

Appendix 9 – Cabinet Procedure Rules

1. Meetings of the Cabinet

- 1.1 Meetings of the Cabinet will be held on such dates and at such times and venues as the Leader will decide.
- 1.2 The Assistant Director of Governance (Democratic and Regulatory Services)will summon all Members of the Cabinet to meetings by sending an agenda and accompanying papers to all Members of the Cabinet. The agenda and papers will normally be sent out at least five clear working days before the meeting. The agenda and papers will be sent at the same time to all other Members of the Council.

2. Agendas

- 2.1 The agenda for each meeting of the Cabinet will comprise:
 - (a) Apologies for absence
 - (b) the minutes of the previous meeting for approval and signing
 - (c) declarations of interest
 - (d) matters referred to Cabinet by the Scrutiny Committee, Select Committees or by full Council
 - (e) public question time
 - (f) any local Member issues/questions raised by Members
 - (g) any non-local Member issues/questions raised by Members (to be taken at the Leaders discretion)
 - (h) issues and reports brought forward by the relevant Cabinet Member or Chief Officer
 - (i) any report by the Head of Paid Service, Director of Finance and Commercial Services or Monitoring Officer.
 - (j) such other items as the Leader decides
- 2.2 The Leader may decide that there are special circumstances that justify an item of business, not included on the agenda, being considered as a matter of urgency. They must state these reasons at the meeting and they must be recorded in the minutes.

3. Quorum

- 3.1 The quorum for a meeting of the Cabinet is the Leader (or the Deputy Leader in their absence) and five other Members.

4. Record of Attendance

- 4.1 Each Cabinet Member attending a Cabinet meeting must, with a view to securing the recording of their attendance sign the attendance sheet provided by the Assistant Director of Governance (Democratic and Regulatory Services)for that purpose. If any Member arrives and the attendance sheet has already been circulated, they must intimate their presence to the Head of Governance and Regulatory Services.

5. Chairing

- 5.1 The Leader (or the Deputy Leader in their absence) will be the Chair of meetings of the Cabinet.

6. Attendance Rights of Members

- 6.1 If a Cabinet Member is unable to attend a meeting of the Cabinet, they may nominate a Deputy Cabinet Member to attend in their place. These Members may attend and speak at meetings of the Cabinet but may not vote and are not Members of the Executive.
- 6.2 Subject to the Access to Information Procedure Rules and paragraph 10 and the Access to Information Rules, any Member of the Council may attend any meeting of the Cabinet, excluding those parts of the meeting when the public are excluded.

7. Member Questions

- 7.1 If a Member of the Council wishes to ask a question under 3(f) or (g) above, they must give 2 working days' notice of the question to the Head of Governance and Regulatory Services, e.g. by 5.00 p.m. on the Wednesday preceding a Cabinet meeting on Monday. The number of questions which can be asked at a meeting will be limited to two per Member (or one question plus a supplementary). Responses to the substantive questions will be given to the questioner in writing before the start of the meeting and copies of the question and response will be available to all in attendance. The responses to substantive questions will not be read out at the meeting. A questioner who asks only one substantive question will be entitled to ask a supplementary question and if they do so, a response to it will be given orally by the Chair, or such other Member of officer as is determined by the Chair. Supplementary questions are subject to a limit of 75 words. If a response to a supplementary question cannot conveniently be given orally, a written answer will be sent to the questioner within 7 working days of the meeting.
- 7.2 The total time for Member questions will be limited to 15 minutes. Member questions are subject to a maximum word limit of 110 words. Member questions that are in excess of 110 words will be disqualified. If the questioner is not present at the meeting or if any questions remain unanswered within that timescale, written responses will be sent to the questioners within 7 working days of the meeting.

