
LEADER'S REPORT

To: **Constitutional Review Working Party – 26 April 2012**

By: **Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Ward: **All Wards**

Summary: **To consider whether the time allowed for the Leader's right of reply should be extended**

For Decision

1.0 Introduction and background

1.1 Council Procedure Rule 2.2 (as revised by Council on 13 October 2011) states:

“The Leader of the Council may make an oral report, not exceeding ten minutes, on key issues arising since the last meeting of Council.

“The Leaders of the Opposition and any other Political Group may comment on the Leader's Report. The comments of the Leaders of the Opposition and other Political Groups shall be limited each to five minutes.

“The Leader has a right of reply, limited to two minutes, to any comments made on his/her report.

“Other Members may make comments and ask questions on the Leader's Report, subject to the discretion of the Chairman, and the total time (including time slots as mentioned above) being limited to 30 minutes.

“The Leader of the Council, the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of any other Political Group may appoint substitutes to speak on their behalf.

“No motions may be moved nor resolutions passed under this item.”

2.0 The Current Position

2.1 At the meeting of Council held on 23 February 2012, the Chairman exercised the discretion to allow other Members to speak, and a significant number of questions were asked of the Leader of the Council. It became apparent that the two minutes allowed for him to respond was insufficient time for the Leader of the Council to answer such a large number of questions.

2.2 Members of the Working Party may wish to consider whether the time allowed for the right of reply by the Leader of the Council should be extended, and, if so, by how much time. Note that the overall time permitted for discussion of the Leader's report would also need to be increased to accommodate this.

- 2.3 It should be noted that the Council now has an additional political Group, meaning that the time taken by these Groups to comment upon the Leader's report will increase by five minutes. The Working Party is therefore invited to consider whether the overall time permitted for this agenda item should be increased by five minutes.
- 2.4 Finally, as the Council is now a "hung Council", the Working Party may wish to consider whether the second paragraph of Council Procedure Rule 2.2 should be amended as follows:

"The Leaders of the Opposition and any other Political Group may comment on the Leader's Report. The comments of the Leaders of the Opposition and other Political Groups shall be limited each to five minutes. The other Group Leaders will comment in an order determined by the number of Councillors within those Political Groups, with the largest Group commenting first, and so on."

and the penultimate paragraph, amended to read:

"The Leader of the Council, the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of any other Political Group may appoint substitutes to speak on their behalf."

3.0 Corporate Implications

3.1 Financial and VAT

- 3.1.1 There are no financial or VAT implications

3.2 Legal

- 3.2.1 If changes are made to the existing Leader's report arrangements, the Council's constitution will need to be amended.

3.3 Corporate

- 3.3.1 The Council's constitution sets out the basic rules governing the Council's business.

3.4 Equity and Equalities

- 3.4.1 There are no equalities implications.

4.0 Recommendation

- 4.1 That the Working Party considers any changes to Council Procedure Rule 2.2 that it wishes to recommend to the Standards Committee.

5.0 Decision Making Process

- 5.1 If the Working Party is minded to make a recommendation on changing the constitution regarding the Leader's report, the recommendation will then go to the Standards Committee, and any recommendations agreed by the Standards Committee will be reported to Council.

Future Meetings: Standards Committee Council	Date: 9 May 2012 Date: 12 July 2012
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Annex List

None	
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Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
None	

Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Finance	N/A
Legal	Harvey Patterson, Corporate and Regulatory Services Manager. Ext 7005
Communications	Hannah Thorpe, Corporate Communications officer, Ext 7120