

Council Constitution

Part 1 - Summary

Your Guide to the Council Constitution

What is the Constitution?

The Constitution provides the framework within which the Council conducts its business and makes decisions. It describes who is responsible for making decisions and how those decisions are taken.

What's in it?

The Constitution sets out the principles on which the Council will make decisions in an open, transparent and accountable way.

It also contains a lot of detailed information. There are detailed rules and procedures. It has statements about what is expected in respect of probity and standards of conduct.

It sets out what Tameside citizens can expect, in terms of access to information, decision making and the opportunity to comment. It also contains details of what the Council expects of citizens.

Why it is important?

It tells everyone how the Council makes decisions and explains the rules. Everyone in the Council must work to these rules. If the rules are to be changed, the Council must approve the changes.

Who has decided what is in it?

The Government requires the Council to put some important rules into the Constitution. It also expects certain 'checks and balances' to be included.

Much of the Constitution has been based on the expressed preferences of the public and stakeholders. The Council has also included some innovative features that suit Tameside as a forward looking authority.

The Council decides what the Constitution should contain.

Who can change it?

The Council can. Tameside citizens can ask the Council to change the Constitution by submitting a petition.

What are the main features?

The [Council](#) sets the policy, budget and Council Tax. Recommendations on these come from a small 'Executive' group of Councillors. This is known as the [Executive Cabinet](#), headed by the [Executive Leader](#). The Cabinet is also responsible for putting Council policy into action. Councillors who are not in the Cabinet meet as [Scrutiny Panels](#) and hold the Executive to account. All quasi-judicial matters are dealt with by [Speakers Panels](#). A [Standards Committee](#), made up of mainly independent people, makes sure the highest standards of conduct and probity are maintained by all parts of the Council. An Independent Remuneration Panel made

recommendations to the Council in respect of a Scheme of Allowances for Elected Councillors made pursuant to the Local Government Act 1989 and subsequent regulations.