

# CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

## Constitution Committee

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**Date of Meeting:** 5<sup>th</sup> July 2012  
**Report of:** Democratic and Registration Services Manager  
**Subject/Title:** Notice of Motion on Changes to the Arrangements for Scheduled Committee Meetings

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### **1.0 Report Summary**

- 1.1 This report invites the Committee to consider the following Motion, proposed by Councillor D Brickhill and seconded by Councillor P Edwards, which has been referred by Council to the Committee for consideration:

“That meetings set out in the Council diary shall not be changed either by timing or location unless:

All Members have been consulted and there is no relevant business in which case the meeting is cancelled.

All Members are consulted and more than 60 agree to the change.”

### **2.0 Recommendation**

- 2.1 That the Committee consider the Motion and offer its advice to Council.

### **3.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1 To enable Council to consider the Committee’s views on the matter.

### **4.0 Wards Affected**

- 4.1 None

### **5.0 Local Ward Members**

- 5.1 None

### **6.0 Policy Implications (including carbon reduction and health)**

- 6.1 None

### **7.0 Financial Implications (authorised by Director of Finance and Business Services)**

- 7.1 None

## **8.0 Legal Implications (authorised by Borough Solicitor)**

- 8.1 Any changes to the current arrangements for changing meetings would require an amendment to the Constitution.

## **9.0 Risk Management**

- 9.1 There may be a risk in securing a sufficient response from Members in time to enable meeting arrangements to be changed, which could impact on the Council's ability to operate flexibly and efficiently. Many Members may choose not to respond because they are not directly affected by the proposed changes.

## **10.0 Background and Options**

- 10.1 Committee Procedure Rule 26 provides that meetings of committees and sub-committees will be set out in the calendar of meetings approved by the Council under Council Procedure Rule 1.1. There will be a presumption against alterations to the date, time and venue for meetings. When it is necessary to alter the date, time and/or venue of a meeting, or to arrange a special meeting, the Monitoring Officer will consult the Chairman and Spokesmen of the relevant Committee or Sub-Committee before any action is taken. The Chairman of the Committee or Sub-Committee will then determine the matter. Any changes to the arrangements of scheduled meetings, and the details of any special meetings, are notified to all Members of the Council.
- 10.2 The introduction of a procedure whereby all Members of the Council have to be consulted on any change in the meeting arrangements for a scheduled committee meeting, and which would require at least 60 Members to agree any such change, could make the operation of the Council's committee system unwieldy, inflexible and inefficient. Under current arrangements, not only the Chairman and Vice-Chairman but also the spokesmen of other political groups represented on the Committee must be consulted and they will no doubt wish to take soundings from their colleagues on the Committee. It is then for the Chairman to determine the matter. All Members of the Council are then be notified immediately of any changes or cancellations and the reason for them. Where it is necessary to convene a special or ad hoc meeting of a relatively small body such as a sub-committee or working group, it is normally the practice to consult all Members of the body on the proposed arrangements.

## **11.0 Access to Information**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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