

COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE PROCEDURE RULES

Annual meeting of the council

1. In a year when there is an ordinary election of councillors, the annual meeting of the council will take place within 21 calendar days of the retirement of the outgoing councillors. In any other year, the annual meeting will take place in May.
2. The annual meeting will:
 - (a) if the Lord Mayor or Deputy Lord Mayor is not present, elect a member of the council to chair the meeting;
 - (b) elect the Lord Mayor for the new civic year;
 - (c) elect the sheriff for the new civic year;
 - (d) elect the Deputy Lord Mayor for the new civic year if the sheriff elected under (c) above is not a councillor;
 - (e) receive any announcements from the lord mayor and/or head of the paid service;
 - (f) elect the Leader of the council;
 - (g) decide the allocation of seats to political groups in accordance with the political balance rules;
 - (h) appoint the chairs and members of the scrutiny committee, a standards committee and such other committees as the council considers appropriate to deal with matters which are neither reserved to the council nor are executive functions;
 - (i) agree the scheme of delegation or such part of it as the constitution determines it is for the council to agree;
 - (j) approve a programme of ordinary meetings of the council for the new civic year, one of which will be to consider the council's budget only;
 - (k) consider any other business set out in the notice convening the meeting.

Ordinary meetings of the council

3. Ordinary meetings will:
- (a) if the lord mayor or deputy lord mayor is not present elect a member of the council to chair the meeting;
 - (b) approve the minutes of the last meeting;
 - (c) receive any announcements from the lord mayor;
 - (d) in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the lord mayor receive announcements from a councillor or an officer;
 - (e) in accordance with these rules to:
 - (i) receive any questions from, and provide answers to, the public;
 - (ii) receive any petitions;
 - (iii) receive any questions from and provide answers to councillors.
 - (f) present any long service awards;
 - (g) deal with any business from the last council meeting;
 - (h) receive minutes from the cabinet and the council's committees and receive questions and answers on any of those reports;
 - (i) receive any reports on current issues from members of the cabinet;
 - (j) receive any reports about and receive questions and answers on the business of joint arrangements and external organisations;
 - (k) consider any motions; and,
 - (l) consider any other business specified in the summons to the meeting, including consideration of proposals from the cabinet in relation to the council's budget and policy framework and reports from scrutiny committee, select committees or officers for debate.

Budget council

4. The ordinary meeting convened to consider the budget shall follow the procedure set out in paragraph 3 (a) to (d) above only but in addition shall receive any questions from, and provide answers to, the public and consider proposals from the cabinet in relation to the council's budget and policy framework.

Extraordinary meetings

5. Those listed below may require the executive head of business relationship management and democracy to call an extraordinary meeting of the council, cabinet, committee or sub- committee, in addition to ordinary meetings -
 - (a) the council by resolution;
 - (b) the lord mayor/chair;
 - (c) the monitoring officer;
 - (d) any three councillors;and in any event such meeting shall be held as soon as reasonably practicable.

Cancellation or rescheduling of meetings

6. The Lord Mayor, having consulted the Leader of the Council and the leaders of the other political groups, may agree to cancel a meeting of the council the date of which has been agreed by the council at its annual meeting if he/she is satisfied that there is an insufficient amount of business to be transacted and providing the summons/agenda for the meeting has not been issued.
7. The Lord Mayor having consulted the Leader of the Council and the leaders of the other political groups, may agree to reschedule a meeting of the council the date of which has been agreed by the council at its annual meeting if he or she is satisfied that this is an appropriate course of action and providing the summons/agenda for the meeting has not been issued.

Time and place of meetings

8. The time and place of meetings will be determined by the executive head of business relationship management and democracy and notified in the summons/agenda.

Notice of and summons to meetings

9. The executive head of business relationship management and democracy will give notice to the public of the time and place of any meeting in accordance with the Access to information procedure rules.
10. At least five clear days before a meeting, the executive head of business relationship management and democracy shall send a

summons signed by him/her to every councillor by post or email or leave it at their usual place of residence.

11. The summons will give the date, time and place of each meeting and specify the business to be transacted, and will be accompanied by such reports as are available.

Chair of meeting

12. The person chairing the meeting may exercise any power or duty of the Lord Mayor.
13. Where these rules apply to cabinet, committee or sub-committee meetings, reference to the Lord Mayor shall mean the chair of the meeting.

