

SCARBOROUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL
LEGAL, DEMOCRATIC & GOVERNANCE
PORTFOLIO
INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBER DECISION

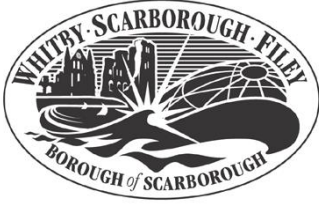
Monday, 23rd December, 2019

These details are published for information only. The decision will be taken by the Cabinet Member who will receive Officer advice in private. A statement of the decision taken, with any appropriate supporting information, will be published as soon as reasonably practicable afterwards.

1. **REVIEW OF WEBCASTING** (Pages 1 - 20)
To consider the report of the Director (LD) (Reference 19/240) attached
2. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME AT FULL COUNCIL** (Pages 21 - 28)
To consider the report of the Director (LD) (Reference 19/261) attached

(N.B. If you have any questions or need further information, please contact St John Harris, Democratic Services Manager , Town Hall, St. Nicholas Street, Scarborough – Tel: 01723 383556, Fax 08702384159 or email stjohn.harris@scarborough.gov.uk)

NOTES

	LEGAL, DEMOCRATIC & GOVERNANCE PORTFOLIO 23 DECEMBER 2019	
	Key Decision	NO
	Cabinet Portfolio Holder	Cllr Tony Randerson
	Date of Decision/ Referral to O&S	23 December 2019
Corporate Priority: All	Deadline for call-in 5pm	30 December 2019
	Implementation Date (if no call-in)	31 December 2019

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR (LD) – 19/240

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF WEBCASTING

RECOMMENDATION (S):

- (i) to approve the recommended changes to webcasting provision of meetings in the Council Chamber, which comprises meetings of the Council, the Cabinet, Planning and Development Committee, Overview and Scrutiny Board, and other formal committee meetings held in the Council Chamber;
- (ii) to approve that the current contract with Public-i not be renewed when it expires in May 2020;
- (iii) to approve the capital investment required to purchase the necessary equipment for the recommended provision after May 2020; and
- (iv) to approve the new Protocol on Webcasting, Reporting on and Filming Meetings attached as Appendix 3 to the report.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION (S):

- To build on the existing promotion of local democracy, and the transparency and community engagement in the democratic process achieved through

webcasting meetings of the Cabinet, Council and Planning and Development Committee by extending webcasting to all formal committee meetings in the Council Chamber.

- To create significant savings for the Council moving forwards, and improve the support to webcasting via internal ICT services.

HIGHLIGHTED RISKS:

See Risk Matrix

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Council recognises that accountability, openness and transparency are critical to gaining public trust in the authority's decision making.
- 1.2 Using a range of different methods, an increasing number of local authorities are webcasting ('web broadcasting') their formal committee meetings, enabling access to the Council's proceedings by residents and others who would otherwise not attend meetings.
- 1.3 Webcasting uses streaming technology to distribute video and audio coverage of a meeting/event. By using webcasting, Council meetings can be accessed live or subsequently by anyone with a computer and internet access, anywhere in the world. Broadcasting meetings in this way encourages engagement and feedback, and overcomes exclusion: transcriptions can be made available to the hard of hearing, translations to minority groups, and residents with reading difficulties can see and hear a streamed video.
- 1.4 Webcasting puts everything on record, it is easy to check exactly what was said and ensures minute taking is more efficient and reliable whilst discouraging inaccurate reporting. It is a cost effective way to reach a large audience on key issues.
- 1.5 In 2014, the Council entered into a contract with an external provider, Public-i, to webcast Cabinet and Council meetings (see Cabinet Report 14/175 – Webcasting Council Meetings, 20 May 2014). After installation of the equipment, extensive testing and training of staff and councillors, the first meeting to be webcast publicly was the Cabinet meeting held on 17 February 2015. The service was extended to meetings of the Planning and Development Committee in autumn 2017. It was also used on an ad hoc basis in September 2018 to webcast two scrutiny task group meetings on the Cinder Track review in which there was much public interest. In May 2019, the contract with Public-i was renewed for a further year until the end of May 2020. This has enabled the Council to review the service and undertake an options appraisal.

