



**CORPORATE & ENVIRONMENTAL  
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:  
11 JULY 2019**

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**Report of: Borough Solicitor**

**Relevant Portfolio Holder: Councillor I Moran**

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**SUBJECT: PUBLIC SPEAKING PROTOCOL – REVIEW**

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Wards affected: Borough wide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To review the current protocol for public speaking at meetings of Cabinet, Overview & Scrutiny Committees, Audit & Governance Committee and Standards Committee.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION**

2.1 That the 'Public Speaking – Protocol' for meetings of Cabinet, Overview & Scrutiny Committees, Audit & Governance Committee and Standards Committee (Constitution 14.1) , attached at Appendix 1 to the report, be considered, taking into account feedback received as set out in paragraph 5 of the report.

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## **3.0 BACKGROUND**

3.1 The Protocol for Public Speaking at meetings of Cabinet, Overview & Scrutiny Committees, Audit & Governance Committee and Standards Committee was introduced in April 2016 and was reviewed/amended in December 2017.

3.2 The Public Involvement in Meetings Working Group established the protocol as part of a task and finish review. Following the cessation of the Working Group, it was agreed that any future reviews of the protocol would be considered at Corporate & Environmental Overview & Scrutiny Committee, with any recommendations for changes being submitted to Cabinet and Council.

#### 4.0 CURRENT POSITION

4.1 Since the introduction of these arrangements the following requests to speak have been received:-

	DATE	ITEM
Cabinet	10 January 2017	Granville Park Conservation Area Review (1 request)
Cabinet	9 January 2018	Funding of Voluntary & Other Organisations Working Group  Request withdrawn prior to the meeting
Cabinet	11 September 2018	The Local Plan Review – Proposed Options (2 requests)
Cabinet	6 November 2018	Burscough Parish Neighbourhood Plan Submission Version (2 requests)
Cabinet	11 June 2019	Called in item – Local Plan Request not published as it was considered inappropriate (1 request)
Corporate & Environmental O & S Committee	2 March 2017	Improved Planting (1 request)
Executive O&S Committee	28 March 2018	Called in Item – Local Plan (1 request)

4.2 There have been no requests to speak at the Audit & Governance Committee nor at the Standards Committee.

#### 5.0 FEEDBACK RECEIVED SINCE THE LAST REVIEW

5.1 The following feedback has been received on the current protocol:

- a) That reference to Parish Councils being able to speak be included in the Protocol (raised at the Parish Clerks Liaison Meeting on 7 June 2019 ).
- b) That Borough Councillors be included in the list of those eligible to speak (raised by a Borough Councillor).
- c) That members of the public should be able to provide written concerns in relation to items of agendas, within the agreed timescales of the protocol,

without the need to attend the meeting and speak (raised by a member of the public).

d) That public speaking be extended to meetings of Council (raised by a Borough Councillor).

e) That the deadline for receipt of applications be extended (raised by a Borough Councillor).

5.2 Members may wish to consider expansions to the current protocol. If the Committee recommend revisions to the protocol, a report to Cabinet on 10 September 2019 and Council on 16 October 2019 will be required and therefore the first meeting for operation of any agreed revisions would be Audit & Governance Committee on 29 October 2019.

## **6.0 PUBLICITY**

6.1 Currently, publicity arrangements include a page on the Council's website, all agendas are published on the website and an agenda sheet is placed on the Council's noticeboard. A press release is produced prior to each Cabinet meeting, which sets out the deadline for submitting requests to speak at future meetings of Audit & Governance Committee, Scrutiny Committees, Standards Committee and Cabinet, to promote these arrangements to members of the public.

## **7.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 The provision of public involvement in meetings provides another method to enable local people to raise concerns or state their views to the Council providing an additional feedback mechanism for the community and improving access for all.

## **8.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 Any revisions to the protocol will be accommodated within existing resources.

## **9.0 RISK ASSESSMENT**

9.1 The Public Speaking Protocol provides an opportunity to further develop transparency and openness through public involvement at meetings.

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### **Background Documents**

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D (5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Report.

### **Equality Impact Assessment**

There is a direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and / or stakeholders. Therefore an Equality Impact Assessment is required, a formal equality impact assessment is attached as Appendix 1 to this report, the results of which have been taken into account in the Recommendations contained within this report

## **Appendices**

1. Public Speaking Protocol (Constitution 14.1)
2. Equality Impact Assessment