

VOTE RECORDING

As there appears to be some uncertainty about the way votes individually recorded electronically will be used, Council is asked to determine:

1. The principles by which meetings will have individual votes recorded electronically
e.g. all public meetings
by request before the meeting
all meetings unless there is agreement to the contrary
each "committee" to decide on its own procedure

Cabinet currently records numbers voting but not names, in the interests of collective responsibility

2. On what occasions votes should not be recorded
e.g. for exempt (confidential) items
where Members might be subject to illegal acts as a result
on appointments
recording in the minutes of votes on appointments is already precluded by the constitution

3. Who should have access to the information
e.g. Members only
any member of the public on request (on payment?)
made available through the Web site

The Freedom of Information Act will require that if the record exists it must be made available on request (other than where exempted for confidentiality)

4. How long the information should be kept, i.e. is it regarded as temporary only or part of the public record?

Minutes, agenda and reports must be kept accessible for 6 years after the meeting; background papers for 4 years

When the Council agreed on 13th January 2004 that the system should be purchased, it had the views of the Constitution Review Working Party, which expected that constituents would be able to see how their local member voted and that the names would be available on request. It was not, however, the intention that names should be recorded in the minutes unless a request for a recorded vote was made and agreed.

Council is invited to confirm that names are recorded in the minutes only when a specific request has been made; and to clarify the issues set out above.