

## Appendix 1 – Options for material changes to Standing Orders

### A: Should committee minutes be approved at Full Council? Standing Order 32

Option Rec. in bold		Pros	Cons	What do other Councils do?
<b>1</b>	Each committee approves its own minutes	<p>It is just those who were at the meeting that consider the minute</p> <p>Minutes are available online for all councillors to read.</p> <p>Keeps full Council strategic</p>	Work of committees less visible to non-committee members.	<p>Most Councils have a system where Committees approve their own minutes.</p> <p>Some have an additional layer where Committee minutes then go to full Council.</p>
2	All committee minutes go to Full Council <i>after committee approval</i>	Greater visibility of committee business to all Councillors	Extra paperwork and potential to lengthen full council meetings	Some operate a hybrid.
3	Committee minutes go straight to full Council for approval	<p>Council used to do this.</p> <p>All 26 councillors get to see what is going on in each committee</p>	<p>Questionable under legislation which suggests that council committees should approve their own minutes.</p> <p>Councillors who weren't at meetings are not able to comment on accuracy</p> <p>Could add significant length to Council meeting times.</p>	



**B: Questions on Minutes – Standing Order 32**

Option		Pros	Cons	What do other Councils do?
1	<p>Current practice:</p> <p>Points of <b>accuracy</b> at beginning of meeting.</p> <p>Questions on <b>content</b> at end of meeting.</p>	<p>Helps council meetings to proceed to consider substantive business</p>	<p>Can lead to confusion in separating out questions.</p> <p>With notice just being given at the meeting specific officers are often not available or unable to prepare for questions later in the same meeting</p>	<p>Some councils require points of accuracy to be raised in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>The majority of Councils who responded do not allow open questions on content of minutes.</p> <p>Some require them to be raised in writing in advance of meeting and some at the discretion of the Chair.</p>
2	<p>Require points of <b>accuracy</b> to be submitted in writing advance of meeting</p>	<p>Gives fair notice and allows careful consideration of wording in what is often a contentious issue.</p>	<p>Limited time after publication of papers for councillors to spot issues.</p>	
3	<p>Encourage questions on <b>content</b> to be raised without the need for committee procedure.</p> <p>Require any remaining questions on <b>content</b> to be submitted under Written Question procedure.</p>	<p>More efficient use of committee time.</p> <p>Gives fair notice.</p> <p>Encourages answers to be sought without the need for committee time to be taken up.</p>	<p>Would not work for spontaneous questions.</p> <p>Limited time before a meeting for members to raise questions</p>	



**C: Reading out responses to Written Questions – Standing Order 36**

Option		Pros	Cons	What do other Councils do?
1	Retain current position where responses to Written Questions are read aloud by clerk as well as published on CMIS	Helpful for those watching online	Inefficient use of committee time	No responses available
2	Publish Responses only (not read out).	<p>Allows committee time to focus on the substantive agenda.</p> <p>Could still allow a follow up question to give “air time” to requestor.</p> <p>Response can be published online for viewing.</p>	May be harder for people watching online to follow the thread.	

**D: Remove open Question time at the end of meetings – Standing Order 41/42**

Option		Pros	Cons	What do other Councils do?
1	Continue current arrangements for agenda to include open questions to the chair time at the end of each meeting.	Seen by councillors as a useful means to raise constituency concerns in public	<p>Inconsistent with good decision making principle of fair notice.</p> <p>Effectively AOCB.</p> <p>Questions are often addressed to officers who are either unavailable or unable to provide an answer due to short notice.</p>	Appears to be unique to Moray and does not feature in any Councils' committee procedures.
2	Remove open question time altogether – rely on existing Written Question procedure	<p>Better quality of responses.</p> <p>Fair notice allows for a more structured response to be given.</p> <p>Allows committee time to be focused on agenda items</p>	Seen by councillors as a useful means to raise constituency concerns in public	

**E: Consider whether to retain Information report section in committees– Standing Order 38.**

Option		Pros	Cons	What do other Councils do?
1	Continue current arrangements where information reports are published with the agenda papers but are not open for debate. Opportunity for these to be called in.	<p>Helps to focus committee time on issues where a decision is required.</p> <p>More in depth discussion can take place in offline briefing sessions.</p>	Can be seen as stifling debate.	No responses available
2	Revert to previous position where reports for noting appeared on agendas.	Gives opportunity for Councillors to discuss issues in a public forum.	<p>Significant amounts of Committee time taken up is discussion with no resulting decision.</p> <p>Motions could be brought forward although not ideal from fair notice perspective.</p>	