

RUGBY BOROUGH COUNCIL

QUESTION PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 10

COUNCIL – 25 OCTOBER 2023

QUESTION C

Councillor Harrington to ask the Leader of the Council, Councillor Poole:

“To convene a meeting of a Constitutional Working Group to review the Council's Constitution and report back to Full Council findings and recommendations to improve and better reflect modern democratic standards. Items for review to include, but not be limited to, thresholds for public petitions, mechanisms to strengthen political impartiality in relevant areas and the operational function of Full Council meetings. Given the Council's No Overall Control position the membership of the Working Group should be politically balanced with an Independent Chair.”

Councillor Poole, Leader of the Council, to reply as follows:

“I thank you for the question that has been brought forward by Councillor Harrington.

I have to say that I was somewhat surprised that such a question has been brought forward given the Constitution Review Working Group has a scheduled meeting on 9 November.

The political composition and membership of this group, as with all working groups, was agreed at the beginning of the municipal year.

I was also again surprised that such a question has come forward given Project 4.6a is the review of the Constitution as shown within the draft Corporate Strategy Delivery Plan which has been shared with all political parties. As we all know, this Delivery Plan has been approved by Cabinet, and this will be debated later tonight.

By way of background, the upcoming Constitution Review Working Group will convene with a view to considering proposed changes to the Council's Constitution. This work commenced during the start of the municipal year whereby support and advice was initially provided by the LGA and thereafter external support and a review has been undertaken by a leading governance lawyer in conjunction with the Council's Monitoring Officer.

This is a comprehensive and significant project and hence the reasons why the Working Party is convening at this point in the municipal year. It will also comprise of several phases, as all key parts of the constitution will need to be reviewed.

I look forward to Councillor Harrington engaging and communicating with his group representative on the Working Group, Councillor Robinson, and sharing his various views on the Council's Constitution.

I also look forward to future recommendations being brought to Full Council.”