

**Report To:** Civic Affairs Committee  
**Lead Officer:** Executive Director (Corporate Services)

28 July 2016

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## **Review of Standing Orders – questions at Council meetings**

### **Purpose**

1. The Council's Standing Orders were reviewed at the meeting of the Civic Affairs Committee held on 12 January 2016, where a number of amendments to Standing Orders were recommended to Council and subsequently approved at its meeting on 28 January 2016.
2. As part of these amendments the Council agreed to the introduction of a new format for questions by Members at meetings of Council. This consisted of the usual process for submitting written questions by notice followed by the ability to ask questions without notice, including questions in relation to the Greater Cambridge City Deal, within a total timeframe of 30 minutes. It was agreed that this would be reviewed by the Civic Affairs Committee in six months. The purpose of this report is to facilitate that review.

### **Recommendations**

3. That the Civic Affairs Committee agrees whether or not to recommend to Council that it amends Standing Orders to permanently include provision for Members to ask questions at meetings of Council without notice.

### **Considerations**

4. There have been two ordinary meetings of Council since this issue was considered on 28 January 2016 where Members have had the opportunity to ask questions at Council meetings without notice.
5. One question without notice was asked at the meeting of Council on 23 March 2016, with no such questions being asked at the Annual General Meeting on 19 May 2016.
6. The Civic Affairs Committee is invited to consider whether the provision of asking questions without notice by Members should be made permanent, with the Council's Standing Orders amended accordingly.

### **Options**

7. The Civic Affairs Committee could:
  - recommend that the provision for Members to ask questions without notice be made permanent;
  - recommend not to continue with the provision for Members to ask questions without notice;
  - recommend a further trial period.

### **Implications**

8. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, there are no significant amendments.

### **Consultation responses (including from the Youth Council)**

9. No consultation has been necessary on the content of this report.

### **Background Papers**

No additional background papers were relied upon in the writing of this report.

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