

BUDGET COUNCIL PROCEDURE

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report proposes a procedure for the Budget meeting of the Council.

2. Background

- 2.1 Standing Order 13 provides that the Director of Law, H.R. and Asset Management “shall, prior to the Budget meeting of the Council, consult with the Leaders of each political group and submit to the Cabinet and Council a suggested procedure to be adopted at the budget meeting, but if no such procedure is adopted the normal procedures of the Council in relation to amendments to Cabinet recommendations will apply”.

3. Proposed procedure

- 3.1 The Budget meeting clearly is different from ordinary meetings and therefore the procedure that is proposed is based largely on that used since 2008, the relevant sections of the Constitution, and one or two suggestions made in the light of comments made in previous years. It is set out in the appendix to this report.

4. Outcome of consultation

- 4.1 As indicated above, the Party Leaders should be consulted on the procedure. Their views will be reported to the meeting.

5. Financial and Staffing Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial or staffing implications arising directly out of this report.

6. Other Implications

- 6.1 There are no implications arising out of this report in terms of equal opportunities, ethnic minorities, the elderly or the disabled; nor are there any implications relating to community safety, human rights, Local Agenda 21, planning or social inclusion.

7. Local Member Support

- 7.1 The report has no implications for individual wards.

8. Background Papers

- 8.1 Other than published works and the Council minutes, no background papers have been used in the preparation of this report.

9. Decision Required

- 9.1 The Cabinet is requested to approve the Budget Council procedure.

Bill Norman

Director of Law, H.R. and Asset Management

10 February 2012

COUNCIL – 1 March 2012

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- 1. Mayor's communications**
- 2. Declarations of Interest / Restrictions on voting**
Note: a letter on what restrictions might apply has been sent to all members
- 3. Petitions**
Note: if a petition relates to the setting of the Budget, the member who presents it should be given the opportunity during the main debate to speak about it, in order that the Council can take account of it in that context.
- 4. Matters requiring approval by the Council**

BUDGET

The Leader will formally move the Cabinet's Budget recommendations, with any additional paragraphs (e.g. those relating to precepts), plus any other minutes from the Cabinet meeting on 20 February that require approval by the Council.

Minutes formally seconded

Budget debate

There will be one debate on the Budget (Cabinet minute xxx). Any alternative proposals to those of the Cabinet should have been lodged with the Director of Law, H.R. and Asset Management by **12.00noon on Monday 27 February**.

The Cabinet's Budget proposals are formally moved.

Formally seconded

Any amendments to the Cabinet's Budget recommendations are formally moved.

Each amendment is formally seconded.

Mayor calls speakers:

The Leader of the Council may request leave to save all or part of his time (15 minutes) until the end of the debate, in which case it will be added to the time for his right of reply (7 minutes).

The Leader of the Opposition, speaking to his Group's budget (15 minutes)

Movers of other amendments (7 minutes)

Note: if there are several such amendments, the Mayor should consider varying the order of movers to ensure a balanced debate.

Mayor will decide the order of other speakers (3 minutes each).

Note: The Portfolio Holder for Children's Services will be allocated 5 minutes by virtue of speaking on the Schools' Budget element.)

Debate ends with seconders, **unless** they have spoken earlier:

The Secunder of the Cabinet's budget (7 minutes)

The Secunder of the Opposition's budget (5 minutes)

Seconders of other amendments (3 minutes each)

Leader's speech / right of reply (all or remainder of 22-minute allocation)

Voting:

The first vote will be on the Opposition's budget, and if it falls

The Council votes on any other amendments.

Decision

If all amendments to the Budget fall, minute xxx of the Cabinet will be **taken as approved, without the need for any further vote**, in accordance with Standing Order 7(1).

If the proposed budget is amended, wholly or partly, that will be regarded as an in-principle decision, which will automatically come into effect five working days from the date of that decision, **unless** the Leader of the Council informs the Director of Law, H.R. and Asset Management in writing within that time that he objects to the decision becoming effective and provides reasons why.

In such circumstances, the Budget and Policy Framework provides for the Director to call another meeting of the Council within a further five days. The Council will then be required to reconsider its decision, and the Leader's written submission, within a further five working days. The actual position is that a reserve date (**Wednesday 7 March**) has been set aside for considering any objection by the Leader. At that second meeting the Council can:

- (i) accept the Cabinet's recommendation, without amendment or objection; or
- (ii) approve a different decision that does not accord with the recommendation of the Cabinet, by a simple majority of votes cast at the meeting.

Other objections

The Council will then debate, in the normal manner, any objections to other minutes that are subject to Council approval.

5. Vacancies

6. Any other business