

REVIEW OF COUNCIL CONSTITUTION

WHY?

Improve significance of meetings
Make Full Council meetings more meaningful
Increase the number of debates on policy matters
Create an improved platform for non-executive members to contribute to policy development
Increase back-bench contributions in debates
Make better use of time available/more manageable
Make best use of council resources.

HOW?

Restructure agenda
Create clear distinction between executive & non-executive business
Executive to agenda more policy proposals for debate
Set aside specified time for opposition business
Limit contributions of Cabinet Members (other than leader and/or deputy leader) to portfolio responsibilities

CABINET BUSINESS

Cabinet to bring forward Green Paper/White Paper proposals for debate
Create mechanism for capturing alternative proposals
Written Statements on important policy proposals to be issued throughout the cycle
Written Statements to be circulated with Summons and question on statements to be limited
Oral statements restricted to the most significant policy
Proposals

NON-CABINET BUSINESS

Create more opportunities for minority parties and for non-executive members of majority party
Set aside specific time for opposition debates
Consider a ballot for "private-member" motions and agree criteria for a motion to get on council agenda

COUNCIL QUESTIONS

Increase use of written questions
Ward specific issues be dealt with by way of written questions only (with caveats)
Reduce time allocated for oral questions/reduce number of written questions
Get rid of second supplementary question
Re-visit formula for allocating questions to party groups (eg take executive out of the calculation)
A separate, additional meeting for oral questions/ questions on statements

COUNCIL MOTIONS

Reduce the number of motions at each meeting (max 2 – 1 opposition; 1 Member)

Re-visit formula for allocating motions to party groups (Cabinet proposals to be regarded as part of majority party allocation)

Groups to provide names of members they want called first in debates & limit number in advance

Priority be given to nominated party spokespersons

Cabinet Member or Assistant Cabinet Member to respond to each motion

Create mechanism to allow groups to remit motions to Cabinet

OTHER ISSUES

Earlier start time for meetings

Introduce time limit on meetings

A guillotine for unfinished business to be put to vote

Non-contentious Cabinet business to be taken at the end of the meeting

Take public questions at Cabinet meetings

Leave things as they are now

ANY OTHER SUGGESTIONS?