



DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
RESOURCES DIRECTORATE	FINANCE AND DEMOCRACY COMMITTEE	27 JANUARY 2020	6
SENIORITY LIST – OFFICE OF THE MAYOR			

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

SUMMARY

The Constitution Review Group, established through the Audit and Standards Committee, has requested that consideration be given to the seniority list by the Finance and Democracy Committee to take into account cumulative service. At present the position of Mayor is determined on years' service from the start of the most recent election to office. For example, if a member was elected in 2011, and re-elected in 2015 and 2019, they would have a total eight years' service under the current arrangements.

However, if they had been a serving member in the past, with broken service, this previous term of office is largely disregarded under the present arrangements.

The Constitution Review Group suggested that cumulative service should be used as the basis for determining seniority.

As the mayoralty falls under the Terms of Reference of the Finance and Democracy Committee, the Audit and Standards Committee referred to particular issue to the Finance and Democracy Committee for consideration. Terms of Reference of the Finance and Democracy Committee, Part 3 (Responsibility for Functions) of the Council's Constitution refers namely *"To consider any issues in relation to the mayoralty, civic functions or civic ceremonial"*.

Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides that the chairman of a principal council shall be elected annually from among the councillors. Section 245 provides that when a district council has the status of a borough, the chairman is entitled to the style of mayor. A council may elect any of its members to be mayor, and is not bound by any seniority list or other policy that it has adopted.

The current methodology has been broadly custom and practice for a number of years and members of the Audit and Standards Committee noted that if any change was to be agreed that it might be instigated following the 2023 elections in order to give due notice.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To consider the proposal of the Constitution Review Group to base the Seniority List for the Office of the Mayor on cumulative service or to re-state support for the current policy

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS

Cabinet, 14th November 2007 (set out within the body of the report)

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

Spending your money in the most efficient way to achieve excellent services (Value for Money)	√
Delivering the services that customers expect of an excellent council (Clean and Green)	
Working with all partners (Vibrant Economy)	√
To make sure Fylde continues to be one of the most desirable places to live (A Great Place to Live)	
Promoting Fylde as a great destination to visit (A Great Place to Visit)	

REPORT

Policy on the Mayoralty 2007

1. At its meeting held on 14th November 2007, the Cabinet considered, and approved, the recommendations of the Policy and Service Review Scrutiny Committee regarding the mayoralty. This followed consideration of the issue by a cross-party Working Group. The resolutions of the Cabinet are set out below.
 - (a) that the selection of the Mayor be based on a method of order of seniority
 - (b) If in an election-year the Mayor-Elect is not re-elected the position of Mayor be offered to the next member of the list. If declined, the list is followed until an acceptance is received
 - (c) if a member becomes eligible for office on the list but declines the position then it be ascertained if they wish to decline the position permanently – and if so, place their name at the bottom of the list with this intent stated; but if they still wish to be considered for the position then their name be moved to the top of the list the following year
 - (d) That a councillor should only be eligible for the office of the Mayor once only and after that their name should be removed from the seniority list
 - (e) that if a number of councillors become eligible for the office of Mayor during the same year, those members decide between themselves the order in which they will take up office or in the circumstances that agreement cannot be reached, the current Mayor will conduct a draw to determine the order of office
 - (f) If a member, having previously stated they don't want to be considered for Mayor subsequently changes their mind, they be placed on the seniority list at a point to be agreed by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader
 - (g) If a member has broken service then the member should join the list at the most recent term elected, but be elevated to a higher ranking than others elected in the same election term

Proposal from the Constitution Review Group 2019

2. The Constitution Review Group, established through the Audit and Standards Committee, requested that consideration be given to the seniority list. At present the position of Mayor is determined on years'

service from the start of the current term of office. For example, if a member was elected in 2011, 2015 and returned to office in 2019, at this point, they would have eight years' service under the current arrangements.

3. However, this does not take into account that they may have been a serving member in the past, and this period of office is largely disregarded under the present arrangements (point g above refers). For example if a member had served previously in 2003 to 2007, in addition to the term illustrated in para 2 above, they would still be considered to have had eight years continuous service when returned to office in 2019.
4. If the service was based on cumulative service, they would have been deemed to have twelve years' service for the purpose of the seniority list, thereby elevating them on the list. The Constitution Review Group felt that past service should be taken into account.
5. The current methodology has been custom and practice for a number of years and members of the Audit and Standards Committee noted that if any change was to be considered by the Finance and Democracy Committee members may wish to postpone its implementation to follow the next term of office in 2023 in order that members can duly plan for any change.
6. The existing seniority list is attached at Appendix A using the present methodology.
7. Appendix B shows the seniority list if the method was based on cumulative service instead.

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	None arising from the report
Legal	Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides that the chairman of a principal council shall be elected annually from among the councillors. Section 245 provides that when a district council has the status of a borough, the chairman is entitled to the style of mayor. A council may elect any of its members to be mayor, and is not bound by any seniority list or other policy that it has adopted
Community Safety	None arising from this report
Human Rights and Equalities	None arising from this report
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	None arising from this report
Health & Safety and Risk Management	None arising from this report

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Appendices

- A. The seniority list using the present methodology.
- B. The seniority list if the method was based on cumulative service instead.