

Part 2

Articles of the Constitution

Article 1 – The Constitution

1.01 Powers of the Council

The Council will exercise all its powers and duties in accordance with the law and this West Devon Borough Council Constitution.

1.02 Purpose of the Constitution

The purpose of the Constitution is to ensure the good governance of the Council in the public interest by:

- a) describing the structures and operating systems by means of which the Council will secure that it can deliver its services efficiently and effectively;
- b) providing the means of internal scrutiny and oversight of the delivery of Council policies and services; and
- c) improving transparency of delivery and being accountable to the local community.

1.03 Aims of the Constitution

The provisions of the Constitution will:

1. enable the Council to provide clear leadership to the community in partnership with citizens, businesses and other organisations;
2. support the active involvement of citizens in the process of local authority decision-making;
3. help Councillors represent their constituents and the Borough more effectively;
4. enable decisions to be taken efficiently, effectively and transparently, with due regard to probity and equity;
5. create a powerful and effective means of holding decision-makers to public account;
6. ensure that no-one will review or scrutinise a decision in which s/he was directly involved;
7. ensure that those responsible for decision-making are clearly identifiable to local people and that they explain the reasons for decisions; and
8. provide a means of improving the delivery of services to the community.

1.04 Interpretation and Review of the Constitution

Where the Constitution permits the Council to choose between different courses of action, the Council will always choose that option which it thinks is closest to the purposes stated above.

The Council will monitor and evaluate the operation of the Constitution as set out in Article 13.