12. Cabinet procedures

12.1 Who carries out executive responsibilities within the Council?

Executive responsibilities are carried out by the Leader, the Cabinet or delegated to officers.

12.2 Date and place of meetings

The Cabinet meets on dates agreed by the Leader. Meetings are at the Town Hall or another place agreed by the Leader.

12.3 Quorum

The quorum is three. Substitutes are not allowed.

12.4 Vacancies on the Cabinet

A councillor can resign from the Cabinet by writing to the Head of Law and Governance. If a Cabinet member resigns from the Cabinet or stops being a councillor, the Leader may replace that Cabinet member and any replacement will become effective upon notification of the name of the new Cabinet member to the Head of Law and Governance.

12.5 How are decisions taken at Cabinet meeting?

Decisions are taken by a majority of members present and voting. If there is the same number of votes for and against, the chair can use a casting vote. Voting is by show of hands.

Any councillor can ask for the minutes to record whether they voted for, voted against or abstained on a vote. The request must be made immediately after the vote.

12.6 Who chairs Cabinet meetings?

The Leader will chair Cabinet meetings or appoint someone else to chair them.

If the Leader or the person they have appointed is absent, the Cabinet can appoint another Cabinet member to act as chair. If the Leader or the person they have appointed arrives part of the way through a meeting, the acting chair will finish the item they are on and hand over the chair.

12.7 Order of business

The order of business will be:

(a) declarations of interest

(b) addresses and questions by members of the public, 15 minutes in total.

Members of the public can submit questions in writing about any item for decision at the meeting. Questions, stating the relevant agenda item, must be received by the Head of Law and Governance by 9.30am two clear working day before the meeting (e.g. for a Thursday meeting, the deadline would be 9.30 am on the Tuesday). Questions can be submitted either by letter or by email (cabinet@oxford.gov.uk).

Answers to the questions will be provided in writing at the meeting; supplementary questions will not be allowed. If it is not possible to provide an answer at the meeting it will be included in the minutes that are published on the Council's website within 2 working days of the meeting.

The Chair has discretion in exceptional circumstances to agree that a submitted question or related statement (dealing with matters that appear on the agenda) can be asked verbally at the meeting. In these cases, the question and/or address is limited to 3 minutes, and will be answered verbally by the Chair or another Cabinet member or an officer of the Council. The text of any proposed address must be submitted within the same timescale as questions.

For this agenda item the Chair's decision is final.

(c) councillor addresses on any item for decision on the Cabinet's agenda

(d) councillor addresses on neighbourhood issues (10 minutes)

(e) reports from the Scrutiny Committee

(f) items for decision, including reports from Cabinet members

(g) items raised by Cabinet members. Such items must be submitted within the same timescales as questions and will be for discussion only and not for a Cabinet decision. Any item which requires a decision of the Cabinet will be the subject of a report to a future meeting of the Cabinet.

(h) minutes of the last meeting.

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This procedure can be suspended if at least half of all the voting members are present and there is a simple majority in favour. It can only be suspended until the end of the meeting.

12.8 Who can put items on the Cabinet agenda?

The Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer or Chief Finance Officer can put an item on the agenda if it will help them carry out their duties in those roles. If the item is urgent, they can require a special meeting to consider it.

No one else can put items on the agenda.

12.9 Forward Plan

All matters on the Cabinet agenda must have appeared on the Forward Plan (Part 15.16)

12.10 Councillors speaking at meetings

Oxford City councillors may, when the chair agrees, address the Cabinet on an item for decision on the agenda (other than on the minutes). The member seeking to make an address must notify the Head of Law and Governance by 9.30am at least one clear working day before the meeting, stating the relevant agenda items. An address may last for no more than three minutes. If an address is made, the Cabinet member who has political responsibility for the item for decision may respond or the Cabinet will have regard to the points raised in reaching its decision.

12.11 Councillors speaking on neighbourhood issues

At each meeting 10 minutes is available for any City Councillor to raise local issues on behalf of communities directly with the Cabinet. The member seeking to make an address must notify the Head of Law and Governance by 9.30am at least one clear working day before the meeting, giving outline details of the issue. Priority will be given to those members who have not already addressed the Cabinet within the year and in the order received. Issues can only be raised once unless otherwise agreed by the Cabinet. The Cabinet's responsibility will be to hear the issue and respond at the meeting, if possible, or arrange a written response within 10 working days.

12.12 Gaps in these procedures

If there is a gap in these procedures, the chair of the Cabinet will decide what to do.

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