



SUPPORTING COUNCILLORS IN THE FORMAL PROCESS OF RAISING MOTIONS & PROPOSALS

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

PAPER B

24 SEPTEMBER 2025

Ventnor Town Council is encouraged to consider implementing a more formal process for councillors to raise motions and proposals, in line with NALC good practice.

Currently, many agenda items originate through informal conversations with officers, who then prepare and present the papers. Whilst this has helped facilitate ideas, it can lead to unclear ownership and increased officer workload.

To improve transparency, accountability, and governance, the council is asked to support a structured process where councillors formally submit motions, take ownership of their proposals, and lead discussions at meetings.

NO. DETAIL

1) BACKGROUND

It has become common practice in some instances for councillors to raise potential agenda topics informally with officers, who then prepare and present the item for discussion. Whilst this has helped facilitate ideas, it can lead to unclear ownership and increased officer workload.

NALC guidance encourages councils to adopt clear procedures for submitting motions, informed by good practice, ensuring councillors are empowered to lead on proposals and officers are positioned to support rather than initiate. This approach promotes transparency, accountability, and good governance.

2) DETAIL

The current informal process can result in unclear attribution of agenda items, officer-led papers on councillor-originated topics, and reduced visibility of councillor-led initiatives.

To align with NALC good practice, the council is invited to consider a refreshed process that supports councillors in formally raising motions and proposals.

Proposed Process Based on Sector Good Practice (NALC):

- a) Councillor Drafts the Motion – Using a standard template to ensure clarity and consistency.
- b) Submission Timeline – Motions should be submitted at least 7 clear working days before the agenda is published, ideally 10–14 days before the meeting.
- c) Agenda Inclusion – The motion is listed with the councillor named as proposer.
- d) Presentation at Meeting – The councillor presents and leads discussion on the motion.

3) RECOMMENDATION

It is proposed that the Policy & Resources Committee:

- a) Supports the implementation of a formal process for councillors to raise motions in line with NALC guidance.
- b) Agrees the short guidance note and submission template to assist councillors – *see Appendix 1*
- c) Encourages councillor-led presentation and discussion of motions at meetings.
- d) Support taking this paper and any updated agreements to Full Council for approval to implement.

Guidance Note for Councillors on Raising Motions and Proposals

1. Purpose of a Motion:

A motion is a formal proposal made by a councillor for discussion and decision at a council meeting. It should be clear, purposeful, and within the council's legal powers.

Key Principles:

- a) Ownership: Motions should be initiated and owned by councillors.
- b) Clarity: Motions must be clearly worded and include sufficient context.
- c) Timeliness: Motions should be submitted in good time to allow inclusion on the agenda and officer support if needed.

2. Submission Process:

- a) Draft the Motion – Use plain language and include background and a clear proposed action.
- b) Use the Motion Template – A standard form will be provided.
- c) Submit to the Clerk – Ideally 10–14 days before the meeting; minimum 7 clear working days before agenda publication.
- d) Agenda Inclusion – Motion appears with councillor named as proposer.
- e) Presentation at Meeting – Councillor presents and leads discussion.

3. Support Available:

The Clerk and officers can advise on legal/procedural aspects, formatting, and whether the motion falls within council powers.

Example Motion Format:

Motion Title: Proposal to Review Community Grant Criteria

Proposed by: Cllr [Name]

Background: The current criteria for community grants have not been reviewed since 2021. Several applicants have raised concerns about clarity and eligibility.

Motion: That Ventnor Town Council undertakes a review of its Community Grant criteria and application process, with recommendations brought to Full Council by [date].