Quorum

14. The quorum of a meeting of the council, committee or sub-committee will be one quarter of the whole number of voting members of that body, with the exceptions of: the audit committee where the quorum is 4 voting members; and as set out elsewhere in the constitution, where the quorum for the cabinet is 4 voting members; scrutiny committee is 4 voting members; and standards committee is 3 voting members.
15. If during a meeting the Lord Mayor/chair declares there is not a quorum present, then the meeting will adjourn immediately. Remaining business will be considered at a time and date fixed by the Lord Mayor/chair. If he/she does not fix a date, the remaining business will be considered at the next ordinary meeting.

Duration of meeting

16. After two hours have passed since the start of a meeting, the Lord Mayor will ask if each of the remaining items can be taken as unopposed business. When unopposed business has been dealt with, the meeting will then deal with opposed items.
17. After three hours have passed since the start of a meeting, or at a convenient point before, unless the majority of members present vote for the meeting to continue, the meeting will adjourn immediately. Remaining business will be considered at a time and date fixed by the lord mayor/chair. If he/she does not fix a date, the remaining business will be considered at the next ordinary meeting.

Questions by the public

18. Any person living in the administrative area of Norwich City Council or any other person entitled to stand as a candidate for election to the council may ask questions of the leader of the council, a member of the cabinet or, the chair of a committee at ordinary meetings of the council and cabinet.
19. The rights of a person under paragraph 18 shall not extend to asking questions of the chairs of standards committee, planning applications committee, regulatory sub-committee or licensing sub-committee.
20. Questions will be asked in the order that notice was received, except that the lord mayor may group together similar questions.
21. A question may only be asked if it has been received in writing or by email by the executive head of business relationship management and democracy no later than 10 am three working days before the council meeting.
22. The executive head of business relationship management and democracy will send a copy of the question to the councillor to whom it is to be put.
23. At any one meeting no person may submit more than one question and no more than one such question may be asked on behalf of one organisation. No person shall be entitled to ask more than one question in any six-month period.
24. The executive head of business relationship management and democracy may reject a question if it -
 - (a) is not about a matter:
 - (i) for which the council has a responsibility or
 - (ii) which particularly affects the city;
 - (b) is defamatory, frivolous or offensive;
 - (c) requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information as defined in appendix 7 – Access to information procedure rules).
25. A maximum of five questions will be allowed at the beginning of each ordinary meeting of the council for questions from members of the public.
26. A maximum of three minutes will be allowed for each question and a further maximum of a minute will be allowed for one supplementary question.

27. Questions shall be answered orally at the meeting by the relevant councillor, or their nominee, but shall not be the subject of any further debate. Where the reply cannot conveniently be given orally, a written answer shall be provided to the questioner within 10 working days of the meeting.
28. 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. The Lord Mayor may reject a supplementary question on any of the grounds in this section of these rules.
29. Unless the Lord Mayor decides otherwise, no discussion will take place on any question, but any councillor may move that a matter raised by a question be referred to the cabinet or the appropriate committee or sub-committee. Once seconded, such a motion will be voted on without discussion.

Petitions

30. Any person qualified to ask a question as set out in these rules, may present a petition to a meeting of the council.
31. A petition may only be presented if the wording of the petition has been received in writing or by email by the executive head of business relationship management and democracy no later than 10 am on the working day before the council meeting.
32. No petition may be presented which is:
 - (a) not about a matter –
 - (i) for which the council has a responsibility or
 - (ii) which particularly affects the city;
 - (b) libellous;
 - (c) obscene;
 - (d) directed to an individual or small group;
 - (e) likely to cause a breach of the peace;
 - (f) concerning planning applications or any licence, notice or order issued, served or made by the council;
 - (g) is substantially the same as a petition which has been presented to a meeting of the council in the past six months.

33. No petitioner shall present more than one petition in any six-month period.
34. The number of signatories to a petition must be at least fifty.
35. Petitions shall be presented in the order in which the executive head of business relationship management and democracy receives notice of them provided that not more than two petitions shall be presented at any one council meeting.
36. In presenting a petition the petitioner may speak for not more than five minutes regarding the subject matter of the petition but shall say nothing which would be in breach of the restrictions in these rules. The relevant councillor or their nominee will have up to five minutes to respond.
37. The executive head of business relationship management and democracy may with the consent of the petitioner arrange for the petition to be presented direct to the cabinet or the appropriate committee.

