

From: Gary Cooke, Cabinet Member, Corporate and Democratic Services
Peter Sass, Head of Democratic Services

To: Selection and Member Services Committee – 27 November 2013

Subject: Webcasting Protocol and extension of webcasting to other meetings

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report sets out a proposal for the phased roll out of webcasting to other meetings that are open to the public but which are not currently webcast and also contains a draft protocol for the webcasting of formal KCC Council and Committee meetings.

1. Extension of the Webcasting of Meetings

(1) At the meeting of this Committee on 4 September 2013 it was agreed in principle that all formal meetings that are open to the public should be webcast with the exception of Corporate Parenting Panel and the Regulation Committee (together with its Member Panels and Mental Health Guardianship Sub-Committee).

(2) It was also agreed that the Head of Democratic Services would draft a protocol for webcasting, including specific measures to address the issues related to webcasting the Planning Applications Committee (to be produced in consultation with the Chairman of the Planning Applications Committee and the Head of Planning Applications Group) and that this draft protocol be submitted to this Committee for approval.

2. Phased approach to the extending webcasting to additional meetings

(1) In order to be able to assess fully the resources necessary to webcast additional meetings, including the implications for the number of webcast hours included in the current contract; the possible need to purchase new equipment for meeting rooms other than the Council Chamber and the Darent Room; and to build confidence in the process for the webcasting of those meetings that are not currently webcast, it is suggested that there should be a phased approach to extending webcasting.

(2) Accordingly, it is proposed that the following additional meetings be webcast with effect from 1 January 2014:

- Electoral and Boundary Review Committee
- Kent Flood Risk Management Committee

- Selection and Member Services Committee
- Governance and Audit Trading Activities Sub Group

(3) The existing webcasting contract is due to be reviewed in early 2015 and it is suggested that this would be the most appropriate time to next review the Council's approach to webcasting and to give this Committee an opportunity to discuss the benefits or otherwise of this non-statutory service prior to instructing officers whether to re-tender the existing contract and, if so, on what basis and for which formal meetings. In the meantime, the Head of Democratic Services will begin to benchmark KCC's webcasting arrangements with those in a number of other Councils in preparation for the review by this Committee in just over 12 months' time.

3. Protocol for Webcasting

(1) The attached protocol (**Appendix 1**) has been drafted to clarify the process for webcasting.

(2) At the last meeting of this Committee it was agreed that this protocol would contain provisions to address the specific concerns of Members and Officers in relation to the webcasting of Planning Applications Committee. However, since the last Committee meeting, discussions have taken place between the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services, the Chairman of the Planning Applications Committee and relevant officers and it is now proposed to defer consideration of the extension of webcasting to the Planning Applications Committee until the review referred to in paragraph 2(3) above.

(3) The Committee is invited to comment on and approve the proposed protocol, which will be applied to all webcast meetings.

4. Recommendations: The Committee is recommended to:

- (a) approve the draft webcasting protocol (**Appendix 1**), which will be applied to all Meetings that are webcast;
- (b) agree a phased approach to extending webcasting to Committees open to the public with the first phase starting on 1 January 2014 consisting of those, Committees listed in paragraph 2(2); and
- (c) consider the extension of webcasting to other formal meetings open to the press and public as part of the review of the webcasting contract in early 2015.

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