

## **CONSTITUTION REVIEW WORKING GROUP**

### **MONDAY, 12 JANUARY 2026**

#### Present:

Camilla de Bernhardt Lane (CfGS) (Chair)  
Councillors Bullivant, Clarence, Palethorpe, Sanders and J Taylor

#### Apologies:

Councillors Daws, Dawson and Steemson

#### Officers in Attendance:

Trish Corns, Principal Democratic Services Officer  
Charlie Fisher, Democratic Services Manager and Monitoring Officer

### **7. NOTES OF LAST MEETING**

The notes of the meeting held on 18 December 2025 were received and approved.

### **8. ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

It was noted that the Constitution items agreed over the last few meetings for recommendation to Council would be presented to the next meeting of the Council on 15 January 2026.

The issue of Shadow Portfolio Holders would be discussed with Group Leaders at the pending meeting.

### **9. SECTION 8E GUIDANCE FOR PLANNING**

Consideration was given to an updated Article 8(e) of the Constitution which was discussed at an informal meeting of the Planning Committee on 16 December 2025.

Further discussion was given to paragraphs 8.1 and 8.2 and which were reworded as follows:

#### **The need for Committee Site Visit**

8.1 Site Visits are a fact-finding exercise for further information to address the planning reason(s) for the consideration of the application. Site visits by Planning Committees can be helpful in reaching a decision on issues where site circumstances are fundamental to the decision. However, Committee site visits can cause delay and additional costs for both the developer and the Council and should only be used by exception.

8.2 Site inspections are held only if:

- A. The Head of Development Management believes a site inspection would be beneficial in advance of the consideration of the application
- B. Requested by the Committee during the Committee decision making process

It was also agreed that:

1. The standard letter to interested parties to advise that an application is going to Committee for consideration should include advice that councillors may individually informally view the site and should they do it will be for observational purposes only and they will not be able to discuss the application with any interested party.
2. The Planning Committee trial digital named votes and the results be announced by the Chair.

## **10. PLANNING SITE INSPECTION PROCEDURES**

Consideration was given to the circulated updated site inspection procedure.

The procedure was agreed.

## **11. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

Members viewed the presentation from Pandora Ellis (CfGS) on public participation and engagement.

It was noted that all public meeting agendas included the committee's terms of reference and links for information on public participation and attending meetings, in addition to existing information of the website.

The group discussed engagement with hard-to-reach groups, the current public participation scheme at Committees be reviewed, and that the definition of Committees on the website be reviewed.

It was noted that the District Councillors role included attendance at Parish and Town council meetings within their wards to feedback on district issues, and to hear what the issues are for their areas.

It was agreed:

1. The community engagement officer be invited to the next meeting.
2. The Chairs introduce officers at the start of all public meetings and councillors introduce themselves the first time they speak at a public meeting.

3. A councillor chat box on the website be investigated for the public to contact councillors.

**12. NEXT MEETING**

12 February 2026 2pm

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