8. Public Questions

- 8.1 A person resident in Norfolk, or who is a non-domestic ratepayer in Norfolk, or who pays Council Tax in Norfolk, may attend meetings of the Cabinet and, by giving two working days' notice, e.g. by 5.00 p.m. on the Wednesday preceding a Cabinet meeting on Monday, may ask any question on any matter in respect of Cabinet's delegated powers. Eligibility to ask questions at Cabinet does not extend to County Council employees asking questions relating to their employment.
- 8.2 The number of questions which may be asked at a meeting will be limited to one per person (or one plus a supplementary) in any six-month period. Substantive questions are subject to a maximum word limit of 110 words. Substantive questions that are in excess of 110 words will be disqualified. Responses to the substantive questions will be given to the questioners in writing before the start of the meeting and copies of the questions and responses will be available to all in attendance. The responses to substantive questions will not be read out at the meeting. A questioner who asks only one substantive question will be entitled to ask a supplementary question and, if they do so, a response to it will be given orally by the Chair. Supplementary questions are subject to a limit of 75 words. If a response to a supplementary question cannot conveniently be given orally, a written answer will be sent to the questioner within 7 working days of the meeting.
- 8.3 Public Question Time will be limited to 15 minutes in total. If the questioner is not present at the meeting or if any questions remain unanswered within that timescale, a written response will be sent to the questioner within 7 working days of the meeting.

9. Conduct of meetings

- 9.1 The Chair will conduct the business of the meeting so as to encourage decision by consensus.
- 9.2 Subject to the rules regarding the declaration of interests, every Member is entitled to express a view on each item of business.
- 9.3 Following debate, the Chair will summarise the discussion and formulate a proposition which they will put to the Cabinet for agreement. A vote will not be taken unless the Chair so decides but any Member who dissents from a decision of the Cabinet is entitled to have that dissent recorded in the minutes, provided this request is made immediately upon the decision having been taken.
- 9.4 If necessary to maintain an orderly discussion, the Chair may:
- a) require a vote to be taken by a show of hands
 - b) restrict the number of times any Member may speak

- c) restrict the length of speeches
- d) adjourn the discussion to a later meeting

9.5 In the event of a vote being taken and the votes for and against being equal, the Chair has a second or casting vote.

9.6 If necessary to maintain order, the Chair may:

- a) with the consent of the Cabinet, require a Member of the Cabinet, Council or the public to leave the room
- b) may direct a Member to be silent
- c) may adjourn or terminate the meeting.

10. Public Misconduct

10.1 If a member of the public interrupts a meeting or otherwise behaves irregularly, improperly or offensively, the Chair may request that they leave the room or order that they be removed. In the event of a general disturbance, the Chair may suspend the meeting or direct that the public be excluded from it. No one so removed or excluded will be permitted to return to the meeting.

11. Discussion of Employees

11.1 No discussion will take place concerning an individual employee unless the Chair has decided whether to discuss the matter in public or private session.

12. Provisions on conflicts of interest

12.1 Where the relevant Member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in a matter to be considered at the meeting and that interest is on the Register of Interests, they must not speak or vote on the matter. If they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in a matter to be considered at the meeting and that interest is not on their Register of Interests they must declare that interest at the meeting and not speak or vote on the matter. In either case they may remain in the room where the meeting is taking place. If they consider that it would be inappropriate in the circumstances to remain in the room, they may leave the room while the matter is dealt with.

12.2 Where a matter arises at a meeting which relates to or affects an 'Other Interests' the relevant Member must declare the existence and nature of the interest unless it has been entered in the County Council's register of interests.

12.3 An 'Other' interest is one which affects, to a greater extent than others in their division the relevant Member's:

- own wellbeing or financial position or
- that of family or close friends
- any body –
 - a) exercising functions of a public nature

- b) directed to charitable purposes; or
- c) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union);

of which the Member is in a position of general control or management

- 12.4 Where an 'other interest' arises, the relevant Member will declare an interest (an "Other Interest") but may speak and vote on the matter.

13. Interpretation of Rules of Procedure

- 13.1 The ruling of the Chair as to the construction or application of the Rules or as to any proceedings of the Cabinet will be final for the purposes of the meeting at which it is given.