

Council

Date of Meeting: 19th December 2019

Report Title: Council Meeting Arrangements

Senior Officer: Head of Democratic Services and Governance

1. Report Summary

Council, on 17th October 2019, considered a report on proposed changes to meeting arrangements, following recommendations from the Constitution Committee. During the debate, it was proposed that all Members should be given an opportunity to comment on the proposals in the report before the matter was considered further. Council determined not to progress discussions on the matter and to allow the Constitution Committee to consider the issues further following a survey of all members and report back to the December Council meeting.

A survey of members has since been undertaken to secure members' views on the proposed changes to meeting arrangements. The survey results were considered by the Constitution Committee at its meeting on 21st November 2019. The survey results had indicated broad support for all of the proposals originally recommended to Council by the Committee.

Having considered the results of the survey, the Constitution Committee resolved that the recommendations set out in the Committee's report to Council on 17th October 2019 be recommended to Council for approval.

2. Recommendation

That Council approve

- 2.1. That with effect from the start of the next municipal year, all ordinary meetings of the Council be held on Wednesdays.
- 2.2. That Council meetings other than the Annual Council meeting continue to be held in Sandbach, at Sandbach Town Hall, but where a larger venue is

needed for a particular occasion, a suitable venue in an alternative location be used.

2.3. That with effect from the start of the next municipal year, all ordinary Council meetings start at 11.00 am.

2.4. That at meetings of Council and the Cabinet, a maximum period of two minutes be allowed for each member wishing to ask a question during members' question time, and a maximum period of two minutes be allowed for each member of the public wishing to speak or ask a question during public speaking time, subject to the Chairman having discretion to vary this requirement where he/she considers it appropriate.

2.5. That at meetings of Council, a total period of two minutes be allowed in which the proposer and seconder of a motion under Paragraph 1.34 (a Notice of Motion) may speak in order to explain the purpose of the motion before the motion is dealt with.

2.6. That the Director of Governance and Compliance be authorised to make such amendments to the Constitution as she considers necessary to give effect to the changes recommended above.

3. Background

3.1. On 19th September 2019, the Constitution Committee considered a report which addressed a number of practical issues relating to meeting arrangements.

3.2. The Committee made a series of recommendations to Council on 17th October 2019. The report is attached at Appendix A.

3.3. During the debate at the Council meeting, views were expressed that Members should be given a further opportunity to comment upon the proposals in the report before the matter was considered further.

3.4. Following the meeting of Council, a survey was sent to Members as attached at Appendix B.

3.5. Officers have analysed the survey responses, and a summary of that analysis is attached at Appendix C.

3.6. It can be seen that the survey results indicate broad support for all of the proposals originally recommended to Council by the Committee.

4. Implications of the Recommendations

4.1. Legal Implications

Any changes to the Council's meeting arrangements must be reflected in the Council's Constitution.

4.2. Finance Implications

No direct finance implications would arise from the recommendations of this report.

4.3. Policy Implications

No direct policy implications would arise from the recommendations of this report, other than those matters which would be reflected in the Council's Constitution.

4.4. Equality Implications

The recommendations made by the Committee take account of the needs of those with disabilities, who currently find it difficult to find parking provision in Sandbach Town Centre, as a consequence of meetings taking place on Market Day.

4.5. Human Resources Implications

No direct human resources implications would arise from the recommendations of this report.

4.6. Risk Management Implications

No direct risk management implications would arise from the recommendations of this report.

4.7. Rural Communities Implications

No direct rural communities implications would arise from the recommendations of this report.

4.8. Implications for Children & Young People/Cared for Children

There are no direct implications for children and young people.

4.9. Public Health Implications

There are no direct implications for public health.

4.10. Climate Change Implications

Current difficulties experienced by Members in seeking parking spaces on the day of Council might result in additional driving around Sandbach in order for some

Members to find car parking provision. The proposed change of day of Council meetings, to avoid Market Day, would minimise this.

5. Ward Members Affected

There would appear to be no direct issues relating to particular Wards.

6. Consultation & Engagement

All Members have been given the opportunity to participate in a survey, in order to secure their feedback upon the matters previously considered by the Committee and Council.

7. Access to Information

Other than the documents appended to this report, there are no background documents.

8. Contact Information

8.1. Any questions relating to this report should be directed to the following officer:

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