



## Report to Cabinet

**Subject:** Recording of Meetings

**Date:** 24 September 2015

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### Wards Affected

All

### Purpose

To inform Cabinet of recommendations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the issue of recording meetings and for Cabinet to authorise the recording of some Committee Meetings.

### Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision

#### 1. Background

- 1.1 At the final meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee before the last Borough Elections the Committee asked officers to examine the issue of recording public committee meetings.

The issue was researched and a paper setting out 3 options for recording meetings (attached as appendix one to this report) was presented to the July meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.

#### 2. Proposal

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee discussed the merits of each method of recording public committee meetings and agreed to recommend to Cabinet that a system of audio recording and broadcasting (referred to as "option 3" in the report) is implemented.

As explained in the report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee the system that is being proposed for implementation relies on using the existing equipment in the Council Chamber. Therefore it is proposed to audio record meetings of the Planning Committee and Council. It is felt that these meetings generally attract the most interest from members of the

public.

Officers are proposing to initially trial the use of the system for a period of six months in order to assess its success. The system does not require any capital expenditure and is used on a “pay as you go” basis which results in the council not having to make a long term commitment to the system.

It is proposed to use the Audio Minutes system which integrates very simply into the council’s website giving the public a very user-friendly experience. The system can also be operated very easily which does not place a burden on staff resources. The public will be able to listen live to meetings at home and recordings will also be available for twelve months on the website, similar to such services as the BBC iplayer.

### **3. Alternative Options**

Cabinet may decide to maintain the status quo and not authorise meetings to be recorded as described above.

Cabinet may decide to explore alternative ways to achieve the goal of recording meetings of the Council.

### **4. Financial Implications**

As mentioned above the financial commitment required to implement a system of audio recording meetings is relatively modest because the hardware required is already in place.

To deliver the service on a pay as you go basis will cost £25 per meeting plus a monthly fee of £50 to host the service. This cost can be met from existing budgets within Elections and Members’ Services.

### **5. Appendices**

Appendix One – Overview and Scrutiny Committee report.

### **6. Background Papers**

None identified.

### **7. Recommendation(s)**

THAT

- (a) Approval is given to implement a system to record and broadcast the audio from meetings of Council and Planning Committee as described in the report;
- (b) The system is trialled for a period of six months; and
- (c) A further report is brought to Cabinet after the six month trial to consider

whether audio webcasting should be continued.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

To respond to the recommendations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

To make Planning Committee and Council meetings more accessible to a greater number of citizens and provide a definitive record of those meetings.