

**REPORT TITLE: Constitution Updates**

**To:**

Civic Affairs & Audit Committee (22 June 2026)

**Report by:**

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**Wards affected:**

N/A

Director Approval: The Monitoring Officer confirms that the report author has sought the advice of all appropriate colleagues and given due regard to that advice; that the equalities impacts and other implications of the recommended decisions have been assessed and accurately presented in the report; and that they are content for the report to be put to the committee for decision.

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| <b>1.</b> | <b>Recommendations</b>   |
| 1.1       | That the Civic Affairs & Audit Committee recommend to Full Council changes to the Constitution as listed in section 4.1 of the report.   |
| <b>2.</b> | <b>Purpose and reason for the report</b>   |
| 2.1       | This report outlines some minor amendments to the Constitution around speaking rights for Group Leaders at Cabinet and the guillotine in relation to formal meetings of the Council including Full Council.  |
| <b>3.</b> | <b>Alternative options considered</b>  |
| 3.1       | The recommendations are being presented to committee as part of agreements made between the Liberal Democrats and Labour Group in order to enable a minority administration. Full Council need to agree any changes to the Council's Constitution. |
| <b>4.</b> | <b>Background and key issues</b>   |

4.1

Details of the suggested changes are highlighted below. These are intended to acknowledge the council is in no overall control and that there is an important role to play for all opposition groups. The proposals are relatively minor and would:

- extend the rights of main opposition group to the Liberal Democrat Group in addition to the Green Group, which enables speaking rights at Cabinet.
- exclude breaks and Mayoral business (including speaking time of Mayor's Chaplain) from the operation of the full council guillotine.

**Addition to Glossary in Constitution:**

**Main opposition parties:**

Where the Council operates under a minority administration, any opposition political group whose membership comprises at least 20% of the total number of councillors shall be recognised as a Main Opposition Group and shall be treated as such for all purposes relating to the Council's governance arrangements, decision-making structures, and constitutional provisions

**Changes to Constitution's Executive procedure rules in track changes:**

4.14. Speaking Rights at Cabinet Meetings (pg 149)

4.14.1 The following have the right to speak at Cabinet meetings:

- a. the Leader and Cabinet;
- b. the Chief Executive, Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer in respect of the discharge of their statutory duties;
- c. the Chair of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee in respect of a report by that Committee;
- d. the Leader's of the Opposition Groups to the Council.

4.14.2 The person presiding may allow other persons, including other Councillors, to

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|           | <p> speak at Cabinet only in relation to an item of business on the agenda. The Cabinet may take into account verbal representations made at its meeting when making decisions but must not consider any additional documentation submitted without compliance with the Access to Information Rules set out in this Constitution. </p> <p> 4.14.3 The person presiding has discretion to determine or limit the amount of time, and the number of times, that any member may speak on a particular item. </p> <p> <b>Standing orders – Guillotine changes tracked</b> </p> <p> 1.9. Duration of meeting </p> <p> 1.9.1 If the business of the meeting has not been concluded within three hours after the start of the meeting (excluding any period of adjournment , speaking time allocated to the Mayor’s Chaplain and Mayors Announcements at Full Council meetings), the Mayor will indicate that the time has expired and any member speaking must immediately sit down. The Mayor will call for a vote immediately on the item under discussion unless a motion to continue the meeting is moved and seconded. A motion to continue the meeting will be voted on without discussion. If the motion is passed by the majority of Councillors present, the meeting will continue for a further 30 minutes. At the end of the further period, the Mayor will indicate that the time has expired and call for a vote immediately on the item under discussion. The vote will be taken in the usual way without any further discussion. </p> |
| <b>5.</b> | <b>Corporate plan &amp; vision</b>   |
| 5.1       | Changes to the constitution are made to ensure the Council’s plans and vision are carried out.   |
| <b>6.</b> | <b>Consultation, engagement and communication</b>  |
| 6.1       | Civic Affairs & Audit Committee are part of the consultation process ensuring all parties have the opportunity to comment before recommendations are passed to Council for agreement.  |

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| <b>7.</b> | <b>Anticipated outcomes, benefits or impact</b>   |
| 7.1       | <p>The anticipate outcomes will allow for more collaborative working between parties by extending speaking rights to all opposition group leaders at Cabinet.</p> <p>The excluding of breaks from the guillotine allows members further time to debate items on the agenda as part of the formal business of the Council.</p> |
| <b>8.</b> | <b>Implications</b>   |
|           | <b>Relevant risks</b>   |
| 8.1       | There are none.   |
|           | <b>Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)</b>  |
| 8.2       | None applicable in lead up to LGR.  |
|           | <b>Financial Implications</b>   |
| 8.3       | There are none.   |
|           | <b>Legal Implications</b>   |
| 8.4       | None, Council can amend constitution with regards to its processes and procedures for Cabinet meetings.   |
|           | <b>Equalities and socio-economic Implications</b>   |
| 8.5       | None.   |
|           | <b>Net Zero Carbon, Climate Change and Environmental implications</b>   |

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| 8.6        | None applicable.  |
|            | <b>Procurement Implications</b>   |
| 8.7        | None.   |
|            | <b>Community Safety Implications</b>  |
| 8.8        | None.   |
| <b>9.</b>  | <b>Background documents</b><br>Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985  |
| 9.1        | Constitution of Cambridge City Council.   |
| <b>10.</b> | <b>Appendices</b>   |
| 10.1       | None.   |
|            | To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Dan Kalley, Head of Governance and Democracy (Deputy Monitoring Officer)<br><a href="mailto:dan.kalley@cambridge.gov.uk">dan.kalley@cambridge.gov.uk</a> |