

**CONSTITUTION TASK GROUP held at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 6.00 pm on 12 MAY 2005**

Present:- Councillor P A Wilcock – Chairman.  
Councillors C M Dean, E J Godwin and A R Row.

Also present:- A Dean, A J Ketteridge and D J Morson.

Officers in attendance:- Councillors A Bovaird, S McLagan, M T Purkiss and T Turner.

**CTG49 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors V J T Lelliott and A R Thawley and M J Perry.

**CTG50 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 April 2005 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**CTG51 BUSINESS ARISING**

It was noted that Alasdair Bovaird and Tracy Turner were still working on the report which had been agreed at the last meeting and this would be available for consideration by the date of the next meeting.

It was also noted that no responses had been received from Members to the options paper which had been circulated with the last set of Minutes.

**CTG52 CURRENT SITUATION**

The Task Group had a wide ranging discussion on the issues which had been discussed so far and the issues which still needed to be resolved. There was general consensus that Members had little appetite for massive changes within the committee structure other than the need to improve scrutiny. It had also been generally accepted that a balance needed to be struck between the need to make the decision-making structure more effective and the desire for minimum change. The imbalance of workload between committees would also need to be addressed and the impact of any changes on the officer resources available needed to be taken into account.

Discussion also took place on the possibility of some form of area decision making and whilst it was agreed that this should be investigated further there was general consensus that Development Control could not be devolved to area committees. There was also general acceptance of the need to increase delegation to ensure that committees worked at a strategic and policy level and officers dealt with the operational issues.

It was agreed that before any final recommendations could be made it would be useful to arrange a member workshop and, in the first instance, the Task Group would operate in a workshop forum at its next meeting to which all Members and the Executive Management Team would be invited.

CTG53

**NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held as a workshop on 26 May 2005 starting at 2.00 pm and concluding by no later than 5.00 pm.

The meeting ended at 7.05 pm.