

Report to:	Council	Date of Meeting:	6 March 2014
Subject:	Recorded Votes at Council Budget Meetings	Wards Affected:	All
Report of:	Director of Corporate Services		
Is this a Key Decision?	No	Is it included in the Forward Plan?	No
Exempt/Confidential	No		

Purpose/Summary

To advise the Council of the Government Regulations which came into force on 25 February 2014, which require all local authorities to amend their Constitution, so as to include provisions requiring recorded votes at Budget Council meetings on motions relating to the determination of the budget, council tax levels and the issuing of precepts.

Recommendation(s)

That approval be given to the inclusion of the following provision within the Council and Committee Procedure Rules, in Chapter 4 of the Constitution:

“Recorded Votes at Budget Council Meetings

The votes of all Members present in the room will be recorded for and against the motion or amendment or abstaining from voting and will be taken down in writing and recorded in the minutes of Budget Council meetings in respect of the determination of the budget, setting of council taxes or issuing of precepts.”

How does the decision contribute to the Council’s Corporate Objectives?

	<u>Corporate Objective</u>	<u>Positive Impact</u>	<u>Neutral Impact</u>	<u>Negative Impact</u>
1	Creating a Learning Community		√	
2	Jobs and Prosperity		√	
3	Environmental Sustainability		√	
4	Health and Well-Being		√	
5	Children and Young People		√	
6	Creating Safe Communities		√	
7	Creating Inclusive Communities		√	
8	Improving the Quality of Council Services and Strengthening Local	√		

	Democracy			
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Reasons for the Recommendation:

To comply with the mandatory provisions in the Government Regulations.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs

None

(B) Capital Costs

None

Implications:

The following implications of this proposal have been considered and where there are specific implications, these are set out below:

Financial	
Legal	The Local Authorities [Standing Order][England] [Amendment] Regulations 2014 amends ,as from 25 th February 2014, the 2001 Standing Order Regulations by requiring that immediately after any vote is taken at a budget decision meeting of an authority there must be recorded in the minutes of the proceedings of that meeting the names of the persons who cast a vote for the decision or against the decision or who abstained from voting.
Human Resources	N/A
Equality	
1. No Equality Implication	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. Equality Implications identified and mitigated	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Equality Implication identified and risk remains	<input type="checkbox"/>

Impact of the Proposals on Service Delivery:

None

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

The Head of Corporate Finance and ICT (FD 2835/14) and Head of Corporate Legal Services (LD2141/14.) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

Implementation Date for the Decision

Following the Council meeting.

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Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection

1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government has issued The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, which came into force on 25 February 2014 and make it mandatory for local authorities as soon as possible after the Regulations are in force, to amend the Standing Orders in their Constitution, so as to include provisions requiring recorded votes at Budget Council meetings.
- 1.2 The regulations require local authorities to adopt the practice of recording in the minutes of the Budget Council meeting how each member present voted on any decision relating to the budget or council tax, to enable the public to see how their councillors voted, not only on the substantive budget motions agreeing the budget, setting council taxes or issuing precepts, but also on any amendments proposed at the meeting.
- 1.3 The Secretary of State has indicated that the purpose of the regulations is to enable local people to see how those they have elected to represent them have voted on critical decisions which affect the lives and households of all who will in the Council's area and it will demonstrate transparency and democratic accountability.
- 1.4 The regulations will require the inclusion of the following provision within the Council and Committee Procedure Rules, in Chapter 4 of the Constitution:

"Recorded Votes at Budget Council Meetings

The votes of all Members present in the room will be recorded for and against the motion or amendment or abstaining from voting and will be taken down in writing and recorded in the minutes of Budget Council meetings in respect of the determination of the budget, setting of council taxes or issuing of precepts."

1.5 The existing provisions in the Council and Committee Procedure Rules relating to a recorded vote if requested by 7 Members (Rule 92) and the right of individual Members to request that their vote be recorded immediately after the vote is taken (Rule 93) remain for all decisions taken at Council meetings.