

# Runnymede Borough Council

## New Member Induction - Meeting Procedures

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# Purpose of Session

- Will deal with procedures at formal meetings of Council  
i.e.
  - Full Council
  - Committees
  - Sub-committees

# Purpose of session (cont.)

- Session will not deal with meetings of Working Parties
- Working Parties do not make formal decisions
- Working Parties are there to formulate proposals
- Working Parties make recommendations to Committees

# Introduction

- Purpose of meetings of Full Council and Committees is to receive reports and make decisions
- Council has a set of Administrative and Procedural Standing Orders in Constitution that contain rules governing way in which meetings are conducted
- Rules for Full Council and Committees are similar

# Who is in charge

All our formal meetings have person who presides over meeting

- Full Council it is Mayor
- Committees it is Chairman

Role is to ensure meeting conducted in accordance with procedural rules

They have powers to curtail debate, deal with disorderly conduct of Members and public and casting vote in certain instances

# Types of reports

Three types of reports will normally be put before a meeting:

- Ask to Resolve – Decide something – Increase fees for a service
- Ask to Recommend – Indicate to another body (e.g. Full Council) they should decide something in certain way – That fees for a service should be increased by a certain amount
- Ask to Note – Being provided for information – Being advised that fees for a service will have to be introduced

# Rules of Debate

- To start off consideration a Member has to move (propose) the matter, which is called a Motion, and another Member has to Second it. Planning Committee different
- If you propose make sure you refer to the wording of the Recommendation on the papers
- If you are Seconding make sure you are clear that you are doing that

# Rules of Debate (Cont.)

- Although a Motion written down in the papers the person who moves, proposes, the Motion may suggest alternative words to those on the papers (sees SO 14.3 (b)) – This explains why sometimes what is discussed is different to what is written down
- Once the Motion is Seconded this is what is debated by the meeting



# Rules of Debate (Cont.)

- Each Member can only speak for 5 minutes at Full Council unless Mayor or Chairman consents to longer (no limit at Committee but be reasonable)
- Can only speak about subject under discussion unless a point of order, personal explanation or personal interest
- Turn light on to indicate wish to speak, wait to be called and stand up at Full Council

# Rules of Debate (Cont.)

- If an amendment is moved you can speak on the amendment
- Can ask a question about a Motion but you can't have second speech i.e. seek clarification about legal basis for imposing a charge for a service
- Person who has moved a Motion has a Right of Reply at end of debate – this is to answer issues raised not introduce new things or have second bite at putting points

# Rules of Debate (Cont.)

## Amendments

- You can propose an Amendment to a Motion
- Amendment must propose to:
  - Leave out words
  - Leave out word and insert or add other words
  - Insert or add words

**An Amendment must not negate the Motion i.e. cause the Motion to be of no effect or have a sense opposed to the original wording**

# Rules of Debate – Amendments (cont.)

By way of example Cllr X might propose the following

Motion:

**‘West Ham Football Club were responsible for England winning the World Cup in 1966 because it provided the three players who formed the backbone of the team’**

Cllr Y might propose the following amendment:

**‘West Ham Football Club were responsible for England winning the World Cup in 1966 because it provided Bobby Moore, Martin Peters and Geoff Hurst who formed the backbone of the team’**

This would be acceptable because it merely leaves out words and adds others but it does not negate the Motion.

# Rules of Debate – Amendments (cont.)

Cllr Z might propose the following amendment:

**‘Mrs Elizabeth "Cissie" Charlton was responsible for England winning the World Cup in 1966 because she taught her sons Bobby and Jackie to play football’**

This would not be acceptable because if adopted it would negate the Motion as the effect of the revised wording would be to have a sense opposed to the original wording i.e. because West Ham Football Club and its players are no longer mentioned and it gives credit to a person and not a football club.

# Rules of Debate – Amendments (cont.)

- Once an Amendment is moved it has to be debated
- Each Member can only speak once
- Member who moved Amendment speaks once debate comes to natural end
- Member who moved original Motion then has final Right of Reply before you vote on Amendment

# Rules of Debate – Amendments (cont.)

- If Amendment is carried you then debate the Motion as amended
- If Amendment is not carried you revert to debating the Motion as originally worded
- At end of debate on Motion as originally worded Member who moved has Right of Reply before vote

# Voting

- Normally by show of hands
- You indicate if you are:
  - For
  - Against
  - Abstain

**Clearly show which way you are voting, don't just half raise your hand as people on top table may not be able to clearly see you**



# Voting (Cont.)

- Any Member can before matter goes to the vote ask for vote to be recorded
- If requested an officer will read out name of each Member and they must verbally indicate their vote
- Numbers added up and result given – once result given cannot be questioned
- Any Member can ask for their vote to be recorded in Minutes except if recorded vote

# Points of Order/Personal Explanation

- These are only occasions when you can speak not about item under debate
  - Point of Order – This is where a Member claims breach of Standing Order e.g. someone has spoken more than once – must state which Standing Order has been breached
  - Personal Explanation – This where Member thinks they have been misunderstood when they spoke earlier e.g. they said I like and people thought they said dislike

# Conduct of Members at Meetings

- If any Member:
  - (a) Persistently disregards the ruling of the person presiding; or
  - (b) Behaves improperly or offensively; or
  - (c) Deliberately disregards established procedure;
  - (d) Deliberately obstructs the business of the meeting;

# Conduct of Members at Meetings (Cont.)

Then the Mayor/Chairman may name the Member and require them to either apologise or correct their behaviour immediately, or to do both.

