NOTICES OF MOTION - BRIEFING PAPER

What is a Notice of Motion?
A Notice of Motion allows a member to put a matter forward before the Full Council for decision.

What may I propose?
A Notice of motion may seek a decision on a matter for which the Council has responsibility. It may also be about an issue affecting the wellbeing of the area or residents, but which is not the responsibility of the Council itself.

Any decision then?
The adoption of a motion is a decision of the Full Council, and it is not always possible to do this by a notice. It is open to the same challenges as any other decisions. This may be because it is not legally possible to make the decision. Sometimes it's because the matter is a Cabinet responsibility. It may also require detailed information or follow statutory procedures such as consultation and equality assessments before reaching a view or position on the proposal.

But I want to have a debate on the subject.
Rather than deciding an issue on the spot it is sometimes possible to draft a motion in a way that allows for debate. For example, a motion to ask a Scrutiny Committee to address a particular topic and consider how to respond to what is being addressed. This provides an opportunity for the issues highlighted to be understood and considered. But you should also, be aware of what is already before a Scrutiny Committee which night be addressing the subject.

Questions?
You have the right to submit a question to be asked in Full Council and this may provide a way forward. Sometimes this is a vehicle to address or avoid a problem with the wording or objective of a motion It is also a better avenue if you are seeking an explanation or account.

What about the wording of the notice?
The form asks you to provide an explanation of the background and reasons for the motion. In drafting the wording of the decision sought it is necessary to be clear about what the Council will decide e.g.:

- I ask the Full Council to support
- I ask the Full Council to ask ??? to write to the Minister to ????
- That the Council adopt??
- That the Council declares/resolves???
- That the ABC Scrutiny Committee consider the appropriate way of responding to ?

Where could I take advice?
You may contact the Monitoring Officer at any time if you need guidance. Although he cannot suggest a text or direction for a motion, he can assist by giving an initial opinion on its propriety and if it is possible how to reword to bring it into order.

Who verifies notices?
The Monitoring Officer has responsibility for determining the propriety of notices of motion. If there is a question about propriety you will be contacted to discuss the situation. Nevertheless, if it cannot be resolved, then a determination will be made with the Chair and Chief Executive as to its inclusion on the agenda which will be final.

Iwan Evans
Monitoring Officer