

**Meeting of the Cabinet – 27<sup>th</sup> June, 2019**

**Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board**

**Questions by Members at Full Council - Review of Council Procedure Rule 11**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To consider the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on the future procedure for dealing with Questions by Members at full Council.

**Recommendations**

2. That the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, as set out in paragraph 5 below, be endorsed and the revised procedure be adopted with effect from the Council meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> July, 2019.
3. That the amendments to Council Procedure Rule 11 be submitted to full Council in due course as part of the annual review of the Constitution.

**Background**

4. On 12<sup>th</sup> June, 2019, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board considered a report on the review of Council Procedure Rule 11 and the future procedure for dealing with Questions by Members at full Council. The report and minutes of that meeting are available on the [Council's website](#).
5. Revised arrangements were piloted at full Council meetings during the previous municipal year. Based on practical experience and feedback received, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board has made recommendations on the following points:

**Purpose of the Question Time Session**

- That the purpose of the session be to allow an interactive 'Question and Answer' session giving greater freedom for Members to ask questions on any matter for which the Council has powers and duties or which affect the Borough.

### The 'White Book'

- That the production of the 'White Book' be continued, however, there is no requirement for Members to link their questions to references in the White Book. The document will be published online and paper copies provided to any Member upon request.

### Time Limit on the Question Time Session

- That an overall time limit of one hour be introduced for questions to the Leader, Cabinet Members and Chairs with the proviso that Council Procedure Rules may be suspended in appropriate circumstances.

### Time Limit on Individual Questions/Responses

- That the time limit on all individual contributions during the Question Time session be reduced to two minutes.

### Limit on the Number of Questions a Member may ask

- That questions be dealt with individually, however, there should be provision for Members to ask more than one question during the session.

### Questions on the Same Subject

- That the practice of the Mayor inviting questions on the same subject be discontinued.

### Written Questions in Advance

- That the provision for advance written questions be retained and it be a requirement that relevant Members state the question and response verbally.

### Supplementary Questions

- That the provision for a questioner to ask a supplementary question be retained.

### Mayor's Procedure

- That the Mayor remind the Council of the procedure to be followed at the start of each Question Time session. This will assist Members and any persons observing the broadcast of the meeting on the Internet.

6. A revised draft of Council Procedure Rule 11 is attached as an Appendix. Subject to approval by the Cabinet, it is intended that this will be applied to the full Council meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> July, 2019 and formalised in the annual review of the Constitution.

### Law

7. The Constitution is adopted by the Council pursuant to the requirements of the Local Government Act 2000.

### **Equality Impact**

8. This report has no direct impact on the Council's commitment to equality and diversity.

### **Human Resources/Transformation**

9. This report has no direct human resources implications. The report deals primarily with a change in the process for dealing with questions at full Council, which will be administered by the Democratic Services Section.

### **Commercial Implications**

10. This report has no impact on the Council's potential to commercially trade.



.....  
**Councillor N Richards**  
**Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board**

### **List of Background Papers**

[The Council's Constitution](#)  
[Report and Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 12<sup>th</sup> June, 2019](#)

**COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 11**

11. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

Questions at Full Council Meetings

- 11.1 At ordinary Council meetings, Members will be invited by the Mayor to address questions to the Leader, Cabinet Members and Chairs as appropriate. The total time period allowed for questions shall be one hour. Council Procedure Rules may be suspended in appropriate circumstances.
- 11.2 Questions must relate to a matter for which the Council has powers or duties or which affect the Borough. Questions should not relate to subjects that are covered by other agenda items or which relate to individual items of casework. Questions will be dealt with individually, however, Members may be invited to ask more than one question during the meeting.
- 11.3 Members may submit written questions in advance by giving at least 3 clear working days' notice to the Monitoring Officer before the date of the ordinary meeting of the Council. Written questions may also be submitted to a Member who is appointed by the Council to a Joint Authority or a Joint Committee. The same notice period applies. Written questions, and the answers to them, shall be stated verbally at the Council meeting.
- 11.4 The time limit on all individual contributions by Members when asking questions and/or providing responses shall be two minutes.
- 11.5 If the Member to whom a question is addressed is absent, the Leader, Deputy Leader, Vice-Chair or another Member will be asked to reply as appropriate.
- 11.6 Before calling on the appropriate Chair to reply, the Mayor may invite the Leader or relevant Cabinet Member to comment on the question.
- 11.7 Immediately after a reply is given to a question, the Member who asked the original question will be invited to ask one supplementary question if they wish. The supplementary question must relate to the original question or the answer to it. Any written replies to questions will be made available to all Members of the Council.

Questions at Committees

- 11.8 If two clear days' notice in writing has been given to the Monitoring Officer, a Member of a Committee may ask the Chair any question on any matter falling within the functions of that Committee.