If a Member named by the Mayor/Chairman under the conduct rules continues their misconduct, the Mayor/Chairman may do any or all of the following at their discretion at any time during the meeting:

# Conduct of Members at Meetings (Cont.)

- (a) forbid the Member from speaking for some or all of the rest of the meeting
- (b) order the Member to leave the meeting for all or part of the remaining business
- (c) order the Member to be removed from the meeting
- (d) adjourn the meeting for 15 minutes or any other period they wish

# Conduct of Members at Meetings (Cont.)

A Member may not impute improper motives, or use any offensive expression, to any other Member.

The Mayor/Chairman shall be the sole judge at the meeting of when this rule has been broken.

If a Member ignores or rejects the ruling they shall be dealt with under the processes set out in the two previous slides.

# Miscellaneous Matters

- **Minutes**

- At each meeting of Full Council the Minutes of the previous meeting will be placed before the meeting to be approved as a correct record
- The Full Council must not discuss the Minutes except to debate their accuracy. If a Member wishes to challenge the accuracy of the Minutes, they must propose a correction by Motion. The Mayor must sign the Minutes as soon as questions relating to their accuracy (if any) have been disposed of, or as soon as it is clear there are none.

# Miscellaneous Matters (Cont.)

## Questions

- A Member can ask one question at each full Council meeting (time limit for submitting see SO 13.1 (iv))
- Question must be for Mayor, Leader of Council or Chairman of a Committee
- Question must relate to matter which concerns Council's powers or duties or which affects the Borough or its inhabitants
- Every question must be put and answered without debate or comment from any other Member. The person to whom a question has been put is not obliged to answer.



# Miscellaneous Matters (Cont.)

## Questions

- If the person questioned answers at the meeting the questioner may ask one supplementary question which must be relevant to the subject of the first question. The use of artificial first questions as a device for unforeseeable supplementary question is not permitted. If the Mayor thinks supplementary question does not reasonably relate to the subject matter of the first question, may prohibit it and no response shall be offered to it. The questioner may not otherwise speak in response to the answer given, either to the original question or any supplementary question.

# Miscellaneous Matters (Cont.)

- After original questioner has asked supplementary question, declined to do so, or been prohibited from doing so, up to two other Members may be allowed to ask one supplementary question each, without prior notice, on the same conditions as set out above.

# Miscellaneous Matters (Cont.)

## Motions

- Members may only move Motions that are relevant to the Council's powers or duties or to the interests of the inhabitants of the Borough. If the Chief Executive receives notice of a Motion which he considers irrelevant, illegal, improper, ultra vires, or incomprehensible, he must immediately refer it to the Mayor.

# Miscellaneous Matters (Cont.)

- Any Member of the Council may propose a Motion at any meeting of the Full Council. No Member may propose more than one Motion at the same meeting. A Motion may not be moved if it or one to the same effect has been moved within the previous six months (time limit for submitting Motion see SO 15.3).
- If a Member, or another Member on their behalf, does not move a Motion of which they gave notice when it is reached on the agenda, it shall be treated as withdrawn unless the Full Council agrees to postpone it. It cannot then be moved without fresh notice.

# Miscellaneous Matters (Cont.)

- Unless certain rules apply the Motion may be discussed according to the normal rules of debate **but shall not be the subject of a final vote.**
- Open to any Member at any stage during the debate to propose that the Motion be remitted to the appropriate Committee with a specified expression of the Council's preliminary opinion upon it.
- The mover or seconder of the original Motion may move such a proposal as he or she moves or seconds the original Motion, or any Member may do so subsequently.

# Miscellaneous Matters (Cont.)

- Once such a proposal is moved and seconded, it shall become the Motion under debate for the purposes of the Standing Orders.
- If a proposal to remit the Motion to the appropriate Committee with an expression of opinion is moved, seconded, and carried, then the Motion shall stand referred to such Committee or Committees as the Corporate Head of Law and Governance shall determine as appropriate under the Terms of Reference.

# Miscellaneous Matters (Cont.)

- If no such proposal has been carried, then the Motion shall still stand referred to such Committee or Committees as the Corporate Head of Law and Governance shall determine as appropriate, but without any expression of Council opinion.
- In either case the Committee or Committees in question must consider the Motion and may either take action if they have delegated power to do so, or make a report and recommendation to the appropriate Committee or the Council in accordance with the Terms of Reference.

# Miscellaneous matters (cont.)

Certain types of Motions can be determined on the night, these are as follows:

- The Member giving the notice and the Mayor both agree before the meeting that the matter is exceptionally urgent and will not allow delay for report to the appropriate Committee.
- The Motion seeks only:
  - an expression of support or disapproval for some action being undertaken by another person or body; or
  - the sending of greetings or congratulations to a person or body; or
  - a result that does not require the Council to do anything new or to stop doing something and carries no adverse legal or financial consequences.



# Miscellaneous matters (cont.)

- In a case not meeting the conditions above, if the Mayor, the Leader of the Council, and the Chief Executive all agree that the Motion is such that it can safely be determined at Council without consideration of a report from a Committee then it can be determined.

- Any Questions?