

CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE

7th October 2013

1. Time limit to debate notices of motion

In light of continued discussions over the maximum 30 minute rule for each political group to consider motions at full council, the Liberal Democrat Constitution Committee members Cllr. Jeremy Hilton and Cllr. Paul Hodgkinson would like to propose the removal of this time limit from the council's constitution together with the following amendments: -

1) Under part 4 – Notices of Motion – Section 11.2.2 -

Unless the Chairperson, in consultation with Group Leaders, decides otherwise, subject to Procedural Standing Order 11.8, there will be no time restrictions on motions from each political group (for the purposes of this Procedural Standing Order 11.2.2 only, all independent Councillors are considered as a political group). Immediately after the end of the debate the proposer of the original motion then under debate may choose whether the motion be put or withdrawn (the consent of the seconder and full Council not being required in these circumstances) and if he or she decides that the motion be put, he or she shall first have the right of reply which shall be limited to 3 minutes;

Deleted: shall be considered by full council for up to a maximum of 60 minutes on the day of a meeting.

Deleted: 30 minute period

In recognizing the removal of the maximum 30 minute rule for each political group to consider motions at full council, Procedural Standing Order 11.8 will also be amended as follows: -

11.8 *The total period of time spent on motions on the day of a meeting shall not exceed three hours immediately following which the motion under discussion shall be put to the vote.*

Deleted: two

Deleted: This Procedural Standing Order may not be suspended.

In considering amendments to a motion, 13.5 of the council's constitution will be amended as follows: -

The time spent debating an amendment to a motion shall not exceed a maximum of 20minutes

Deleted: count towards the

Deleted: allowance of the political group of the proposer of the amendment to the motion.

The effect of these proposed amendments would be to restrict the total time for debating motions to three hours, an increase of just one hour from present constitutional limit. Council would be able to suspend standing orders to increase this time if it so wished. There would be no time limit on discussion on individual motions, but there will be a need for group leaders in consultation with the chair, to agree beforehand an informal time period for each motion, so that all motions can be debated and determined within the three hour time limit. To help facilitate the completion of motions it is proposed to introduce a 20 minute limit to debate amendments.

NB: The above changes however do not affect the 'Rules of Debate' and the time limit given to individual speakers.