



# City Council Meeting

## Inquiry of the Corporate Resources O&S Committee

### 1 Purpose

- 1.1 Following the Leader's appearance at your Committee last month, and following discussions held by the Committee at the start of the municipal year, the Committee indicated its intention to review the arrangements for City Council meetings.
- 1.2 This had been scheduled for the April meeting but, as a report scheduled for the February meeting has been deferred, this item has been brought forward for consideration of the terms of reference (Appendix 1) and initial evidence gathering.
- 1.3 This note sets out some background information and key questions.

### 2 The Constitution

- 2.1 The constitution sets out the role of the City Council meeting. In Part A, Article 10 sets out the responsibilities (see Appendix 2a) and in Part B, B1 – Council Standing Orders deal with the procedure at meetings of the full council (see Appendix 2b).

### 3 A Brief History (with omissions)

- 3.1 Prior to 2000, the City Council delegated functions to committees (although not to individual Members) or to officers as it saw fit. The papers for the meetings of many council meetings across the country consisted of the minutes of the various committees. Approval of a committee's minutes by the full council was often the point at which decisions were taken.
- 3.2 Following the passing of the Local Government Act 2000, this changed significantly. With powers and duties now vested in the Executive, the major decisions falling to full Council relate to approving the constitution, the budget, policy framework plans and bye laws, and electing the Leader of the Council.
- 3.3 In 2005, the Co-ordinating O&S Committee conducted a review of the Role of Members and the Full Council. The conclusions and recommendations in relation to the full Council meeting are attached in Appendix 3.
- 3.4 Those recommendations were implemented but there have been subsequent further changes, such as the removal of Cabinet Member reports and the addition of public questions.



# City Council Meeting

- 3.5 In 2014, the Governance, Resources and Customer Services O&S Committee considered the issue of petitions to the full council and the agenda was subsequently amended. The letter to CBM is attached (Appendix 4).

## 4 Other Examples

- 4.1 Appendix 5 contains examples of city council agendas from the other seven Core Cities.

## 5 Next Steps

- 5.1 Members are asked to
- agree the terms of reference;
  - consider what other forms of evidence gathering members wish to undertake (e.g. invited contributions, survey of members?);
  - discuss possible recommendations.
- 5.2 It is proposed that this is brought back to the March meeting of the Committee, for members to decide if they wish to take a report to City Council.

### **Contact Officers:**

Emma Williamson, Head of Scrutiny Services (0121 464 6870)  
Jayne Power, Research & Policy Officer (0121 303 4810)



## Appendix 1: Work Outline DRAFT

# City Council Meeting

## Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Our key question:	How should the City Council agenda be changed to allow the meeting to play a more effective role in supporting local democracy?
1. How is O&S adding value through this work?	The Leader has asked the Committee to consider the City Council meeting and how it could be managed differently to facilitate wider debate.
2. What needs to be done?	<p>The key lines of enquiry are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To consider member views on the role of the City Council meeting;</li><li>• To consider how Cabinet Members, Regulatory Committees (including Audit) and O&amp;S Committees can play a part in the City Council meeting;</li><li>• To consider the role of public questions and question time;</li><li>• To consider the usefulness of Policy Framework Plans</li></ul>
3. What timescale do we propose to do this in?	<p>Evidence gathering in February and March.</p> <p>Report in April.</p>
d4. What outcomes are we looking to achieve?	A report to the Leader or City Council, setting out proposals for improvement.

### Member / Officer Leads

Lead Member:	Cllr Waseem Zaffar
Lead Officer:	Emma Williamson