

COMMITTEE	Urgent Business Committee
DATE	3 July 2017
REPORT TITLE	Amendment to Standing Orders
REPORT NUMBER	CG/17/___
LEAD OFFICER	Fraser Bell
REPORT AUTHOR	Martyn Orchard

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT:-

- 1.1 This report responds to the decision of Council of 21 June 2017, to report to the Urgent Business Committee meeting established to deal with appointments to outside bodies, on amending Standing Orders so that it shall be within the discretion of the Convener of a Committee or Sub Committee to cancel, advance or postpone an ordinary meeting if in his/her opinion there is a good reason for doing so.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 That the Committee approve that Standing Orders be amended to incorporate the following additional Standing Order to the Ordinary Meetings heading within the Council and Committee Meetings section:-

- 6.3 It shall be within the discretion of the Convener of a Committee or the Convener of a Sub Committee to cancel, advance or postpone to a later date an ordinary meeting if in his/her opinion there is good reason for doing so.

3. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

- 3.1 The Council's new Standing Orders were approved at the Council meeting on 15 March 2017. At that time it had been anticipated that the Council's Scheme of Delegated Powers would also be revised and approved by Council, however this will not take place until October 2017 at the earliest.
- 3.2 In the meantime, a report was submitted to the Council meeting on 21 June 2017 relating to appointments to outside bodies, amendments to committee places and the Council diary. Amongst many things, the report recommended that the Council delegate authority to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to set and amend the calendar of Council, Committee and Sub Committee meetings, following consultation with the Lord Provost and Council Leader and to update the Scheme of Delegation accordingly.

- 3.3 However, the Council did not approve the aforementioned recommendation, and instead instructed the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to report to the Urgent Business Committee meeting established to deal with appointments to outside bodies, on amending Standing Orders so that it shall be within the discretion of the Convener of a Committee or Sub Committee to cancel, advance or postpone an ordinary meeting if in his/her opinion there is a good reason for doing so.
- 3.4 Such an amendment to Standing Orders would simply be reinstating a Standing Order which existed previously, namely Standing Order 31(3) of the Council's Standing Orders approved on 8 October 2014.
- 3.5 If the Committee is in agreement that the Standing Orders should be amended, this Standing Order would be added at Standing Order 6.3.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendation of this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendation of this report. Approval of the report is not considered to pose any legal risk to the Council.

6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

- Financial - none
- Employee - there is a risk that a change of date could mean that some elected members and officers who had booked leave around scheduled dates may not be able to attend amended ones. In such cases substitutes would need to be utilised and cover would need to be put in place at officer level.
- Customer/citizen - none
- Environmental - none
- Technological - none
- Legal - none
- Reputational - there may be a reputational risk if the recommended Standing Order is used excessively and meeting dates are changed frequently. However, the Standing Order requires there to be a good reason for doing so, and experience with the previous equivalent Standing Order would suggest that this risk is low.

7. IMPACT SECTION

7.1 Economy

- 7.1.1 There will be no impact on the economy arising from approval of the recommendation within the report.

7.2 People

- 7.2.1 The report may be of interest to the public, particularly those members of the public who take an interest in local democracy and Committee and Sub Committee meetings.
- 7.2.2 An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment is not required as the proposal does not disproportionately impact on persons with protected characteristics compared to persons without such characteristics.

7.3 Place

- 7.3.1 There will be no direct impact on the environment or the community arising from this report

7.4 Technology

- 7.4.1 There will be no impact on technology arising from this report.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Aberdeen City Council Standing Orders - approved on 15 March 2017
- Aberdeen City Council Standing Orders - approved on 8 October 2014

9. APPENDICES

None

10. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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