

MEETING	AUDIT COMMITTEE
DATE	26, SEPTEMBER, 2013
TITLE	REVIEWING THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION.
PURPOSE OF THE REPORT	TO REQUEST THE COMMITTEE TO ESTABLISH A WORKING GROUP TO REVIEW THE CONSTITUTION
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1. In reporting to full Council on the 2nd May, 2013 on the amendments to the Constitution, I explained that work was in hand under the auspices of the association which represents Monitoring Officers in Wales, with the support of the Welsh Local Government Association and the Welsh Government, to draw up a standard Constitution for the unitary councils in Wales. The motivation for this was the fact that all councils in Wales now operate executive arrangements (Leader and Cabinet), and substantial differences are appearing between the legal requirements on Welsh councils compared to those in England as a result of legislation by the Welsh Government.
2. The standard constitution has now been completed. It continues to allow local differences from Council to Council, but it is hoped that there will be more consistency in interpretation of the Constitution across Wales and that the constitutional document will be easier to understand.
3. Under the new arrangements, the Audit Committee has the role of reviewing and assessing the Authority's arrangements for corporate governance and making recommendations regarding the adequacy and effectiveness of those arrangements. It is considered that the Council's Constitution and its contents are an integral part of the Council's arrangements for good corporate governance, and that the Audit Committee therefore is the appropriate committee to give consideration to the constitutional document. The right to adopt the Constitution rests with the Full Council.
4. Detailed work is required to look at the contents of the new Constitution. This work would be carried out more easily by a Task and Finish Working Group rather than the full Committee.
5. It is recommend therefore that the Committee nominate a working group of up to seven members with an interest in the work to undertake the detailed task of considering the standard constitutional document and offer any local variations appropriate to Gwynedd. There is no

need for such a working group to be on a political balance basis but I suggest that it would be of advantage in the end to have representation from the different groups on the working group.

6. Regarding the timetable, it is anticipated that the working group will undertake its work and consult with other relevant committees over the coming months and report back to this Committee and then present the new constitutional document to full Council at its next annual meeting.

RECOMMENDATION.

7. That the Committee establish a Task and Finish Working Group of up to seven members to review the Council's Constitution.