



**MOVING, RESOLVING, AMENDING AND AGING  
RESOLUTIONS IN LOCAL GOVERNMENTS**

We support the processes of proposing and amending, and also moving, resolving and voting on motions at our meetings that are open to the public. The most basic motion is one of approval of a decision for our own purposes. This procedure applies to both committees.

Let us look at a general starting point that also allows for a second reading. Please read the Chairman or your member or staff before you begin.

If a motion is to be received the Chairman will discuss the motion with the meeting before all members of the public have the right to request that their participation is deferred from the meeting. Please make your own request to the Chairman.

The Chairman has absolute authority to terminate or suspend the meeting if it is necessary to ensure that the meeting is held in accordance with the provisions of the Act. It is the duty of all members to comply with the Chairman's instructions.

# Understanding Motions and the Rules of Debate



# What we will cover today

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- How to craft motions
- How motions are presented
- How motions are debated
- How motions are determined

# What is a motion?

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***“A formal proposal that is discussed and voted upon at a meeting”***

- A proposal that enables discussion and decision on specific topics that comes from Members and are determined only by Members
- Officer recommendations are submitted through reports to enable a proposal to be put, debated and voted upon.

# First things first

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- Careful thought and consideration should be given to the use of motions
- Do your research and be sure of the facts
- Consult with relevant officers to understand implications – important to discuss with the Monitoring Officer and S.151 Officer
- Sound out your political allies to establish a level of support
- Seek advice

# Crafting a motion

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- Make sure it is in the proper form – This Council notes ... This Council believes ... This Council resolves that ...
- Must be relevant to some matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties, or which affects the District.
- Motion cannot instruct or ask the Council
- Can instruct Committees, Leader, Committee Chairs or officers
- Avoid jargon

# Submitting a motion

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- Procedure Rule 16 sets out the requirement
- Ten working days before the next ordinary meeting of the full Council
- Can be submitted by email or in writing to Director of Corporate and Customer Services and Committee Team
- Will receive acknowledgement and confirmation of consideration at the next ordinary meeting of Council
- Agenda published five clear working days before meeting date

# Alteration of motions

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- Proposer of a motion may alter a motion on which they have given notice before it is proposed
- They can also alter after proposal subject to the consent of the Member who seconds their motion
- Important rule that can enable more effective debates

# Procedure Rule 17 – Motions without Notice

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- Election of Chair
- Accuracy of the minutes
- To give precedence to an item of business
- Reference of business to a committee
- Appointment of a committee or councillor thereof occasioned by an item mentioned on the agenda
- Receipt of reports or adoption of recommendations from committees or officers
- To withdraw a proposal
- Amendment to proposals
- “that Council proceed to next business”
- “that the question be now put”
- “That the debate be now adjourned”
- That the Council do now adjourn”
- Suspension of a procedure rule
- Exclusion of press and public
- That a councillor be not further heard or do leave the meeting
- To give consent where the consent of Council is required
- To continue a meeting beyond 2 ½ hours





# Procedure Rule 18 – Rules of Debate

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- No speeches until a proposal has been seconded (and right to speak as seconder may be reserved to a later period in the debate)
- Speakers to address the Chair, who will decide who and the order of speakers
- Speeches must be direct to the question under discussion
- Proposers of motions or amendments have up to 7 minutes to speak, everyone else has up to five minutes
- Members may not speak more than once in debate except to speak on an amendment, move a further amendment, exercise the right of reply (proposers only), a point of order or personal explanation

# Procedure Rule 18 – Amendments

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- Amendments must be relevant and should either:
  - Refer the matter to the appropriate body for consideration or reconsideration
  - To leave out words
  - To leave out words and to insert words or add others
  - To insert or add words
- The negative of a proposal may not be moved by way of an amendment
- Any amendment must be pertinent and relevant to the original motion
- Only one amendment at a time
- If lost, return to the original proposal
- If won, becomes the substantive motion which must be voted on again

# Procedure Rule 18 – Proposals in debate

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When a proposal is under debate, no other proposal may be moved except procedural proposals:

- To amend a proposal
- To adjourn a meeting
- To adjourn debate
- To proceed with the next business
- That the question be now put
- That a councillor be not further heard
- By the Chair, that a councillor do leave the meeting
- Exclusion of press and public
- The meeting to continue beyond 2 ½ hours
- Debate be adjourned for a site visit (Planning Committee)

# Procedure Rule 18 – Closure Proposals

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A councillor may move without comment at the conclusion of a speech of another councillor:

- That the Council proceed to the next business
- That the question be now put
- That the debate be now adjourned or
- That the Council do now adjourn

Once seconded, the Chair shall

If a proposal to next business is seconded and the Chair believes it has been sufficiently discussed, the proposer shall have the right of reply and then put the procedural proposal to the vote

If a proposal that the question now be put is seconded and the Chair believes it has been sufficiently discussed s/he will put the procedural motion to vote. If passed, the proposer of the motion has a right of reply before the motion is voted on

# Procedure Rule 18 – Points of Order

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- A councillor may raise a point of order at any time and be heard immediately.
- A point of order may only relate to an alleged breach of the Council's Procedure Rules or the law.
- The councillor must indicate the rule of law which he/she consider has been broken
- the Chair's ruling on the matter will be final.

# Procedure Rule 19 – Voting

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- The Chair shall take votes in one of the following ways:
  - By show of hands
  - By ballot
  - Where any councillor requests it immediately after the vote is taken, their vote will be so recorded in the minutes
  - If two councillors present demand it, names will be recorded in the minutes showing how councillors voted
- Any matter will be determined by a simple majority
- Chair's casting vote where there is an equal number for and against – no restriction on how it is used, but if not used then the proposal falls automatically
- In the event of an equality of votes for the Chair at the Annual Meeting, the person presiding must exercise a casting vote

# Summary

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- Be clear on what you're trying to achieve
- Plan your wording
- Seek advice
- Work out if you have enough support in advance of submitting a motion
- Read the rules of debate and understand them!
- The Chair and MO are there to help!

# Questions

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