

Motions Submitted to Council

In accordance with Chapter 2, Part 2 (Rule 15) of the Council's Constitution

Motion 1

Submitted by Councillor Duffin

Council requests that Standards and Audit Committee investigate bringing in guidance to Group Leaders, that once a Group Member has served one year on the Planning Committee, they only consider re-nominating the same Group Member to Planning Committee after a period of three years has expired, as this will bring a circulation of expertise, skills and objectivity from other Members of the Council that may contribute to the work of the Committee.

At the same time Council also write to the government requesting they introduce legislation so that such a circulation of Members can be made mandatory.

Monitoring Officer Comments:

Currently any mandatory scheme would conflict with Group Leaders legal powers under section 15 Local Government and Housing Act 1989 to choose who to appoint from their Group up to their political balance entitlement and therefore require parliamentary legislation to allow.

It may also be noted that Planning Committee is a highly technical committee that can take some time for Members to become fully trained and familiar with given its complex procedures and law.

It could be argued that such an approach may make it harder for the committee to discharge its responsibilities, appears to depart from general local government practice and has the potential to undermine the good governance by limiting continuity of experience.

Minority Groups may also struggle to fill the committee places allotted to them under (section 15 LGA&H Act 1989) political balance calculations - which may in turn distort the legal requirement for political balance on the committee. Therefore any such discretionary guidance would have to address these legal requirements in the absence of new enabling legislation or a vote by Full Council to disapply the political balance arrangements.

Section 151 Officer Comments:

There are no direct financial implications arising from this motion. If there was to be a more frequent change in Members on the committee, there may be additional training costs that would have to be met from existing budgets.

Is the above motion within the remit of Council to approve?

Yes