- 1.6 As technology has advanced and webcasting has grown in popularity since the commencement of the Public-i contract, officers have considered whether the existing contract gives value for money, and whether alternative delivery methods and options could be more cost effective. The recommended alternative needs to be approved early enough for procurement, installation and testing of new kit and process ahead of May 2020.

2. CORPORATE AIMS

- 2.1 The proposed decision supports all of the Council's Corporate Aims by improving the organisation. Webcasting of Council meetings can contribute to promoting local democracy and increasing community engagement by increasing citizens' awareness of the democratic process.

3. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

- 3.1 The introduction of webcasting opened up the Council's democratic and decision making process, providing transparency to the public and others unable to attend Council meetings. It was unknown at the time what the demand would be. Public-i provide continuously updated figures of the number of views (both live and archive) of the Council's webcasts. Views are the number of times a webcast has been played. The view must be for a minimum of one minute. A visit is recognised as each time someone lands on a webcast player page. Webcasts are available for view on the Council's website for a period of six months.
- 3.2 As at the end of October 2019, there have been 16,516 views of the Council's webcasts amounting to a total length of viewing of 5478.9 hours. The total number of visits for the same period was 30,941. Of this total about 32% (9900 views) were internal. The meeting with highest number of views (more than three times the second highest) was the full Council meeting held on 9 January 2017 when Members considered the proposed demolition of the Futurist Theatre and adjoining buildings and stabilisation of the cliff. This meeting attracted a total of 1545 views (1018 live and 527 archive), and 5018 visits. The total length of viewing for this meeting was 965 hours, 33 minutes. About 13% of the views of that webcast were internal.
- 3.3 Each month, Public-i provide a webcast report update. For example, for the month of September 2019, there were three webcast meetings. As at 31 October 2019, the figures read:

Meeting	Total number of views	Total length of viewing
Cabinet, 3 September Duration: 47 mins	62 (16 live + 46 archive)	13 hours 58 mins
Planning & Development, 5 September Duration: 45 mins	47 (7 live + 40 archive)	8 hours 38 mins
Council, 16 September Duration: 1 hour 30 mins	224 (35 live + 189 archive)	96 hours 42 mins

- 3.4 The existing contract is limited to 50 hours of broadcasting time per year, which has been more than sufficient for webcasting meetings of Full Council, Cabinet and the Planning & Development Committee. There is a clear appetite among councillors for more formal, public meetings to be webcast as evidenced by a recent discussion at full Council when the Portfolio Holder for Legal, Democratic and Governance undertook to look into the matter.
- 3.5 The current one-year contract with Public-i costs £15,874. A contract for a longer term would cost less per annum, but the value would increase in proportion to the maximum number of webcasting hours to accommodate more committee meetings.
- 3.6 Public-i, as part of their contract, offer support for technical issues. Unfortunately, these have been frequent over the last five years with repeated problems with the broadband connection (which have now been resolved), occasional issues with software updates, but ongoing difficulties with camera automation to the microphones and the webcast of corresponding plans at meetings of the Planning and Development Committee. Remote testing of each webcast is carried out by Public-i usually an hour before the meeting, but resolution of problems such as camera automation can be very time-consuming, taking up much Democratic Officer time, both before and after the meeting. As internal ICT services were not the support contact for the software or hardware, their ability to help or intervene has remained limited.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Discussion has taken place with the Portfolio Holder about the options appraisal and best way forward.

5. ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 Over recent years the streaming and storing of videos on the internet has grown in popularity among individuals and organisations alike. This has been made possible through social media and platforms such as YouTube, whilst the kit required to achieve such streaming has become more affordable and accessible to the average user.
- 5.2 Democratic Services have been working with ICT in recent months to explore other councils' approaches, including alternative in-house delivery models. Some authorities are using Public-i (paying similar rates), others are using competitor providers, whilst others have moved to internal provision – some video and audio, and others just audio. Based on that research and further consideration of viable alternatives, an options appraisal has been prepared at Appendix 2.
- 5.3 The options, in brief comprise the following:
- Option 1 - stop webcasting altogether, both audio and visual

- Option 2 - continue with current arrangements
- Option 3 - use alternative method of webcasting via internal ICT Services
- Option 4 - move to audio only webcasting

of which the recommended option is Option 3.

- 5.4 The pros and cons of Option 3 are set out in Appendix 2. In summary, this option delivers a high quality streaming service of council meetings with unlimited storage at a fraction of the cost of the current service, with less testing and preparation required for each meeting, and internal ICT support on hand should any technical issues arise.
- 5.5 The only downside is that Option 3 does not offer as sophisticated functionality as Public-i. Public-i enables the cameras to track the microphones so that when the microphone is activated, the camera focuses on the speaker and the screen displays their name. Option 3 works on the basis of two largely static camera positions, thereby reducing the number of possible camera angles. Through Public-i viewers can refer to the corresponding report or presentation whilst watching the video for that item, and they can also click on agenda items and skip to the relevant part of the video to watch. The ability to maintain some of this functionality through the recommended option is possible, by 'time stamping' a video with agenda items allowing a user still to click to the part they want to watch. Although the ability to view reports and presentations in separate screens will be lost, the proposed option does allow multi-screen projection into one screen (the one the viewers would watch) where both the camera footage and the presentation can be seen.
- 5.6 However, the recommended Option 3 still delivers on the Council's aspiration to be open, transparent and accountable, by both improving the quality of the video, and significantly increasing the number of meetings webcast.
- 5.7 Introduction of a new in-house method of webcasting also provides an opportunity to review the current webcasting protocol ensuring the Council is compliant with its obligations under the Data Protection Act/GDPR and the Human Rights Act 1998, whilst explaining the rights of the press and public to report on or record meetings of the Council, including through the use of social media. The new, revised Protocol on Webcasting, Reporting on and Filming Meetings is attached at Appendix 3.
- 5.8 Currently, meeting webcasts are available on the Council's website for a period of six months, after which they are archived. Since webcasting and the retention of film do not replace the formal record of the meeting and the decisions made, it is proposed under the new protocol that instead webcasts are made available on the Council's website for a period of 12 months, after which they are destroyed. 12 months provides a reasonable time for the public to access historical material on the website, whilst removing the archive step and making webcasts easier to access for a longer period than at present.

6. IMPLICATIONS

Policy

- 6.1 See below

Legal

- 6.2 The new revised protocol reflects the need for the Council to take account of any Data Protection and Human Rights implications.

Financial

- 6.3 The recommended Option 3 (a £6,530 one-off capital investment) delivers a significant saving on the current cost of the service of £15,874 p.a.

Equalities and Diversity

- 6.4 Webcasting can benefit people with disabilities and other sections of the community who may be unable to attend meetings, but who, through this medium, may be able to access the proceedings.

Planning

- 6.5 The proposed Action Plan provides adequate time for ICT officers to agree with the Local Planning Authority a solution which is acceptable in planning terms in the setting of a Grade II listed building.

Other

- 6.6 I have considered whether Staffing Implications, Crime and Disorder Implications, Health and Safety implications, or Environmental implications arise from this report and am satisfied that there is no identified implication that will arise from this decision.

7. ACTION PLAN

- 7.1 The following plan is proposed:

Stage	Timescale
Cabinet Member approves new in house webcasting service	December 2019
ICT Services procure, test and install new ICT equipment	January - March 2020

Staff training	April/May 2020
Introduction of in house webcasting service	1 June 2020



Lisa Dixon
Director

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Background Papers:

None

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUERIES ABOUT THIS REPORT OR WISH TO INSPECT ANY OF THE BACKGROUND PAPERS, PLEASE CONTACT ST JOHN HARRIS, CONTACT DETAILS ABOVE.