Questions by councillors

38. Councillors may ask questions of the leader of the council, a member of the cabinet or the chair of a committee at ordinary meetings of the council; and, of a member of the cabinet at cabinet meetings.
39. At a meeting no member may ask more than one question unless the time taken by questions has not exceeded thirty minutes in which case second questions will be taken in the order that they are received.
40. A councillor may only ask a question if either:
 - (a) It has been received in writing or by e-mail by the executive head of business relationship management and democracy by 10 a.m. on the Wednesday in the week preceding the Council meeting; or
 - (b) the question relates to urgent matters, they have the consent of the person to whom the question is to be put and the content of the question is given to the executive head of business relationship management and democracy in writing by 12 noon on the day of the meeting.
41. The executive head of business relationship management and democracy may reject a question if:
 - (a) it is not about a matter –
 - (i) for which the council has a responsibility or
 - (ii) which particularly affects the city;

- (b) it is defamatory, frivolous or offensive;
 - (c) it requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information as defined in the Local Government Act 1972;
 - (d) it relates to a day to day council function or the provision of a council service and has not been asked first of the relevant service area.
42. Written replies will be given to questions by the relevant member of the cabinet or committee chair, or their nominee, but shall not be the subject of any further debate. Where the reply cannot conveniently be given at the council meeting, a written answer will be provided to the questioner within 10 working days of the meeting.
43. The councillor to whom the question is asked may decline to answer in which case that shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting
44. A questioner may also ask one supplementary question without notice to the councillor who has replied to the original question. A supplementary question must arise directly out of the original question or the reply. The lord mayor may reject a supplementary question on any of the grounds set out in this section of these rules.
45. Unless the Lord Mayor decides otherwise, no discussion will take place on any question, but any member may move that a matter raised by a question be referred to the cabinet or the appropriate committee or sub-committee. Once seconded, such a motion will be voted on without discussion.

Questions to committees and sub-committees

46. At the discretion of the chair, a councillor may ask a committee or subcommittee a question on any matter in relation to which it has powers or duties.

Motions

47. Except for motions which can be moved without notice under these rules, notice of every proposed motion, together with the name of the proposed mover and seconder of the motion, shall be given in writing or by email and be received by the executive head of business relationship management and democracy not later than 10 am six clear working days before the date of the meeting.
48. Motions for which notice has been given will be listed on the agenda, which is published on the council's website, in the order received, unless the member giving notice states, in writing, that they propose to move it at a later meeting or withdraw it.

49. A motion must relate to a council function, or, if not, it must affect the city or one of the council's key partners.
50. Any notice of motion included on the agenda for a council meeting shall not be dealt with in the absence of the councillor in whose name it stands unless that councillor has agreed that it may be moved by another councillor.
51. If a notice of motion cannot be taken at a meeting of the council, it shall be included on the agenda for the next meeting and take precedence at that meeting over all business after statutory business, proceedings and reports of cabinet, committees or officers.

Motions that may be moved without notice

52. The following motions may be moved without notice and will move to the vote without debate:
 - (a) to appoint a chair of the meeting;
 - (b) in relation to the accuracy of the minutes;
 - (c) to change the order of business in the agenda;
 - (d) to withdraw a motion (a councillor may withdraw a motion which he/she has moved with the consent of both the seconder and the meeting);
 - (e) to suspend a particular Council procedure rule;
 - (f) to exclude the public and press in accordance with the Access to information procedure rules;
 - (g) to not hear further a councillor named or to exclude them from the meeting under these rules;
 - (h) to give the consent of the council where such consent is required by this constitution.
 - (i) to proceed to the next business:
 - (i) if a motion to proceed to next business is seconded, the lord mayor will ensure that each political group's spokesperson has had the opportunity to speak before giving the mover of the original motion the right to reply, on the procedural motion;
 - (ii) the procedural motion is then put to the vote.
 - (j) that the matter be put to the vote without further debate:

- (i) if such motion is seconded, the lord mayor will put it to the vote;
 - (ii) if such motion is passed, the lord mayor will ensure that each political group's spokesperson has had the opportunity to speak before giving the mover of the original motion the right to reply;
 - (iii) the original motion is then put to the vote.
- (k) to adjourn a debate or a meeting;
53. The following motions may be moved without notice and after debate will move to the vote:
- (a) to refer something to an appropriate body or individual for consideration or reconsideration;
 - (b) to appoint a committee or member arising from an item on the summons for the meeting;
 - (c) to receive reports or adoption of recommendations of committees or officers and any resolutions following from them;
 - (d) to amend a motion.

