

Report to: Governance Committee

Date of meeting: 22 March 2022

By: Assistant Chief Executive

Title: Amendment to Constitution – Debate of Cabinet priorities

Purpose: To seek approval to amend the Constitution in relation to the debate of the Cabinet priorities for the year ahead

RECOMMENDATION: The Governance Committee is recommended to recommend the County Council to agree to the proposed amendments to the Constitution set out in paragraph 1.3 of the report

1 Background Information

1.1 Standing Order 45 of the Constitution sets out that at the annual meeting of the Council in May up to 90 minutes shall be set aside for a debate on the Cabinet priorities for the year ahead (and past achievements). At a meeting in June/July then Cabinet considers a report on Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources – State of the County which is reported to the County Council (usually October).

1.2 It is considered that it would be preferable to have the Full Council debates on the State of the County report and the Cabinet priorities at the same meeting as the report could inform the priorities debate. It is therefore proposed that the Constitution be amended to have the debate on the Council priorities at the July Council meeting. It is proposed that an exception to this be in a year of Full Council elections when the debate of priorities would take place at the annual meeting in order that the administration can set out its priorities at the earliest opportunity.

1.3 It is therefore proposed that the amendments be made to the following Standing Orders:

- a) Standing order 10 (11)

At the **July** annual meeting, to debate the Cabinet's priorities for the year ahead, **with the exception of a year of Full Council elections when the debate will be held at the annual meeting**

- b) Standing Order 23 (2)

No speech shall exceed five minutes except there the Leader of the Council and the Leaders of the Opposition Groups are speaking at the start of the debate ~~at the annual meeting~~ on the Cabinet's priorities. In this instance, each Leader shall be permitted to speak for up to 11 minutes – see Standing Order 45.

- c) Standing Order 32.8

The Leader of the Council shall have a right of reply to the debate ~~at the annual meeting~~ on the Cabinet's priorities for the year ahead.

d) Standing Order 45

DEBATE OF CABINET'S PRIORITIES FOR YEAR AHEAD

At the **July** annual meeting of the Council up to 90 minutes shall be set aside for a debate of the Cabinet's priorities for the year ahead (and its past achievements) **with the exception of a year of Full Council elections when the debate will be held at the annual meeting.** The Leader of the Council and the Leaders of the Opposition Groups shall be entitled to speak first and shall each be permitted to speak for up to 11 minutes. Any extension must be agreed by the Council. Otherwise the normal restrictions on the length of speeches shall apply. No motions may be moved during this debate. At the end of the 90 minutes' period (or sooner if the debate is concluded in less time) the Leader of the Council shall be entitled to reply to the debate.

1.4 In order to facilitate the Cabinet priorities debate being held at the same meeting as the debate on the State of the County Report (with the exception of a year of Full Council elections) it is proposed that the Committee recommend the changes to the Constitution set out in paragraph 1.3 to the Council for approval.

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Local Member: All

Background Documents: None