Risk Matrix

Risk Ref	Date	Risk	Consequences	Mitigation	Current Risk Score	Target Score	Service Unit Manager/ Responsible Officer	Action Plan
1	Dec 2019	Cease webcasting	<p>Lost opportunity to enhance public access to local democracy, at a time when other authorities are moving forward, thereby affecting the reputation of the Council</p> <p>Exclude citizens who rely on sub-titles</p>	Adoption of Option 3 in the report	C3	B2	S Harris	As in report
2	Dec 2019	Inadequate in house resources to support webcasting and provide timely and efficient technical support	Technical problems which end up consuming valuable Democratic Officer time and which may damage the Council's reputation	Adoption of Option 3 in the report	D3	B2	S Harris	As in report

Glossary of Terms

Risk	An event which may prevent the Council achieving its objectives
Consequences	The outcome if the risk materialised
Mitigation	The processes and procedures that are in place to reduce the risk
Current Risk Score	The likelihood and impact score with the current mitigation measures in place
Corporate Objectives	An assessment of the Corporate Objectives that are affected by the risk identified.
Target Risk Score	The likelihood and impact score that the Council is aiming to achieve
Service Unit Manager	The Service Unit or Officer responsible for managing the risk
Action Plan	The proposed actions to be implemented in order to reduce the risk to the target score

Risk Scoring

Impact	5					
	4					
	3					
	2					
	1					
		A	B	C	D	E
	Likelihood					

Likelihood:

- A = Very Low
- B = Not Likely
- C = Likely
- D = Very Likely
- E = Almost Certain

Impact

- 1 = Low
- 2 = Minor
- 3 = Medium
- 4 = Major
- 5 = Disaster

Webcast Options Appraisal

Option 1 - Stop webcasting Council meetings	
Description	Do not renew the contract with Public-i in April 2020
Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Save staff time when setting up Council meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less transparent, open and accountable • Our public galleries are limited to 103 attendees • Citizens expect us to offer this as a service • Meetings are not accessible for those who rely on subtitles
Costs	£0 Saving of £15,874 annually from revenue budget

Option 2 - Continue with Current Webcasting Arrangements	
Description	Renew our contract with Public-i in April 2020
Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hardware is already in place • Software integrates with Modern.gov <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pulls through Councillor profiles ○ Adds agenda and slides as attachments • Multiple cameras that will follow whoever is speaking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Microphones are assigned to specific councillors and need testing and setting up every meeting which is very time consuming • Remote technical support from supplier means problems which occur quite frequently can take much time and effort to resolve • Videos are only stored for 6 months • Limited to 50 hours of videos each year
Costs	£15,874 annually No saving achieved

Option 3 - Alternative Method of 'Webcasting' via internal ICT Services	
Description	The Digital Solutions team in ICT will replace current cameras and webcasting equipment. A new solution will make use of free to use streaming platforms such as Facebook Live and YouTube Live which offer a larger customer base, unlimited video storage and industry leading technical infrastructure.
Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simpler setup process, microphones don't need to be assigned to each Councillor • Much better video quality • Ability to stream to a larger user base, either YouTube (37.1 million UK adults using it) or Facebook Live (Around 37 million active users in the UK) • 3 video feeds can be displayed at the same time (for example, 2 cameras and a PowerPoint slide) • Unlimited video storage • Supported by SBC ICT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The camera position will be static to cover the whole chamber and not follow the speaker • It will not integrate with Modern.gov • Advertisements will be shown to viewers
Costs	<p>Capital:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Camera x2 £1,498 ○ Webcaster £2,984 ○ Roving microphone £300 ○ Cabinet of equipment storage in Chamber £250 <p>(TOTAL COST = £6,530 one off capital investment)</p> <p>Saving of £15,874 annually from revenue budget</p>

