



Subject:	Amendment to Standing Order 24 –Voting and Divisions
Date:	21 st September, 2018
Reporting Officer:	Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager
Contact Officer:	Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager

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 the possible amendment of Standing Order 24 to provide that all votes at a Council meeting will be taken by way of a recorded vote.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is requested to <ul style="list-style-type: none">Consider the matter and decide if it wishes to amend Standing Order 24 as outlined in the report
3.0	Main report
	<u>Key Issues</u>
3.1	The Committee, at its meeting on 17 th August, agreed to receive a report on a suggestion that all votes at a Council meeting should be taken by way of a recorded vote. If the

Committee is minded to agree to this then it would require an amendment to Standing Order 24.

3.2 That Standing Order currently states that:

“Subject to any statutory provisions to the contrary, any matter to be decided by the Council will be by simple majority, conducted by show of hands.

If, before a vote is called, any Member present at the meeting requests it, the names for and against the proposal or amendment and those abstaining from voting will be taken down in writing and recorded in the minutes of the meeting. Upon such request being received, the division bell shall be rung, and a period of one minute shall be allowed to elapse, when the doors of the Council Chamber shall be closed and no one admitted until the vote has been taken.

During the taking of the votes Members shall remain seated.

In the case of an equality of votes, the Lord Mayor shall have a second and casting vote.”

3.3 As can be clearly seen, the existing Standing Order provides a simple mechanism whereby any single Member can require a vote to be recorded.

3.4 If the Committee is minded to amend the Standing Order as requested, then this would inevitably result in the meetings taking longer to complete. Typically, each recorded vote takes about 7 or 8 minutes to complete. Over the year from June 2017 till May 2018, a recorded vote was requested on 33 occasions, averaging 3 per meeting.

3.5 The Council has operated, since it was established in 1973, by way of the existing Standing Order. The Committee may wish to consider if there is any purpose to be served by requiring every vote to be a recorded one rather than maintaining the existing system which permits a recorded vote to be taken upon the request of a single Member.

3.6 If the Committee wishes to amend the Standing Order, then the following wording is suggested:

	<p><i>“Subject to any statutory provisions to the contrary, any matter to be decided by the Council will be by simple majority, conducted by a recorded vote.</i></p> <p><i>The names for and against the proposal or amendment and those abstaining from voting will be taken down in writing and recorded in the minutes of the meeting. Before the vote is taken, the division bell shall be rung, and a period of one minute shall be allowed to elapse, when the doors of the Council Chamber shall be closed and no one admitted until the vote has been taken.</i></p> <p><i>During the taking of the votes Members shall remain seated.</i></p> <p><i>In the case of an equality of votes, the Lord Mayor shall have a second and casting vote.”</i></p>
3.7	<p>If the Committee agrees then the recommendation will, in accordance with Standing Order 64, require to be ratified at the Council meeting on 1st October and confirmed at the meeting on 1st November.</p> <p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p>
3.8	<p>There would be some minor expenditure in the reprinting of copies of Standing Orders to incorporate the change but this can be met from within existing budgets.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p>
3.9	<p>None Associated with this report.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	None