

30. Motion submitted by Councillor Speight

The Motion, as printed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor Speight and seconded by Councillor Halden. The Motion read as follows:

Residents get nine, or at best ten, opportunities a year to see their council in full action. Far too often vital matters are not discussed because of the guillotine regulations which foreshorten debate and discussion. This has led, in the past, to political filibustering and spurious questions to ensure that matters are not discussed in public because of the time limitation. This is not democracy in action. For full meetings only, councillors and officers should be expected to give whatever time is necessary to discuss matters. This motion does not seek to remove the limits of time individual councillors get to speak, but to remove the guillotine on separate sections of the meeting; henceforth this council calls on cabinet and/or the constitution working group to review the constitution as a matter of urgency and subsequently allow monthly full council meetings to run their full length without the need to invoke standing orders for an extension.

The following points were made:

- There had been improvements made to the process over the last couple of years by extended the guillotine time, provided more time for questions and motions, and moved portfolio holder reports to scrutiny committees.
- There were plenty of other changes that could be introduced, but there were only certain ways to change the constitution to achieve a better democratic level of debate.
- All members should become more actively involved to strengthen and broaden the debate in the constitution.
- The call-in process could potentially stop the art of decision making.
- The Mayor was asked to allow unlimited time at council meetings to allow time for questions and motions to ensure the business could be concluded until the consultation had been completed and had been reflected in the constitution.
- Point was made that all officers and members should remain in committee meetings until all business had been completed.
- Point raised that there had to be a sensible time for meetings to finish.
- Need to look at the type of questions coming forward particularly those that could be asked directly to officers outside of the meeting.

Councillor Speight summed up by urging all members for their support.

The Mayor called a vote on the Motion.

With 47 votes in favour, the motion was carried.