Option 4 – Move to Audio only Webcasting	
Description	Broadcast audio-only option using Audio Minutes online service.
Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archive 500 hours of recordings • Software integrates with Modern.gov <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ability to attach the audio to the agenda webpage once complete • Minimum setup required by staff • Microphones won't need assigning to each Councillor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not possible to display who is speaking • Meetings containing visual elements will not be suitable • Not possible to show subtitles
Costs	Capital: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Android tablet £125 ○ Roving microphone £300 <p>£3,900 annually required, saving of 11,974 from revenue budget</p>



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SCARBOROUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Protocol on Webcasting, Reporting on and Filming Meetings of the Borough Council

January 2020

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Author	Petra Jackson
Owner	Performance and Governance
Protective Marking	NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED
Cabinet Approval Date	
Council Approval Date	
Policy Date/Period	Ongoing
Policy Review Frequency	Annually

REVIEW HISTORY

		Version	Any Revisions?

REVISION HISTORY (only required where changes made)

Date	Revised By	Version	Description of Revision
January 2020	Petra Jackson	0.1	Creation of Policy

DOCUMENT REVISION APPROVALS

Version	Approval	Date
Protocol on webcasting		May 2014

Scarborough Borough Council

Protocol on Webcasting, Reporting on and Filming Meetings of the Borough Council

- 1 Scarborough Borough Council is committed to open and transparent decision making. In support of this, the Council has agreed that certain meetings should be the subject of live web transmission (“webcasting”). This protocol has been produced to assist the conduct of webcast meetings and to ensure that, in doing so, the Council is compliant with its obligations under the Data Protection Act/GDPR and the Human Rights Act 1998. This protocol also explains the rights of the press and public to report on or record meetings of the council, including through the use of Social Media.
- 2 All formal meetings of the Borough Council, its Cabinet, committees and sub committees are open to the public, except where there are legal requirements preventing them from being so.
- 3 Members of the Press or public are not required to give notice of their intention to attend a meeting that is open to the public. However, in order to make sure appropriate arrangements are in place to facilitate attendance, it is requested that individuals with special access needs or large groups wishing to attend a meeting contact Democratic Services in advance of the meeting on 01723 232323 or by email to democraticservices@scarborough.gov.uk
- 4 **Webcasting**
 - 4.1 Scarborough Borough Council has agreed that certain meetings should be the subject of live web transmission (“webcasting”). Fixed cameras are located within the Council Chamber for this purpose. Meetings are broadcast live over the internet and are also available to view after the meeting. The main purpose of webcasting is to give members of the public the chance to view meetings as they happen without having to attend in person. Webcasting and the retention of film do not replace the formal record of the meeting and the decisions made.
 - 4.2 All formal committee meetings and public Member Briefings held in the Council Chamber are webcast.
 - 4.3 Webcasts are available on the Borough Council website for a period of 12 months from the meeting, after which they are destroyed.
 - 4.4 The following will apply to all meetings to be webcast by the Council.
 - 4.5 Main Provisions
 - 4.6 The Chair of the meeting has the absolute discretion to terminate or suspend the webcast at any time and for any reason which the Chair deems reasonable. Such circumstances where the Chair may deem suspension reasonable may include, but are not limited to:
 - i) public disturbance or other suspension of the meeting;
 - ii) exclusion of public and press being moved and supported;
 - iii) any other reason moved, seconded and supported by the Council/committee.

- 4.7 No exempt or confidential agenda items shall be webcast.
- 4.8 Subject to paragraph 4.9 below, all archived webcasts will be available to view on the Council's website for a period of 12 months.
- 4.9 Archived webcasts or parts of webcasts may be removed from the Council's website if, in the reasonable opinion of the Monitoring Officer, it may prejudice the Council's, or the public's interests. Content may also be removed if the Monitoring Officer considers that it is necessary because all or part of the content of the webcast is, or is likely to be, in breach of any statutory provision or common law doctrine (for example Data Protection/GDPR and Human Rights legislation or provisions relating to confidential or exempt information).
- 4.10 Any councillor who is concerned about any webcast should raise their concerns with the Monitoring Officer
- 4.11 Agenda Front Sheets and Signage at Meetings
- 4.12 On the front of each agenda and on signs to be displayed inside and outside the Council Chamber there will be the following notice:

