

 Executive – 10 June 2009		Agenda Item No.
Title	Council meeting agenda format	
For further information about this report please contact	Robert Inman	
Service Area	Members' Services	
Wards of the District directly affected	None	
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006	No	
Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number		
Background Papers	None	

Contrary to the policy framework:	No
Contrary to the budgetary framework:	No
Key Decision?	No
Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)	No

Officer/Councillor Approval		
Officer Approval	Date	Name
Relevant Director		Chris Elliott
Chief Executive		
CMT		
Section 151 Officer		Mike Snow
Legal	18 May 2009	Peter Oliver
Finance	18 May 2009	Marcus Miskinis
Portfolio Holder(s)	22 May 2009	Michael Doody
Consultation Undertaken		
Final Decision?		Yes
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)		

1. **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The format of agendas for Council meetings was amended in March 2009 in an attempt improve the relevance of meetings.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 That the Executive consider recommending any amendments to the Council Procedure Rules, as contained in the Constitution, regarding the revised format of the business considered at Council meetings.

3. **REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 The revised format of Council meetings was introduced subject to a review after three months, to include the Council meetings in March and April 2009.

4. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 An alternative to making any changes to the current procedures followed at Council meetings would be to continue with those introduced in March 2009.

5. **BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK**

- 5.1 There are no budgetary issues involved other than expenditure would increase again if the previous format of Council agendas was reintroduced.

6. **POLICY FRAMEWORK**

- 6.1 There are no policy issues relating to this issue.

7. **BACKGROUND**

- 7.1 Section 4 of the Council Procedure Rules contained in Part 4 of the Constitution sets out how meetings of the Council will be conducted.

- 7.2 The Order of Business in Section 4 describes this as follows:

- 1. Apologies for Absence
- 2. Minutes of the last Council meeting
- 3. Communications and Announcements
- 4. Public Submissions
- 5. Memorials and Petitions
- 6. Questions Pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 7(2)
- 7. Questions to Portfolio Holders
- 8. Report of the Executive and any recommendations from committees
- 9. Notices of Motion
- 10. Common Seal

- 7.3 Agenda item 7: *Questions to Portfolio Holders* provides an additional opportunity for any Councillor to raise a question for response by a Portfolio Holder on issues within their area of responsibility..

- 7.4 Any question under agenda item 7 must be submitted to the Chief Executive by 9 am on the day before the Council meeting. The question is then printed and circulated at the meeting. A verbal response is given by the Portfolio Holder.
- 7.5 With regard to agenda item 8, only the minutes of the Executive meeting are included with the agenda and are divided into Part 1: recommendations, and Part 2: resolved items.
- 7.6 The recommendations are called individually so that they can be commented on or discussed, whereas the resolved items are called en bloc and any item can be raised for comment or discussion.
- 7.7 The minutes of all the other committee meetings are not included on the agenda except when there is a recommendation from a committee which needs to be referred to the Council meeting for a decision.
- 7.8 The size of the agenda is now considerably smaller than under the previous arrangements and so much less paper is used in producing the agendas for Council meetings.
- 7.9 It would be necessary to agree to amend the Constitution to allow any changes to be made to the arrangements introduced in March 2009.
- 7.10 The only detailed proposed amendment to the revised format has been made by the Leader.
- 7.11 The proposed amendment is that with regard to agenda item 8 (Report of the Executive and any recommendations from committees) only the recommendations (Part 1) would be submitted for debate. The resolved items (Part 2) would not be discussed. However, questions on the resolutions could be asked under agenda item 7 and must be submitted to the Chief Executive by 9 am on the day before the Council meeting. The questions would be printed and circulated at the meeting and a verbal response would be given by the Portfolio Holder. A verbal, supplementary question could then be asked to clarify the answer given by the Portfolio Holder.
- 7.12 Questions under agenda item 7 would be restricted to the resolved items of the Executive.
- 7.13 It is also proposed that these revised arrangements should be introduced for a further trial period of three months covering the Council meetings on 19 August and 14 October 2009. During that time the views of all the group leaders would be requested so that a final format could then be introduced.