

Chapter 1 – The Constitution

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 document, and all its appendices, is the Constitution of the East Hertfordshire District Council.

1.3 Purpose of the Constitution

- 1.3.1 The council is committed to serving the aspirations and the needs of the whole community of East Hertfordshire with efficient and cost effective services. It will promote economic, environmental and social wellbeing whilst protecting the District's heritage of market towns, villages and countryside.
- 1.3.2 The council believes that local government should never be onerous or burdensome and should always act to empower individuals and their communities. All processes operated by the Council will permit access by individuals affected whenever possible and be designed to be equitable and fair.
- 1.3.3 The purpose of the Constitution is to:
- (a) enable the council to provide clear leadership to the community in partnership with citizens, businesses and other organisations;
 - (b) support the active involvement of citizens in the process of local authority decision-making;
 - (c) help Members represent their constituents more effectively;

- (d) enable decisions to be taken efficiently and effectively;
- (e) create a powerful and effective means of holding decision-makers to public account;
- (f) ensure that no one will review or scrutinise a decision which they were directly involved in taking;
- (g) ensure that those responsible for decision making are clearly identifiable to local people and that they explain the reasons for decisions; and
- (i) provide a means of improving the delivery of services to the community.

1.4 Interpretation and Review of the Constitution

1.4.1 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.

1.4.2 Consequential amendments will be made to the electronic version of the Constitution as soon as reasonably practicable and published on the council's website to provide transparency.

1.4.3 The council will monitor and evaluate the operation of the Constitution as set out in Chapter 14.