

Council Issues

1. Points of Order

- 1.1 The Constitution currently allows members to raise a 'point of personal explanation' where a statement they made earlier in the debate appears to have been misunderstood. Such points may only be raised with the permission of the Chairman.
- 1.2 It has been raised that this is quite a narrow right, and that during debates members may sometimes refer to things allegedly said by other members in a different debate or even at a different meeting or on an informal occasion.
- 1.3 Whilst it is undesirable to get into lengthy debates on what was previously said – or not said – on another occasion, the current rules can leave members feeling that previous statements have been misrepresented without them having the opportunity to present their point of view on the representation.
- 1.4 It is therefore proposed to expand the scope of a 'point of personal explanation' to allow a member to raise a point of personal explanation if another member has referred to something the first member is claimed to have said, regardless of when the statement was made.
- 1.5 All points of personal explanation will continue to require permission of the Chairman.

Recommendation:

Amend paragraph 16.9.15 of the constitution to read as set out below:

16.9.14 Points of order or personal explanation

A member may rise on a point of order or by leave of the Chairman in personal explanation and shall be entitled to be heard forthwith.

A point of order may only relate to an alleged breach of a Standing Order or statutory provision and the member shall specify the Standing Order or statutory provision and the way in which they ~~he~~-considers it has been broken.

A personal explanation shall be confined to some material part of a ~~former~~ speech-statement made at any time by that member which may appear to have been misunderstood or misrepresented in the present debate.

2. Responses to executive statements

- 2.1 The constitution currently allows an executive statement to be made at every meeting and the Chairman will then allow a period of time for members to ask questions.

- 2.2 It has been raised that opposition group leaders may have no questions to ask but may wish to make a brief speech in reply.
- 2.3 It is therefore proposed to amend the constitution to allow opposition group leaders to make a speech in reply to an executive statement of up to three minutes.
- 2.4 This is in addition to the rules which requires the chairman to make a period of time available for any member to ask questions.

Recommendation

That paragraph 16.9.11 (vii) of the constitution be replaced with new paragraphs (vii) and (viii) as shown below:

(vii) The Chairman will then invite leaders of opposition groups (or a member nominated by them) to make a statement in reply for up to three minutes.

(viii) The Chairman will then invite questions from Members of the Council for a period of time at his discretion. The originator of the Statement shall respond to the questions as they are raised.

3. Amendments to List of Approved Bodies

- 3.1 Appendix 3 of Part 26 of the Constitution is a list of Approved Bodies. Members appointed as the County Council's representatives to Approved Bodies may claim expenses from the Council for attending meetings if they do not receive payment from any other organisation.
- 3.2 The list of Approved Bodies is subject to change and the Council's representatives are appointed by the relevant Cabinet Member.

Recommendations

1. That the list of Approved Bodies in Appendix 3 of Part 26 of the Constitution be amended to remove

- a) The East of England Energy Group
- b) Age UK
- c) Hadleigh Country Park and
- d) LGA City Regions

and be amended to add

- a) Jaywick Sands Community Forum
- b) LGA Coastal Special Interest Group

2. Council is also asked to note that

- a) The representative appointed to the Jaywick Sands Community Forum is Councillor Honeywood

- b) The representative appointed to the LGA Coastal Special Interest Group is Councillor Platt.

2. Dates of future meetings of Council

The dates of the future meetings of Council have been agreed to be Tuesday 7 December 2021 and Thursday 10 February 2022 but it is necessary to schedule meetings to be held for the remainder of 2022.

Recommendations:

1. That the Council meetings scheduled to be on Tuesday 7 December 2021 and Thursday 10 February 2022 remain unchanged
2. That the dates of Council meetings in 2022 be on the following Tuesdays, 10 February, 10 May, 12 July, 11 October and 13 December.