Rules of debate

54. No speeches may be made after the mover has moved a proposal and explained the purpose of it until the motion has been seconded.
55. Unless notice of the motion has already been given, the lord mayor may require it to be written down and handed to him or her before it is discussed.
56. When seconding a motion or amendment, a councillor may reserve the right to speak later in the debate.
57. Speeches must be relevant to the matter under discussion or to a personal explanation or point of order.
58. No speech may exceed:
- (a) ten minutes in the case of the mover of an original motion:
 - (b) five minutes in the case of a spokesperson for any political group whose name has been notified in advance to the executive head of business relationship management and democracy as its main

speaker on an original motion moved otherwise than by a member of that group;

(c) three minutes in any other case.

59. A member shall only speak once on a motion and on an amendment, except:

(a) to move a further amendment;

(b) in exercise of a right of reply;

(c) on a point of order; and

(d) by way of personal explanation.

Amendments

60. An amendment to a motion must be relevant to the motion and will either be:

(a) to leave out words;

(b) to leave out words and insert or add others; or

(c) to insert or add words.

as long as the effect of (a) to (c) is not to negate the motion or introduce a new proposal.

61. Amendments will be taken in the order that they are notified to the lord mayor who may require an amendment to be written down and handed to him/her before it is discussed.

62. Amendments to the policy and budget framework at annual council meetings must be received by the executive head of business relationship management and democracy by 10am, three clear working days in advance of the meeting.

63. No speeches may be made after the mover has moved an amendment until the amendment has been seconded.

64. If notice of an amendment to a motion on the agenda has been received prior to the meeting, the lord mayor will ask the mover of the original motion to indicate if he/she agrees to accept the amendment. If so, and no other councillor objects, the amendment becomes part of the substantive motion without debate.

65. If an amendment is moved and seconded during debate, the lord mayor will ask the mover and seconder of the original motion if he or she is

content to accept the amendment. If so, and no other councillor objects, the amendment becomes part of the substantive motion without debate.

66. Only one amendment may be moved and discussed at any one time.
67. No further amendment may be moved until the amendment under discussion has been disposed of.
68. Not more than one amendment may be made to a motion by any one councillor.
69. If an amendment is not carried, other amendments to the original motion may be moved.
70. If an amendment is carried, the motion as amended takes the place of the original motion and becomes the substantive motion to which any further amendments are moved.
71. After an amendment has been carried, the lord mayor will read out the amended motion before accepting any further amendments, or if there are none or no other councillor has indicated a desire to speak to the amended motion, put it to the vote.

Alteration of motion

72. A councillor may alter a motion which he/she has moved and if no other councillor objects, the amendment becomes part of the substantive motion without debate.
73. Only alterations which could be made as an amendment may be made.

Right of reply

74. The mover of a motion or an amendment has a right to reply at the end of the debate on the motion or the amendment respectively, immediately before it is put to the vote.
75. If an amendment is moved, the mover of the original motion may speak on the amendment and may also waive the right of reply to the original motion at the close of the debate.

Point of order

76. A member may raise a point of order at any time. The Lord Mayor will hear them immediately.
77. A point of order may only relate to an alleged breach of these council rules of procedure or the law.

78. The councillor must indicate the rule or law and the way in which he or she considers it has been broken.
79. The ruling of the Lord Mayor on the matter will be final.

Personal explanation

80. A councillor may make a personal explanation at any time.
81. A personal explanation may only relate to some material part of an earlier speech by the councillor which may appear to have been misunderstood in the present debate.
82. The ruling of the lord mayor on the admissibility of a personal explanation will be final.

Previous decisions and motions

83. A motion or amendment to rescind a decision made at a meeting of council within the past six months cannot be moved unless the notice of motion or amendment is signed by at least ten members of the council.
84. A motion or amendment in similar terms to one that has been rejected at a meeting of council in the past six months cannot be moved unless the notice of motion or amendment is signed by at least ten members of the council. Once the motion or amendment is dealt with, no councillor can propose a similar motion or amendment for six months.

