

PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL

Subject:	Constitutional amendments – Council procedure rules
Committee:	Full Council
Date:	21 November 2016
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Riley, Cabinet member for HR/Democracy and Governance/Licensing
CMT Member:	David Shepperd, Assistant Director for Legal Services and Elections
Author:	Judith Shore, Democratic and Member Support Manager
Contact details:	judith.shore@plymouth.gov.uk T: 01752 304494
Key Decision:	No
Part:	I

Purpose of the report

The purpose of the report is to set out proposed changes to the constitution as recommended by the Constitution Review Group on 26 October 2016.

The Council Corporate Plan 2016 - 19

This report reflects the ethos of open government. It also complies with the Council's constitutional requirements.

Implications for Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications: Including finance, human, IT and land

None identified.

Other Implications: e.g. Child Poverty, Community Safety, Health and Safety and Risk Management

None identified.

Equality and Diversity

No implications identified.

Recommendations and Reasons for recommended action

To amend the constitution: Part B, Section 5.1, Order of Business at Ordinary Meetings of the Council, as set out in the report.

Reasons: to enable questions submitted by members of the public to be heard at an earlier stage of Council meetings and to ensure that Cabinet members' announcements are concise.

Alternative options considered and rejected

The alternative was to make no changes to the constitution.

Published work / information:

www.plymouth.gov.uk/CouncilConstitution

Sign off:

Fin		Leg	26829 /DVS	Mon Off	26829 /DVS	HR		Assets		IT		Strat Proc	
Originating SMT Member David Shepperd													
Has the Cabinet Member(s) agreed the content of the report? Yes													

Summary

Councillor Riley, the Cabinet member for HR/Democracy and Governance/Licensing, proposed a number of amendments to the constitution for consideration by the Constitution Review Group (CRG).

On 26 October 2016, CRG considered the proposed amendments and recommended that two amendments, as set out below, are adopted at the next meeting of full Council on 21 November 2016.

PART B, RESPONSIBILITY FOR COUNCIL FUNCTIONS, THE COUNCIL AND COUNCIL PROCEDURES

SECTION 5, ORDER OF BUSINESS AT ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

5.1 – Ordinary meetings except for Council Tax setting meetings

(i) Reply to questions by the public

Recommendation: that responses to questions by the public are moved from 5.1 (i) to 5.1 (g) and are heard directly after the Lord Mayor's announcements in order to welcome contributions from members of the public at an earlier stage of the meeting.

The amended constitution to read,

'(f) receive announcements from the Lord Mayor, Head of Paid Service, Responsible Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer

(g) reply to questions from the public

(h) receive announcements from the Leader, Cabinet members and committee chairs'

(Subsequent sections of 5.1 to be re-numbered accordingly.)

5.1 – Ordinary meetings except for Council Tax setting meetings

(h) Receive announcements from the Leader, Cabinet members, committee chairs

Recommendation: some meetings of Council are very lengthy (examples being the Council meetings held on 11 July and 19 September) and it is proposed that a time limit is introduced for item (h) 'receiving announcements from the Leader, Cabinet members and committee chairs'. The introduction of a time limit could encourage more concise statements and members of the public present or viewing from home may be more appreciative of shorter Council meetings.

The amended constitution to read:

(Footnote added after (q) councillors' questions): 'Council will spend no longer than 30 minutes on item (h) receive announcements from the Leader, Cabinet members and committee chairs.'