Webcasting Notice

Please note: this meeting may be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Borough Council's website on the internet – at the start of the meeting the Chairman will confirm if all or part of the meeting is to be filmed. The images and sound recording may be used for training purposes by the Council. Generally the public gallery is not filmed. However, by entering the Council Chamber and using the public seating area you are consenting to be filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purposes.

If you have any queries regarding this, please contact the Democratic Services.

- 4.13 Conduct of Meetings
- 4.14 At the start of each meeting to be filmed, an announcement will be made to the effect that the meeting is being, or may be, webcast and the Chair will make the following statement:
"May I remind everyone present that this meeting will be broadcast live via the internet and the record archived for future viewing."
- 4.15 Cessation of Webcasting for Private Sessions
- 4.16 No part of any meeting held will be webcast after Members have passed a resolution excluding the public and the press because there is likely to be disclosure of exempt or confidential information. The Democratic Services Officer present will ensure that filming and/or recording of the meeting has ceased and will confirm this to the Chair of the meeting before any discussion of exempt or confidential matters is commenced.
- 4.17 Formal Record
- 4.18 Webcasting and the retention of any filmed material does not replace the formal record of the meeting and the decisions made. The only formal record of any meeting of a local authority is its minutes and agendas. Minutes are required to be maintained in perpetuity and agendas for a six year period.

5 Filming and photography by others

- 5.1 We welcome transparency and openness, and therefore support the concept of others filming public council meetings. We believe that councillors and council officers acting in the public interest should expect to be held to account for their comments and votes in relevant meetings.
- 5.2 Under the Localism Act 2011, councils are required to provide reasonable facilities for any member of the public to report on meetings, and therefore should allow the filming of councillors and officers at meetings that are open to the public. Equally, the GDPR/Data Protection Act does not prohibit filming of public meetings
- 5.3 However, councils may ask for the filming to be undertaken in such a way that it is not disruptive or distracting to the meeting. The Council is also required to protect the privacy rights of any members of the public who attend meetings. We have therefore developed the following guidance in order to achieve this.
- 5.4 All recording must be overt and as a courtesy, members of the public should also be informed at the start of the meeting that it is being filmed, in order that they can request not to be filmed, or choose to leave the meeting.
- 5.5 Anyone intending to film or record a meeting of the Borough Council is therefore requested to notify the Democratic Services Team in advance of the meeting by phone to 01723 232323 or by email to democraticservices@scarborough.gov.uk by 5pm the day before the meeting is scheduled to be held.
- 5.6 This will allow an announcement to be made by the Chair at the start of the meeting that filming will take place. It will then allow any members of the public to indicate if they do not wish to be filmed, or to leave the meeting.
- 5.7 Unless specific permission is given by the Monitoring Officer in advance, filming or photography must be from a fixed spot and should aim to focus on the speaker.
- 5.8 All recording activity must be done in such a way that does not disrupt or interfere with the running of the meeting or with the ability of other observers to view or record the proceedings. For that reason, large or distracting equipment (such as lighting rigs, flash photography, floor standing cameras) would generally not be allowed without the express permission of the Monitoring Officer.
- 5.9 In general all recording devices and equipment should operate quietly and unobtrusively (electronic devices, such as smartphones, should be switched to silent, for example).
- 5.10 If the Chair deems that the filming is either disruptive or distracting, he/she will be entitled to ask for the filming to cease. The Chair's decision will be final.
- 5.11 Anyone recording or attending a meeting is not permitted to provide an oral commentary from within the room.
- 5.12 Councillors who are members of the committee may not request that they are not filmed.

