

	<b>LEGAL, DEMOCRATIC AND GOVERNANCE PORTFOLIO</b>  <b>23 DECEMBER 2019</b>	
	<b>Key Decision</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Corporate Aims Council</b>	<b>Cabinet Portfolio Holder</b>  <b>Date of Decision/ Referral to O&amp;S</b>  <b>Deadline for call-in 5.00pm</b> <b>Implementation Date (if no call-in)</b>	<b>Cllr Tony Randerson</b>  <b>23 December 2019</b>  <b>30 December 2019</b> <b>31 December 2019</b>

**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

**Author:** St John Harris, Democratic Services Manager, Town Hall, St Nicholas Street, Scarborough, Telephone No: 01723 383556, Fax No: 0870 238 4159  
E-mail address: [stjohn.harris@scarborough.gov.uk](mailto:stjohn.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

<b>Risk Ref</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Risk</b>	<b>Consequences</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>	<b>Current Risk Score</b>	<b>Target Score</b>	<b>Service Unit Manager/ Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Action Plan</b>
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