

**DEMOCRATIC ARRANGEMENTS FORUM
TUESDAY, 26 AUGUST 2014**

In attendance: Councillor M Connolly (in the Chair)
The Mayor (Councillor M Wiseman – Chair of
Standards Committee),
Councillor I Gartside

Officers: M Kelly – Chief Executive
J Hammond – Assistant Director of Legal and
Democratic Services
C Shillitto – Head of Democratic Services

**Apologies for
Absence** Councillor S Walmsley

**1. NOTICES OF MOTION – CONSIDERATION PRIOR TO INCLUSION ON
COUNCIL SUMMONS**

It was reported that there was currently no provision in the Council Procedure Rules for a means of determining, prior to the issuing of the Council Summons, whether or not a Notice of Motion was inappropriate or illegal and should therefore be ruled Out of Order. Whilst it was acknowledged that the need for such a measure would be rare, it was considered desirable as a means of protecting Members.

It was agreed:

1. That Council Procedure Rule 12.4, headed "Scope", be amended by the addition of:

"(2) The Mayor, or in his/her absence the Deputy Mayor, on the advice of the Council Solicitor, may exclude from the agenda any notice of motion which may be out of order, illegal, irregular or improper. In the event of non-acceptance, the Council Solicitor shall so inform the Member giving notice and the Member shall be entitled to submit a further Notice of Motion prior to the issuing of the Council Summons."

2. That in order to provide sufficient time for Notices of Motion to be properly assessed, Council Procedure Rule 12.1, "Notice," be amended by the deletion of "at least eight clear working days" and the substitution of "at least ten clear working days"

2. QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER

It was reported that prior to September 2009, questions to the Leader were listed on a "First Come First Serve" basis. Then the current system of questions by political group in rotation was introduced.

Members are asked to consider if these arrangements are appropriate at the current time given that some members are able to ask two questions whilst others will not get an opportunity to ask one.

It was agreed:

1. That questions continue to be asked through political group rotation but the sequence be dictated by political proportionality (resulting currently in 3 Labour questions to one Conservative question);
2. That Council Procedure Rule 11.1 (b) be amended by the deletion of "There will be a 30 minute time limit on this part of the Council proceedings," and the substitution of "There will be a 40 minute time limit on this part of the Council proceedings;"
3. That these arrangements be reviewed after a couple of Council meetings to assess the impact on the efficient management of Council business;
4. That further discussion take place regarding written questions submitted by independent members or single members.

3. THE OPENNESS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT BODIES REGULATIONS 2014

It was reported that these Regulations are now in force and affect local authorities in two ways:

- Allow members of the public to report and commentate on open meetings including filming and disseminating proceedings through social media;
- Require written records to be kept of certain decisions taken by officers.

Further consideration would now be given to the practical implications for the Council.

COUNCILLOR M CONNOLLY
Chair

(Note: The meeting started at 5.00 pm and ended at 5.40 pm.)