

# Article 1

## The Constitution

### Introduction

**This Article sets out the fundamental provisions of the Constitution. It confirms that the Authority will act within the law and the provisions of this Constitution, and also that the Authority will monitor and review its Constitution. It also provides for methods of changing the constitution, and for its publication.**

#### 1.1 Powers of the Council

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

#### 1.2 The Constitution

This Constitution, and all its appendices, is the Constitution of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.

#### 1.3 Purpose of the Constitution

The Council's aim is:

***To deliver high quality, cost effective services through a partnership with all stakeholders and the community in general.***

***To govern within a framework of fairness, openness, integrity and accountability.***

The purpose and principles outlined in the Constitution seek to:

- enable the Council to provide clear leadership to the community;
- work in partnership with citizens, businesses and other organisations;
- support the active involvement of citizens in the process of local authority decision making;
- help Councillors represent their constituents more effectively;
- enable decisions to be taken efficiently and effectively;
- create a powerful and effective means of holding decision makers to public account;
- provide excellent standards of ethics and probity in decision making;
- ensure that those responsible for decision making are clearly identifiable to local people;
- explain the reasons for decisions; and

- provide a means of improving the delivery of services to the community.

#### **1.4 Interpretation 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 above purposes.

The ruling of the Mayor as to the construction or application of this Constitution or as to any proceedings of the Council shall not be challenged at any meeting of the Council. Such interpretation will have regard to the purposes of this Constitution contained in this Article.

#### **1.5 Review and Amendment of the Constitution**

The Council will monitor and evaluate the operation of the Constitution and will amend it as appropriate.

Where changes must be approved by full Council, the Monitoring Officer, having first consulted with the Leader of the political groups or their nominees, may present a report direct to Council proposing changes to the Constitution. Subject to any statutory requirements, the Codes and Protocols and other documents in Part 5 of the Constitution may be amended by the body that created them without Council approval except for the Code of Conduct for Members which is reserved to Council.

#### **1.6 Publication**

The constitution is published on the Council's website and updated when amendments are made.

#### **1.7 Change from a Leader and Executive form of governance to alternative arrangements, or vice versa.**

The Council must take reasonable steps to consult with local electors and other interested persons in the area when drawing up proposals for a change in the form of governance and shall comply with any statutory requirements in relation to such changes.

#### **1.8 Suspension of the Constitution**

The Articles of this Constitution may not be suspended. Other Rules and Protocols may be suspended by the body to which they apply (or if no such body by the Council) to the extent permitted within those Rules, and Protocols and the law.