

## **Members Advisory Panel-New Constitution**

A meeting of Members Advisory Panel-New Constitution was held on Monday, 28th February, 2011.

**Present:** Cllr Terry Laing (Chairman), Cllr Mrs Lynne Apedaile, Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr Mrs Jennie Beaumont, Cllr David Coleman, Cllr Mrs Suzanne Fletcher, Cllr Robert Gibson, Cllr Ken Lupton, Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy (vice Cllr Mrs Cains), Cllr Bill Noble, Cllr Steve Walmsley

**Officers:** Mrs M.Waggott, N.Hart, Ms L.Lawty (LD).

**Also in attendance:**

**Apologies:** Cllr Mrs Cains.

### **MAP 4/10      Declarations of Interest**

There were no Declarations of Interest declared.

### **MAP 5/10      Minutes of the Meeting held on 31st January 2011**

AGREED that the minutes of the meeting held on 31st January 2011 are a correct record.

### **MAP 6/10      Review of Annual Council Meetings-2011 Onwards**

Further to the recent EIT Task & Finish Review of Democratic Services approved by Cabinet (Min CAB 121/10-16th December 2010 refers) consideration was given to proposed options regarding the hosting of the Council's Annual Council Meeting with effect from 2011.

The Head of Democratic Services outlined for members the background of events which had led to the current agreed format for the meeting used for 2010. As the Council's preferred own venue for the event would not be available in time for the 2011 Annual Meeting, officers had invited quotations from 2 of the 3 venues previously considered by this Panel in 2009, with the other venue (Preston Park) being also unavailable for 2011. Consideration was given to a summary of the costs associated with each quotation, along with the services to be provided.

It was noted that should members wish to depart from the current format for the event, other options were also available including both the Town Hall and the Baptist Tabernacle in Stockton. An estimate of the financial cost of each was provided for members. Both of these venues benefited from being on a bus route and were therefore easily accessible.

In considering whether any change was necessary to the format for the event, members were advised of changes necessary to the future appointment of the Leader and Cabinet as a result of the introduction of New Executive arrangements from May 2011. It was noted that whilst Annual Council would still appoint the Leader, the Leader in turn would then appoint his/her own Cabinet for a four year period. A further change recently agreed by Cabinet had also seen appointments of councillors to outside body organisations to be now made for a four year period, giving some certainty and continuity to the role. It was

noted therefore that given this shift towards a four year tenure of office, this Panel may wish to consider whether appointments to Committees and Chair/Vice Chair positions should also be for a four year term; saving on much of the administrative work for both members and officers of annual appointments. Members noted that depending upon the timescale for the appointment of the Cabinet, it may not be possible to make appointments to Committees and Chair/Vice Chair positions at the same meeting as groups may need confirmation of Cabinet positions prior to making these appointments. If this was the case, subsequent appointments could be made at the first available ordinary Council meeting.

The above changes to the appointment process, both proposed and already agreed, therefore led members to consider whether it was now timely to consider changes to the format of the Annual Council meeting given the reduction in business to be transacted following the initial four year appointments made.

It was proposed that for the 2011 meeting, a light buffet with tea, coffee and juice, be provided following the meeting for a maximum of 150 invited guests; to be determined in consultation with the incoming Mayor. With regards to venue, it was suggested that M&M, the venue used for the 2010 meeting, be asked to provide a final costing for the event for 2011 based on this revised format, but in the event that this cost did not match the cheaper quotation already obtained, the event be held in the Baptist Tabernacle, Stockton.

Members noted that Billingham Forum would be available from 2012 should the Council wish to continue to host its Annual Meeting at this venue. The costs associated with such a venue were however unknown at this stage. It was therefore suggested that subject to future clarification of the costs involved and the preferred format for the event by this Panel post elections 2011, the Annual Meeting be held thereafter at Billingham Forum .

AGREED that the following changes to the format and conduct of the Council's Annual Meeting, be recommended to Council for approval:-

1. That M&M, the venue used for the 2010 meeting, be asked to provide a final costing for the event for 2011 based on the proposed revised format outlined at Recommendation 2 below.
2. Subject to the outcome of Recommendation 1 above, the 2011 Annual Meeting be held in the Baptist Tabernacle followed by a light buffet with tea, coffee and juice, to be provided for a maximum of 150 invited guests; to be determined in consultation with the incoming Mayor.
3. That from 2011, appointments to Committees and Chair and Vice Chair positions be made for a four year period in line with changes already introduced with regards to the appointment of the Leader, Cabinet and Outside Body positions.
4. That subject to future clarification of the costs involved and the preferred format for the event by this Panel post elections 2011, the Annual Meeting be held thereafter at Billingham Forum .

