

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

RECORD OF RECOMMENDATION OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL TO COUNCIL

Recommendation Made: 07 June 2012

LEADER'S REPORT ON CURRENT ISSUES

Issue for Decision

Reporting on a request from the Group Leaders to open up this item to include questioning from the other members of the public.

Recommendation Made

That Procedural Rule 17 in the Council Procedure Rules in the Constitution be deleted and the following inserted:-

"Leaders Report on Current Issues"

- 17.1 At every Ordinary Meeting of the Council (except the Annual Meeting) after the Question and Answer session dealing with questions by Members, the Leader shall report to the Council on current issues.
- 17.2 The Leaders of every other Group shall then have the right to respond to the issues raised.
- 17.3 Each Group Leader may speak for up to five minutes.
- 17.4 After the Leader and the other Group Leaders have spoken the Mayor will open the item to questions from Council Members for a period of fifteen minutes.
- 17.5 Questions to be asked by Council Members as set out in 17.4 above will be limited to those issues raised by the Leader and the other Group Leaders in their speeches. Questions will be answered as directed by the questioner and will not require a response from all Group Leaders. The Mayor will be the sole determinant of whether the question relates to the issues raised in these speeches.

Reasons for Recommendation

Currently the constitution states the following:-

"LEADERS REPORT ON CURRENT ISSUES

- 17.1 At every Ordinary Meeting of the Council (except the annual meeting) after the Question and Answer session dealing with questions by Members, the Leader shall report to the Council on current issues
- 17.2 The Leaders of every other Group shall then have the right to respond to the issues raised.
- 17.3 Each Group Leader may speak for up to ten minutes.
- 17.4 After the other Group Leaders have spoken the Leader shall have the right to speak for a further three minutes in response to points raised by them."

This means that the item on the Council Agenda entitled "Leader's Report on Current Issues" allows for the Leader to speak for ten minutes and for the other Group Leaders to respond speaking for ten minutes with the Leader summing up for a further three minutes. The Group Leaders have requested a review of the "Leaders Report on Current Issues" with a view to opening it up to all Members to give them an opportunity to participate in this item. The view is that each of the Leaders should still have five minutes to speak but after that there should be a period of fifteen minutes for Council members to ask questions of the Leader and other Group Leaders about matters they have raised in their speeches. It is proposed that there will be no summing up by the Leader. It is felt that this gives a greater opportunity for all Members to be involved in the proceedings of the Council meeting.

The recommendation sets out the changes necessary to the Constitution to implement the proposal made by the Group Leaders.

Alternatives considered and why not recommended

The Leader could agree to take no action and retain the existing system but that would fail to provide an opportunity for greater involvement in the Council meeting for all Members on the Council.

Background Papers

None

Evaluation from Standards Committee

In accordance with Article 15.02 (a) of the Constitution, the Standards Committee has evaluated the proposed amendments to the Council Procedure Rule relating to the Leaders' Report on Current Issues and, although having some concerns about the details (for example, calling the Rule "Leader's Report on Current Issues"), in principle, believes that their implementation will help to ensure that the aims and principles of the Constitution are given full effect by providing an opportunity for all Members of the Council to have greater involvement in Council meetings.