Voting

85. Unless these rules provide otherwise, any matter will be decided by a simple majority of those members voting and present in the room at the time the question was put.
86. If there are equal numbers of votes for and against, the lord mayor will have a second or casting vote.
87. The second or casting vote of the lord mayor at a council meeting must be used in favour of the administration.
88. Unless a ballot or recorded vote is requested under this section of these rules, the lord mayor will take the vote by show of hands (with numbers voting for, against and abstaining on substantive items being recorded).
89. If a councillor requests a vote by ballot and this request is supported by at least 5 other councillors, the number of votes for and against will be counted and the lord mayor will announce the numerical result of the ballot immediately.

90. If a councillor requests a recorded vote and this request is supported by at least five other councillors, the names for and against the motion or amendment or abstaining from voting will be taken down in writing and entered into the minutes and the lord mayor will announce the numerical result of the ballot immediately.
91. A request for a recorded vote will take precedence over a request for a ballot.
92. Immediately after the vote is taken and where a councillor so requests, their vote will be recorded in the minutes to show whether they voted for or against the motion or abstained from voting.

Minutes

93. The Lord Mayor will sign the minutes of the proceedings at the next suitable meeting.
94. The only part of the minutes that can be discussed is their accuracy.
95. Minutes will contain all motions and amendments in the exact form and order the lord mayor put them.

Exclusion of public

96. Members of the public and media may only be excluded either in accordance with these rules or the Access to information procedure rules (Appendix 7).

Members' conduct

97. When councillors speak at a council meeting they must address the meeting through the lord mayor. Councillors must remain silent whilst another councillor is speaking unless they wish to make a point of order or a point of personal explanation.
98. When the lord mayor indicates during a debate that he/she wishes to speak, any councillor speaking at the time must stop and the meeting must be silent.
99. If a councillor persistently disregards the ruling of the Lord Mayor by behaving improperly or offensively or deliberately obstructs business, or similar, the Lord Mayor may move that the member be not heard further.
100. If seconded, the motion will be voted on without discussion.
101. If the councillor continues to behave improperly after a motion under this section of these rules is carried, the Lord Mayor may move that either the member leaves the meeting or that the meeting is adjourned for a specified period.

102. If seconded, the motion will be voted on without discussion.

103. If there is a general disturbance or similar, making orderly business impossible, the Lord Mayor may adjourn the meeting for as long as he or she considers necessary.

Disturbance by public

104. If a member of the public interrupts proceedings, the Lord Mayor will warn the person concerned. If they continue to interrupt, the Lord Mayor will order their removal from the meeting room.

105. If there is a general disturbance in any part of the meeting room open to the public, the Lord Mayor may call for that part to be cleared.

Suspension and amendment of council procedure rules

106. All of these council procedure rules except rule 1 (may be suspended either by motion on notice or, if at least one half of the whole number of members of the council are present, without notice. As a maximum, suspension can only be for the duration of the meeting.

107. Any motion to add to, vary or revoke these council procedure rules will, when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the council.

Appointment of substitute members of committees and sub-committees

108. Political groups may nominate some or all their councillors to be substitutes for appointed members of committees, joint committees, sub-committees, working groups and panels, provided that in the case of the:-

- (a) council's regulatory type committees and sub-committees (licensing, planning applications and standards committees and the personnel appeals panel) substitutes must have received suitable training;
- (b) scrutiny committee where all councillors except cabinet members are permitted to be substitutes.

109. Notice of substitution stating the name of the substitute must be given to the executive head of business relationship management and democracy before the commencement of the meeting concerned.

110. Cancellation of the intention to substitute will not be effective unless the executive head of business relationship management and democracy is notified before the commencement of the meeting.

111. If, after notice of substitution has been given, the original appointed member is present when the meeting begins, the substitution will not have effect for that meeting.
112. If the original appointed member arrives when the meeting is in progress, the substitution will remain effective and the original appointed member will not be allowed to participate in the decision making. It is not possible to substitute for part of a meeting only.
113. The chair shall inform the meeting of any substitutions before the commencement of the meeting.

Application to cabinet, committees and sub-committees

114. The council procedure rules apply to meetings of full council.
115. The following rules apply to meetings of the cabinet: rules 5 to 16; 18 to 45; 52 to 105. (See also Appendix 5, Cabinet procedure rules.)
116. The following rules apply to meetings of the council's committees, subcommittees: rules 5 to 16; 18 to 37; 46; 52 to 105; 108 to 113.