

Wiltshire Council

Council

25 February 2014

Recorded Voting – Decisions on Budget and Council Tax The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014

This is to advise Council of the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 which come into force on 25 February 2014. The Regulations require principal councils to hold recorded votes when determining levels of expenditure on services and the level of council tax to be levied for their area.

This in effect means that all councils must adopt the practice of recording in the minutes of the meeting how each member present voted on any decisions relating to the budget and council tax, not only on the substantive motions but also on any amendments voted on these items. The Government has introduced the Regulations it says, to enhance transparency and democratic accountability. Consequently, all votes on decisions concerning the budget and setting of council tax at the Council meeting on 25 February will be by way of recorded voting.

Paragraph 16.3 of Part 2 of the constitution, empowers the Monitoring Officer to amend the constitution to effect changes in the law. Under this provision, the Monitoring Officer will be making the following change to the constitution:

Part 4 – Council Procedure Rules

Recorded vote

136. With the exception of the following paragraph, if 10 Councillors (or a quarter of the members of a committee) present at the meeting demand it, the names for and against the motion or amendment or abstaining from voting will be ~~taken down in writing and entered~~ recorded in the minutes. A demand for a recorded vote will override a demand for a ballot.

To add:

Recorded votes shall be taken on all decisions in respect of setting the authority's budget and determining the level of council tax to be levied. The names for and against the motion or amendment or abstaining from voting on these matters will be recorded into the minutes.

Councillor Julian Johnson, Chairman of the Standards Committee has been advised of this requirement and the above changes being made to the constitution.

Robin Townsend, Associate Director – Corporate Function and Procurement
Ian Gibbons, Associate Director – Law and Governance/Monitoring Officer