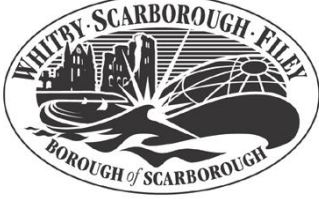
- 5.13 Members of the public attending the meeting/speaking at the meeting have a right not to be filmed and if they indicate they do not wish to be filmed, their wishes should be observed and they should not be filmed. In no circumstances should any children in attendance at a meeting be filmed or photographed.
- 5.14 The Council requests that any video recordings or photographs made during a meeting are not subsequently edited in a way that would misrepresent the views of a speaker or the general proceedings.
- 5.15 The rights set out in this protocol are subject to the Council's existing rules set out in the Constitution on members of the public attendance at meetings. These rules allow for the Chair of a meeting, after giving a warning, to order that a member of the public be removed from the meeting, or that a meeting be adjourned.

6 Social media

- 6.1 Members of the public and the press are welcome to tweet or blog (or use any other form of real time social media) from any meeting of the council that is open to the public.
- 6.2 Oral commentary from within the meeting room is not permitted.
- 6.3 Any use of social media within a meeting room must not disrupt or interfere with the meeting.

7 General

- 7.1 Any queries about this protocol or requests for special permissions requiring the Monitoring Officer's consent, should be directed to Democratic Services on 01723 232323 or by email to democraticservices@scarborough.gov.uk
- 7.2 On all matters connected to this protocol, the decision of the Monitoring Officer (outside of the meeting) or the Chair of the meeting (during the meeting) are final.
- 7.3 To find out about upcoming public meetings visit: www.scarborough.gov.uk
- 7.4 If you have any queries regarding filming of meetings, please contact: democraticservices@scarborough.gov.uk.

	LEGAL, DEMOCRATIC AND GOVERNANCE PORTFOLIO 23 DECEMBER 2019						
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Corporate Aims Council	<table> <tr> <td>Date of Decision/ Referral to O&S</td> <td>23 December 2019</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Deadline for call-in 5.00pm</td> <td>30 December 2019</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Implementation Date (if no call-in)</td> <td>31 December 2019</td> </tr> </table>	Date of Decision/ Referral to O&S	23 December 2019	Deadline for call-in 5.00pm	30 December 2019	Implementation Date (if no call-in)	31 December 2019
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Implementation Date (if no call-in)	31 December 2019						

REPORT OF: Director (LD) – 19/261

WARDS AFFECTED: All

SUBJECT: PUBLIC QUESTION TIME AT FULL COUNCIL

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Portfolio Holder approves:

- (i) the extension of the Council's Public Question Time scheme to full Council on a trial basis with effect from the meeting on 6 January 2020; and
- (ii) that the trial be reviewed by the Governance Working Group in due course.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

To explore ways to promote public engagement in the democratic process.

HIGHLIGHTED RISKS:

See Risk Matrix at Appendix A

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Public Question Time has been a standard item on the agendas of the Council's committees (but not the Council) for many years.
- 1.2 The relevant extract from the Council's Constitution outlining the scheme can be found at Appendix B.

2. CORPORATE AIMS

- 2.1 The recommendation supports the Key Aim in the Corporate Plan 'to be an efficient and effective council which is financially sustainable for the future'.

3. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

- 3.1 During January-April 2019 a cross-party Constitution Review Group chaired by Councillor Tony Randerson reviewed the Council Procedure Rules identifying housekeeping changes and making a series of recommendations. Most of these were endorsed by the reconvened Governance Working Group at its first meeting on 22 August 2019.
- 3.2 Among the recommendations was for the Borough Council to follow North Yorkshire County Council's example and allow public questions at full Council. The County Council scheme differs in certain ways from this Council's Public Question Time, and further, the introduction of public speaking at full Council would require amendments to the Council's Constitution and the approval of full Council.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 See paragraph 3.1 above.

5. ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 In his new position as Portfolio Holder for Legal, Democratic and Governance, Councillor Randerson has proposed that this Council's current Public Question Time scheme as set out in Appendix B be extended to the full Council meeting on a trial basis first, to test the public appetite for the scheme at full Council and to determine whether it needs fine-tuning for this and other committees.

6. IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no legal, policy, financial or equality and diversity implications arising from this report. In respect of communications, the Public Question Time trial at full Council will be publicised through the Council's website.



Lisa Dixon
Director

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E-mail address: stjoh.harris@scarborough.gov.uk

Background Papers: None

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUERIES ABOUT THIS REPORT OR WISH TO INSPECT ANY OF THE BACKGROUND PAPERS, PLEASE CONTACT THE AUTHOR

Risk Matrix

Risk Ref	Date	Risk	Consequences	Mitigation	Current Risk Score	Target Score	Service Unit Manager/ Responsible Officer	Action Plan
1	Dec 2019	The Council unnecessarily limits opportunities for the public to contribute ideas to matters under discussion at full Council	Negative effect on the Council's reputation and reduced public engagement in the democratic process	Trial Public Question Time at full Council	C2	B2	S. Harris	As in report

Glossary of Terms

Risk	An event which may prevent the Council achieving its objectives
Consequences	The outcome if the risk materialised
Mitigation	The processes and procedures that are in place to reduce the risk
Current Risk Score	The likelihood and impact score with the current mitigation measures in place
Target Risk Score	The likelihood and impact score that the Council is aiming to achieve
Service Unit Manager	The Service Unit or Officer responsible for managing the risk
Action Plan	The proposed actions to be implemented in order to reduce the risk to the target score

Risk Scoring

Impact	5					
	4					
	3					
	2					
	1					
		A	B	C	D	E
	Likelihood					

Likelihood:

- A = Very Low
- B = Not Likely
- C = Likely
- D = Very Likely
- E = Almost Certain

Impact

- 1 = Low
- 2 = Minor
- 3 = Medium
- 4 = Major
- 5 = Disaster

16. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

16.1 General

Members of the public may ask questions at any Meetings of the Cabinet or a Committee or Sub-Committee.

16.2 Order of questions

Questions will be asked in the order notice of them was received, except that the Chief Executive may group together similar questions.

16.3 Notice of questions

A question may only be asked if notice has been given by delivering it in writing or by electronic mail to Democratic Services (at the Town Hall, St Nicholas Street, Scarborough, YO11 2HG at least 2 clear working days before the day of the meeting (if it relates to an item on the agenda for the meeting), or at least 3 clear days before the day of the meeting (in any other case). Each question must give the name and address of the questioner.

16.4 Scope of questions

A question will be rejected if it:-

- is, in substance, a statement and not a question;
- is not about a matter for which the Council has a responsibility or which does
- not affect the Borough;
- is defamatory, frivolous or offensive;
- is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting in
- the past six months; or
- requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information;
- relates to a matter in respect of which the Council is exercising a quasi
- judicial role or where there is a statutory or local procedure for public
- consultation or appeal including planning applications, traffic regulation
- orders, public rights of way applications and licensing applications.

16.5 Asking the question at the meeting

Any question is limited to a maximum of 2 minutes speaking time. If questioners who have submitted written questions are unable to be present the question will not be dealt with.

16.6 Supplemental question

A questioner who has put a question in person may also put one supplementary question without notice to the member who has replied to his or her original question. A supplementary question must arise directly out of the original

question or the reply. A supplementary question may be rejected on any of the grounds in Rule 16.04 above.

16.7 Written answers

Public question time will be limited to a maximum of 15 minutes. Any question which cannot be dealt with during public question time, either because of lack of time or because of the non-attendance of the Member to whom it was to be put, will be dealt with by a written answer within 7 days of the meeting.

16.8 Reference of question to the Cabinet or a Committee

No discussion will take place on any question, but any Member may move that a matter raised by a question be referred to a future meeting of the Cabinet or the appropriate Committee or Sub-Committee. Once seconded, such a motion will be voted on without discussion.