

## **EMERGENCY COMMITTEE - TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **PURPOSE**

To enable the Council to function in emergency situations when fewer Councillors and /or Officers are available to attend meetings.

The Committee will be convened, as required, as part of the Borough Council's Major Incidents and Emergency Planning process.

The decision to convene the Committee will be made by the Chief Executive through consultation with the Leader and after the Monitoring Officer has assessed the appropriateness of taking a particular report to the Committee. The decision will be recorded on the agenda.

The Agenda will include a Statement of Purpose for the Committee being convened and will record reasons why the decision being sought could not be deferred and there will be a clear statement of what the Committee will be discussing.

Equally a proposal to stand down the Committee will be brought? by the Chief Executive through consultation with the Leader to each Committee, and after obtaining such advice as necessary from the Monitoring Officer or their deputy as appropriate, such proposal to stand down the Committee will be decided by a majority vote of Members at the meeting. All Members of the Council will also have the ability to influence the decision to stand down the committee. This can be undertaken by at least a third of Councillors writing to the Chief Executive and the Monitoring Officer requesting the committee stands down. If this action is taken then the reinstatement of the full committee structure will take place or an Extraordinary Council meeting can be called to debate any other emergency governance models required to enable the Council to function lawfully.

Once the Committee is convened it can take on the role of the delegations afforded to the following Committees; The key Committees are Council, Policy, Resources & Economic Development, Environment, Enforcement & Housing, Community & Health, Planning & Licensing and Audit & Scrutiny. The intention, where possible, is to still undertake Planning & Licensing and Audit & Scrutiny Committees separately when required and appropriate. This will be decided by the Chief Executive through consultation with the Leader. These powers can be in full or in part.

All Members sitting on the Committee will have the appropriate planning and licensing training prior to the consideration of any item, relating to planning and licensing, being presented at this committee.

The Committee will only undertake Audit and Scrutiny decisions that relate to the audit function of the Council and if there is a statutory reason that an urgent decision is needed and the Audit & Scrutiny Committee cannot be convened for whatever reason.

Any decisions made by the Emergency Committee may be subject to the scrutiny of the Audit & Scrutiny Committee when it is next convened.

Officer delegations will remain as per the Constitution.

The Committee will also meet as required and consider the immediate strategic issues for the Borough Council arising from the particular incident, having received reports from the Chief Executive.

The Committee may authorise action affecting any of the Borough Council's functions, if the urgency of the situation demands this, subject to such action being reported, together with the Committee's reasons for acting, to the next meeting of Full Council.

The Committee must ensure that steps are being taken to provide, to members of the public and the press, regular communications on the incident and the action being taken.

- Members of the Committee are to be suitably briefed and prepared to make appropriate statements to the media if required in consultation with the Council's communications manager.
- The Committee should consider the longer-term implications arising from the incident and the impact these may have on the Borough Council.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

The Committee shall consist of 10 named Members of the Borough Council, to include:

- Leader of the Council and Chair of Policy, Resources & Economic Development (who will be the Chairman of this Committee)
- Vice-Chairman of Policy, Resources & Economic Development
- The Chairman of the Community & Health Committee
- The Chairman of the Environment, Enforcement & Housing Committee
- The Leaders of all groups
- Other named Members to achieve a political balance

If there is a change of political balance on the Council, this composition will be recalculated by the Proper Officer and amended accordingly.

Succession arrangements are key and for clarity it is confirmed that formal delegations between Councillors will ensure continuity of the Committee. Substitutes for this committee will be submitted in writing by Group Leaders to the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer ahead of the first meeting and updated for future meetings where necessary.

## **QUORUM**

The minimum number of Members to transact any business shall be one third (3) of the committee.

## **PROCEDURES, PROTOCOLS AND PUBLIC SPEAKING**

Except as provided below, the Chairman shall be responsible for maintaining order and the effective conduct of business at meetings.

Any Member of the Council can attend and may speak on any issue once, as agreed through the Chairman, in line with the legislation in force at the time.

Members of the public and press will be provided with the means to attend the meeting and have access to agendas, reports and other documents necessary under the legislative provisions current at the time of calling the meeting(s).

## **QUESTIONS**

Members may ask questions to the Chair in the usual way. If the meeting is virtual then the questions will be put in writing via the appropriate text/chat box. The Chair may read the question and provide a written or verbal response as appropriate.

## **VOTING**

When Members are present at the meeting voting will be taken by a show of hands. If Members are not present i.e. remotely using technology, a recorded vote will be taken by the clerk.

In the event of an equality of votes, the Chairman shall have a second or casting vote.

## **TRAINING**

All training requirements for members of the Committee will be ensured to enable them to undertake the delegations afforded to them when undertaking the role of another Committee.

