020 Regulations anticipate that local authorities may also wish to incorporate bespoke additional provisions over and above those set out in the 2020 Regulations to govern how they operate their remote meetings.
- 2.2 For the purposes of transparency, clarity and to include additional provisions relating to the conduct of remote meetings, this report is brought forward to recommend that the Borough Council’s Standing Orders be amended to reflect the 2020 Regulations and to capture the key requirements for how the Borough Council will conduct its remote meetings.

3 Policy Implications

None

4 Financial Implications

None

5 Personnel Implications

None

6 Environmental Considerations

None

7 Statutory Considerations

The relevant provisions of the 2020 Regulations have been incorporated into the draft amendments to the Standings Orders at Appendix 1.

8 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

(Pre screening report template attached)

9 Risk Management Implications

Amending the Standing Orders within the Borough Council's Constitution to reflect current legislation and set out the way the Borough Council will conduct its remote meetings will promote good governance of those meetings, thereby reducing the risk of challenge of decisions.

10 Declarations of Interest / Dispensations Granted

None

11 Background Papers

None

Pre-Screening Equality Impact Assessment

Borough Council of
King's Lynn & West Norfolk



Name of policy/service/function					
Is this a new or existing policy/service/function?	New / Existing (delete as appropriate)				
<p>Brief summary/description of the main aims of the policy/service/function being screened.</p> <p>Please state if this policy/service is rigidly constrained by statutory obligations</p>					
Question	Answer				
<p>1. Is there any reason to believe that the policy/service/function could have a specific impact on people from one or more of the following groups according to their different protected characteristic, for example, because they have particular needs, experiences, issues or priorities or in terms of ability to access the service?</p> <p>Please tick the relevant box for each group.</p> <p>NB. Equality neutral means no negative impact on any group.</p>		Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unsure
	Age				
	Disability				
	Gender				
	Gender Re-assignment				
	Marriage/civil partnership				
	Pregnancy & maternity				
	Race				
	Religion or belief				
	Sexual orientation				
Other (eg low income)					

