

SECTION 1A - To be filled in by submitter of the Motion:

Report from	Town Clerk
On behalf of	N/A
Date	18 th May 2023
For Meeting of Council/Committee	Full Council
Date of meeting	23 rd May 2023
Agenda item no.	40/23-24
Confidentiality	N/A
TITLE OF MOTION	ELECTION OF CHAIRS & VICE-CHAIRS AT ANNUAL MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL
MOTION(S)	To decide to elect Chairs and Vice-Chairs each year at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council
Background	<p>In 2021, shortly after the formation of the Town Council, and again in 2022 Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Council's Committees have been voted in at the start of the first committee meeting following the Annual Meeting of the Town Council.</p> <p>This is, however, not a legal requirement, and Local Councils can decide to do this at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council instead at the same time as when decisions are made which Committees to continue with and which Councillors are to join those Committees (see also this SLCC webpage under the sub-heading 'Committee meetings').</p> <p>Different Councils decide to do this in different ways, dependent on what works best for that particular Council.</p> <p>This motion proposes to change the way this has happened so far going forward, starting immediately at the 2023 Annual Meeting of the Town Council, to improve efficiency for the Council and for its staff.</p>
Issues/items for consideration by the Council	<p>The following considerations are to be considered by the Town Council, in its decision which model it will adopt going forward:</p> <p>The following arguments for and against this proposal could, arguably be made:</p> <p>Cons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As the Annual Meeting of the Town Council is already a full agenda due to the nature of the meeting and legal requirements for items on this annual meeting agenda, it may make the meeting somewhat longer and could potentially disrupt the flow of the meeting. Councillors will have to come prepared to the Annual Meeting of the Town Council and consider in advance of the meeting which role(s) they would want to stand for. <p>Pros:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decisions made by committees, where delegated powers to do so as per the Scheme of Delegation, can affect the whole Council. Thus it can be argued that is in the interest of the whole Council to choose who they believe would be the best Chairs and Vice-Chairs to represent the Council in its decision-making processes at a committee level.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It could therefore be argued that it should not be left to the committees itself to decide on who is chairing the meetings; - Other Councillors may also consider Council-wide factors in their voting (where there is more than one person nominated for a position) and may consider other factors than the committee members may necessarily focus on. • As there is a delay in committee meetings taking place following the Annual Meeting of the Town Council, and Chairs and Vice-Chairs are (re-)elected each year, the Council risks losing valuable time until the first committee has taken place, potentially losing momentum and information exchange opportunities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Clerk's experience from 2022 is that this can in practice mean we can lose several months until the relevant committee meeting takes place, especially where committee meetings have turned out to be inquorate more often than expected. This happened last year with the Events and Markets Committee which was not quorate in June and thus a (new) Chair and Vice-Chair were not voted in until in July. - The latter can, in practice, also mean that staff preparing the meeting agendas do not necessarily get the input or feedback from any outgoing committee chairs and can also not yet discuss a draft agenda for the first committee meeting with an incoming chair - losing important cooperation opportunities and losing valuable time in the process, potentially negatively affecting the speed at which existing and new initiatives are being progressed.
Recommendations	<p>For the Town Council; To decide to elect Chairs and Vice-Chairs each year at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ It is argued that it is in the Town Council's interest to decide on Chairs and Vice-Chairs for all committees at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council for the above-mentioned reasons. ➤ It is argued that the additional time needed to do this at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council is far outweighed by the continuation of committee information flows, allowing staff to work effectively with the right people from day one following the Annual Meeting of the Town Council instead of potentially losing one, two or perhaps even more months before a new routine is set, and ensuring that existing and new initiatives do not lose momentum as a result of hand-over delays.
Appendices	N/A
Documents:	N/A

SECTION 1B - To be filled in by submitter of the Motion:

Input needed from Clerk?	N/A
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PLEASE NOTE: Agenda item requests: in order to be considered for inclusion on the agenda, motions with all associated papers *must* be received by the Clerk in a final format at least 7 clear daysⁱ before the meeting at which you would like your item to be considered – if any input is required from the Clerk please provide sufficient additional time for the Clerk to schedule in for any feedback and/or additional research that may be required.

SECTION 2 - To be filled in by the Clerk:

Meets/links with Council objectives:	Council efficiency	
Staffing Implications: ⁱⁱ	Yes – would improve overall Council efficiency and prevent unnecessary delays in work progressing at committee level, as set out in above	√
Volunteer need implications:	N/A	
Equalities & Human Rights ⁱⁱⁱ	There are no equalities and human rights issues Details, where relevant: N/A	
Crime and Disorder ^{iv}	Crime and disorder have been considered Details, where relevant: N/A	
Biodiversity ^v	There are no (negative) bio-diversity implications Details, where relevant: N/A	
Sustainability	Is in line with the Council's Plastic-Free Pledge: N/A	
Financial ^{vi}	There are no financial implications at this stage: N/A	
	There will be financial implications; Details: N/A	
	There is provision within the budget Budget heading & details: N/A	
	Decisions may give rise to additional expenditure; Details: N/A	
	Decisions may have potential for income generation; Details: N/A	
Other Resource implications (besides finance):	Details: N/A	
Health and Safety implications ^{vii}	Details: N/A	
Legal	Power under which the spend can be actioned: ^{viii} N/A	
	GDPR - Data Privacy Impact Assessment: ^{ix} Details, where relevant: N/A	
	Other considerations: N/A	
Risk Management	Material risks ^x exist and these are considered and being assessed: Details: YES - Risks of less efficient council work by continuing as done in 2021 and 2022 – as set out above	×
Other Considerations:	N/A	

ⁱ Northstowe Town Council's [Standing Order 9 b,d](#).

ⁱⁱ The Council has a legal duty to ensure it looks after employees' health and wellbeing (the Health and Safety at Work etc act 1974).

ⁱⁱⁱ The key legislation regarding unlawful discrimination is the Equality Act 2010, which amongst other requires the Council to monitor for compliance with the Equality Duty.

^{iv} The Council has a legal duty to act with due regards to crime and disorder in the area (Crime and Disorder Act 1998, s17).

^v The Council has a legal duty to have regard to conserving biodiversity (Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, s40).

^{vi} It is the RFO's duty to manage financial risks on behalf of the Council, as described in the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, reg 4.

^{vii} See also Town Council's [Health and Safety Policy](#).

^{viii} See here for an [Overview of relevant discretionary powers](#) beyond the General Power of Competence.

^{ix} See also the Town Council's [Data Protection Policy](#).

^x See Town Council's [Risk Management Plan](#).