

**Report of the City Solicitor**

**Report to Full Council**

**Date: 14<sup>th</sup> November 2012**

**Subject: Recommendations from General Purposes Committee - Review of Council Meetings**

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**Summary of main issues**

The annual meeting of Council in May 2012 adopted new arrangements for the operation of Ordinary Council meetings, in particular to allow for greater opportunities for Council to engage in activities linked to Community Leadership and for holding the Executive to account. These new arrangements were in place for the meetings of Council in July and September 2012.

Following each of these meetings, Whips from all political groups met to review the new arrangements and to address areas for improvement that have emerged.

The consensus amongst Whips is that the new arrangements have worked well, and, that the opportunity to further refine the arrangements in July and September has been valuable. General Purposes Committee therefore recommends the approval by Full Council of revised Council Procedure Rules, amended to reflect the agreements that have been reached.

**Recommendations**

Council is asked to approve the Council Procedure Rules as attached at Appendix 1.

## **1 Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 Following the operation of revised arrangements at the Council meetings in July and September, General Purposes Committee met on the 25<sup>th</sup> October 2012 to consider redrafted procedure rules for Council to reflect the agreements that have been reached.
- 1.2 This report contains the recommendation from General Purposes Committee to Full Council that the Council Procedure Rules attached at Appendix 1 be approved.

## **2 Background information**

- 2.1 Group Leaders and Whips discussed the scope for modernising the operation of the Full Council Meeting on the lead up to the Annual Meeting in May 2012, in particular to allow for greater opportunities for Council to engage in activities linked to Community Leadership and holding the Executive to account.
- 2.2 Following the Council meeting in July some refinements to the arrangements were agreed by Council in September

## **3 Main issues**

- 3.1 Given the previous approvals by Full Council, and the subsequent political agreements reached for Full Council to operate in July and September, it is now opportune to consolidate those matters into formal procedure rules.
- 3.2 General Purposes Committee met on the 25<sup>th</sup> October 2012 to consider draft Council Procedure Rules. This report presents, at Appendix 1, the Council Procedure Rules recommended for adoption by Full Council by that committee.

## **4 Corporate Considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and Engagement**

- 4.2 Whips from across all political groups have been consulted on these proposed alterations to the format of full Council meetings.

### **4.3 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

- 4.3.1 An initial consideration of the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration screening form indicates that there are no issues raised by the review of the operation of Full Council.

### **4.4 Council Policies and City Priorities**

- 4.4.1 The Council's Business Plan 2011 – 2015 sets out the Council's priorities in delivering services to the public over that period. Particularly the priorities and performance measures for Corporate Directorate require that we "Ensure there are good rules and procedures to govern the council's business".

### **4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

- 4.5.1 These proposed amendments need to be made by Full Council.

## **4.6 Risk Management**

4.6.1 There are no corporate risks arising from this report.

## **5 Conclusions**

5.1 The proposals contained within this report seek to further embed democratic accountability within the Council's governance arrangements and build upon the arrangements approved at the Annual Meeting of Council in May 2012, and refined in September.

## **6 Recommendations**

6.1 Full Council is asked to approve the Council Procedure Rules as attached at Appendix 1.

## **7 Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

7.1 None

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available for inspection on request for a period of four years following the date of the relevant meeting. Accordingly this list does not include documents containing exempt or confidential information, or any published works. Requests to inspect any background documents should be submitted to the report author.