

TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Report to: Council
Date: 19 February 2014
Report for: Decision
Report of: Director of Legal and Democratic Services

Report Title

Amendments to Standing Orders – Recorded Votes

Summary

The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Department of Communities and Local Government, Brandon Lewis MP wrote to all Councils on the 4 February 2014. The letter advises that the Government has introduced regulations in accordance with the Audit and Accountability Act 2014 which will require all councils to adopt the practice of requiring a recorded vote at Budget setting meetings.

It also asks that those councils who will meet before the regulations come into effect adopt the practice even though they are not legally required to do so at that point in time.

Recommendations

1. That the Council's Standing Orders be amended with effect from the 25 February 2014 so as to include provisions requiring recorded votes at budget meetings as set out in the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014.
2. That, prior to the changes, recorded votes be held for all substantive motions agreeing the budget, setting council taxes or issuing precepts and any amendments proposed at the meeting.

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

Name: Peter Forrester – Democratic Services Manager
Extension: 1815

Background Papers:

None

1. Report

- 1.1 The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Department of Communities and Local Government, Brandon Lewis MP wrote to all Councils on the 4 February 2014. The letter advises that the Government has introduced regulations in accordance with the Audit and Accountability Act 2014 which will require all councils to adopt the practice of requiring a recorded vote at Budget setting meetings.
- 1.2 It also asks that those councils who will meet before the regulations come into effect adopt the practice even though they are not legally required to do so at that point in time.

2. The Regulations

- 2.1 The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 were passed last week. The Regulations make it mandatory for councils as soon as is practicable after the Regulations are in force, to amend their Standing Orders so as to include provisions requiring recorded votes at budget meetings.
- 2.2 This will require a recorded vote on any decision relating to the budget or council tax. The purpose of the Regulations is to allow people to see how members voted on the substantive budget motions agreeing the budget, setting council taxes or issuing precepts and also on any amendments proposed at the meeting.
- 2.3 The regulations will come in to force on 25 February 2014, which is after the proposed date of Trafford's Budget Council meeting. However, it is the Minister's expectation that councils will take a recorded vote on these matters in any event and therefore it is recommended that we amend our Standing Orders to reflect the changes required by the Regulations from the 25 February 2014 and adopt the practice for this meeting.

Implications:

Relationship to Policy Framework/Corporate Priorities	The report indirectly links to all of the corporate priorities as they are about the democratic arrangements of the Council
Financial	There are no financial implications directly associated with this report.
Legal	The main body of this report details the provisions Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and proposed Regulations.
Equality & Diversity	There are no equality and diversity issues arising from the report
Sustainability Implications	There are no sustainability implications directly associated with this report.
Staffing/ E-Government/ Asset Management	There are no staffing, e-government or asset management implications directly associated with this report.

Risk Management	There are no risks directly associated with this report.
Health and Safety	There are no risks directly associated with this report.
Health and Well-being	There are no issues arising from this report