

| Report of       | Meeting | Date          |
|-----------------|---------|---------------|
| Chief Executive | Council | 12 April 2016 |

## LICENSING AND PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE: PUBLIC QUESTIONS

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To request that Council amend Standing Orders in relation to Licensing and Public Safety Committee to introduce public questions procedure rules in line with those for Council, Executive Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

### RECOMMENDATION(S)

- That speaking rights for members of the public attending the Licensing and Public Safety Committee be established and the procedures for speaking be approved as follows:
  - A maximum period of three minutes will be allowed for a question from a member of the public on an item on the agenda, including one supplementary question. A maximum period of up to 30 minutes to be allocated for public questions if necessary at each Licensing and Public Safety Committee meeting
  - Questions should be submitted to the Democratic Services Section by midday, two working days prior to each Licensing and Public Safety Committee meeting to allow time to prepare appropriate responses and investigate the issue if necessary.
  - The question to be answered by the Chair or whoever is most appropriate as directed by the Chair.
- To update the Council's Standing Orders (Appendix 3 of the Constitution) to reflect the above.

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|--|-----|-----------|
| <b>Confidential report</b><br>Please bold as appropriate | Yes | <b>No</b> |
|--|-----|-----------|

### CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

|  |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
| Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all | ✓ | A strong local economy  |   |
| Clean, safe and healthy communities  |   | An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area | ✓ |

### BACKGROUND

- At the Licensing and Public Safety Committee at its meeting on 3 February 2016 a resolution was passed to request Council amend the procedure rules for Licensing and Public Safety Committee to fall in line with those for Council, Executive Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committee public questions procedure rules.

6. This would allow questions be submitted to Democratic Services by midday, two working days prior to the meeting to allow time to prepare appropriate responses and investigate the issue if necessary.
7. Development Control Committee also has a public questions procedure, but this relates to specific applications and has separate rules.
8. The existing public questions procedure rules were introduced in 2006, although the Development Control Committee rules were updated in 2009 and 2014 to allow ward Councillor and Town/Parish Councillors respectively to participate.

#### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THE LICENSING AND PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE**

9. Members of the public regularly attend the Licensing and Public Safety Committee, in the main, representatives of the taxi trade, taxi operators and drivers. Whilst their involvement is welcomed, this needs to be in a more structured way ensuring the public receive informed answers to their question.
10. To facilitate effective engagement with the public it was agreed that a formal procedure for questions should be approved. This will, hopefully, improve the level of public participation in the Committee's decision making process and ensure that informed and accurate responses are provided at the meeting. The Chair would have discretion to vary this procedure, but this should only be exercised in exceptional circumstances.
11. In addition to the Licensing and Public Safety Committee the trade do have access to discuss issues openly and without any restriction on speaking at regular Licensing Liaison Panel meetings. The introduction of these new procedure rules does not prevent their views being heard via that channel.
12. It is suggested that an item be considered at the Licensing Liaison Panel to inform the trade of the change in process.

#### **IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT**

13. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

|  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| Finance                                  | ✓ | Customer Services                      |  |
| Human Resources                          |   | Equality and Diversity                 |  |
| Legal                                    | ✓ | Integrated Impact Assessment required? |  |
| No significant implications in this area |   | Policy and Communications              |  |

#### **COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER**

14. There are no financial implications.

#### **COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER**

15. The proposal will provide similar public speaking rights to those exercised in other public council meetings.

16. At present public speaking is only allowed in Licensing and Public Safety Committee at the discretion of the Chair. As representatives from the trade frequently wish to speak at committee the proposals contained in this report, if approved, will put the asking of questions from the public on a more clearly defined footing with written rules. However, Chair's discretion will still apply, for example, in relation to exceeding the three minute time limit allowed.

GARY HALL  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

| <b>Background Papers</b>                                       |                 |             |   |
|--|-----------------|-------------|---|
| <b>Document</b>  | <b>Date</b>     | <b>File</b> | <b>Place of Inspection</b>  |
| Chorley Council Constitution<br>Appendix 3 Standing Orders     | January 2015    | Web         | <a href="https://democracy.chorley.gov.uk/documents/s60977/Appendix%203%20Standing%20Orders%20Jan%202016.pdf">https://democracy.chorley.gov.uk/documents/s60977/Appendix%203%20Standing%20Orders%20Jan%202016.pdf</a>   |
| Licensing and Public Safety<br>Committee minutes<br>16.LPSC.28 | 3 February 2016 | Web         | <a href="https://democracy.chorley.gov.uk/documents/g4445/Printed%20minutes%2003rd-Feb-2016%2014.00%20Licensing%20and%20Public%20Safety%20Committee.pdf?T=1">https://democracy.chorley.gov.uk/documents/g4445/Printed%20minutes%2003rd-Feb-2016%2014.00%20Licensing%20and%20Public%20Safety%20Committee.pdf?T=1</a> |

| <b>Report Author</b> | <b>Ext</b> | <b>Date</b>      | <b>Doc ID</b>   |
|----------------------|------------|------------------|---|
| Ruth Rimmington      | 5118       | 10 February 2016 | Licensing and Public Safety<br>Committee Public Questions |