



Subject:	Motion – Audio Recording of Council Working Groups
Date:	23 rd March, 2018
Reporting Officer:	Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager
Contact Officer:	Jim Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To consider a motion in relation to the audio recording of all meetings of the Council's Working Groups which, in accordance with standing orders, was referred to the Committee by the Council at its meeting on 1 st February and, subsequently deferred at the Committee's meeting on 16 th February in order for further information to be provided.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to consider the motion and to take such action thereon as may be determined.

3.0	Main report
3.1	<p data-bbox="272 255 421 286"><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p data-bbox="165 322 1468 405">3.1.1 At the meeting of the Council on 1st February, the following motion was proposed by Alderman Rodgers and seconded by Councillor Johnston:</p> <p data-bbox="368 472 1378 658">"This Council recognises the need for openness, transparency and accountability in how it transacts its business. In order for this to happen, the Council agrees to audio record all meetings of Council Working Groups not presently included in the policy, namely:</p> <ul data-bbox="368 725 1321 1128" style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit and Risk Panel • Budget and Transformation Panel • Party Leaders' Forum • North Foreshore Members' Steering Group • Reference Group on Older People • Strategic Cemeteries and Crematorium Development Working Group • Shared City Partnership and • Historic Working Group." <p data-bbox="165 1196 1378 1480">3.1.2 In accordance with Standing Order 13(f), the motion was referred to the Committee for consideration. At the meeting on 16th February, the Committee deferred consideration of the matter to enable advice to be obtained in relation to the recording of the Shared City Partnership and the Audit and Risk Panel and for information to be provided also on the recording of the Party Leaders' Forum and the Budget and Transformation Panel.</p> <p data-bbox="165 1536 1378 1980">3.1.3 Members will be aware that on both the Shared City Partnership and the Audit and Risk Panel there are a number of external members who are not elected representatives. At the time of their appointment to these Working Groups there was not any intention to audio record the proceedings of the meetings and therefore those external members would have had a reasonable expectation that their comments at those meetings would remain private and would not be published on the Council website. If the Committee is minded to approve the audio recording of those Working Groups, then it would be necessary to write to the individuals concerned seeking their agreement to their comments being recorded and published. If any persons objected</p>

to such a process, then a further report would need to be submitted to Committee.

3.1.4

The Budget and Transformation Panel is comprised of the Chairperson of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and the Party Leaders of the six main political parties on the Council. Its remit is to:

- Provide political support in terms of party groupings and the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for the delivery of the Council's efficiency and transformation agenda
- Scrutinise the alignment of the Council's efficiency and transformation agenda to corporate priorities
- Support the development and implementation of the Council's efficiency and transformation programme
- Hold officers to account for the delivery of an agreed efficiency and transformation programme
- track and monitor the achievement of agreed financial savings
- provide oversight of the Council's finances.

3.1.5

The Party Leaders' Forum is comprised of the Party Leaders of the six main political parties on the Council. The purpose of this Forum is to allow the early discussion of matters where there might be political differences between the parties in order to ascertain whether or not there is room for agreement/compromise before those matter come before Council Committees for decision.

3.1.6

In the case of both of these Working Groups, it must be stressed that, as is the case with all Working Groups, they do not have any delegated decision-making powers. They are supposed to act as a forum for the early political discussion of matters where there will be a report submitted to a Council Committee for formal decision.

3.1.7

Should the Committee be minded to agree to extend the audio recording policy to include some or all of the remaining Working Groups as listed in the motion, then the same technical issues and protocols for the recording of Standing Committees and Area Based Working Groups would apply. These will include appropriate consideration of the content of reports and whether restrictions need to be applied.

Financial & Resource Implications

<p>3.2</p> <p>3.2.1</p> <p>3.3</p> <p>3.3.1</p>	<p>There are not any significant financial implications associated with this report. Any additional costs from extending the audio recording to include Working Groups can be met from within existing budgets.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>None</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Appendices – Documents Attached</p>