



REPORT OF THE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

REVISED PROCEDURE FOR COUNCIL QUESTIONS

With the formation of a fifth Group on the Council (UKIP) and following consultation with the Administration, proposals were recently put forward to revise the procedure for deciding the number of Council questions which could be submitted at a Council meeting. The report also reviewed the current distribution rights for Council questions.

At its meeting held on 10 September, Governance Committee was reminded that the recent agreement about the number of questions for Council had been formulated on the basis of three Opposition Groups. Now there were four Opposition Groups, the number of questions (15) did not appear to work conveniently in terms of allocating questions to each Group. The proposal was to raise the number of questions to 16 with either a fixed number for each Group or a proportional number of questions depending on Group size with a number of questions “spare” for allocation on a “first-come-first-served” basis.

Members considered that 15 questions could be retained if the proportions were distributed along the same lines as those used to calculate political balance in committees (which would have the advantage of change as the number of members of a Group changed without affecting the overall number of questions available).

The formula adopted (after a vote) was: Residents’ Group 8, Labour Group 3 and IRG and UKIP groups 2 each (15 questions in total).

Accordingly, the Committee recommends to Council that:

- 1 The maximum number of questions should remain 15**
- 2 Rule 10.6(a) of the Council Procedure Rules (Notice of Questions) should be amended to read:**

“A maximum of 15 questions can be submitted for a Council meeting all of which, together with any supplementary questions under Rule 10.5 will receive an oral reply at the meeting. Any questions in excess of the maximum number that are submitted will be treated as a Member enquiry and receive a written response.”
- 3 The distribution of questions should be:**

Residents' Group 8; Labour Group 3; Independent Residents' Group 2; and United Kingdom Independence Party 2.