Changing Governance Arrangements

1. **Introduction**

1.1 There are about 21,000 councillors in England and Wales. The authorities on which they serve vary significantly, with sharp contrasts in political balance, spending, council size, and electoral representation. The time members devote to council business also varies widely between authorities.

1.2 Elected members of all local authorities have three important and different jobs. In the first place they are **politicians**; they represent electors as citizens of the local community, reflecting party differences. At the same time, they **represent** the interests of those who pay for and those who receive the services the council delivers. Finally they are responsible, like **directors of a company board**, for the organisation of the council they control.

1.3 Every local council needs some members who can do all three jobs well regardless of the structure it operates under.

1.4 Constitutions and procedures which were established in easier times and designed to deal with simpler issues do not always help councillors match their political and service aims to the management needs of a complex organisation working across a number of different partnerships. The processes of local authority management, which are seen most clearly in the committee system, it is argued by some, can, tend to focus on day to day problems rather than on policy, strategy and results.

2. **Pressure for Change**

2.1 Does it matter that so much attention is given to operational management? That has, after all, historically been the major part of what councillors do. This operational bias may not matter if they are addressing the strategic and important issues too. Members have come under increased pressure in each of their three roles; in particular, the expanded and more complex Board Member role is leaving insufficient time for the other two roles, particularly the representative role. This pressure is demonstrated by the growing burden of operational management. Committees can become overloaded with detail, and the setting of objectives and monitoring of outcomes just get squeezed out.

2.2 Councillors are now under more pressure as Politicians. The tendency to organise on party lines has continued to grow with the majority of members elected on party tickets, with most councils dominated by party groups. Therefore it follows that at Political Group meetings are the places where crucial decisions are made.

2.3 Lastly the representative role has also become more demanding. Ward areas can be large and their electorate diverse and more volatile in their tastes and more demanding in their preferences. Consumers of council services have become more expectant, less 'grateful' with increasing concerns about service quality, not merely quantity. It is not just have the bins been emptied or the grass cut but how have they been emptied and how good the cut was.

2.4 Local authorities are undoubtedly more complex than they were and the task of managing them is made harder by the difficulty of recruiting high quality employees. The same can also be said of recruiting elected members.

2.5 Effective management of a council by elected members can only happen where the balance been the Political, Representative and Board Member roles take account of both the internal and external forces being placed upon it.

3. Changing Landscape

3.1 Since 2000 with the Local Government Act 2000 and the Localism Act 2010 a number of changes have occurred in the local government landscape. The potential for greater delegated powers for councillors and officers has changed the culture of decision making and led to a swifter decision-making process and clear operational responsibility for officers. Under the committee system members have not had the same increase in powers to make swifter decisions.

3.2 This Council has recognised that often the big issues for the community need to be tackled through public services working together and have entered into formal partnerships to achieve this. Partnering with Christchurch Council, the creation of the Dorset Waste Partnership, the Stour Valley & Poole Partnership and the Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership are examples of formal partnerships.

3.3 The creation of a Pan Dorset Growth Board moving towards a Combined Authority structure only shows that the way we conduct business in the future will be more by partnership working. More and more Councillors will be required to attend meetings in a representative role with the powers to make executive decisions.

3.4 For the democratic process to work in the future an element of delegation to senior councillors will need to be made which goes beyond that of the current system.

3.5 We live and work in a rapidly changing environment and any proposed changes to the structure of local decision making needs to take into consideration public concerns about accountability, openness, transparency and democracy. Any new governance model needs to be designed to respond to and tackle issues in a way that enhances the genuinely effective involvement of councillors and the public, in the decision making process.

3.6 A new culture of swifter decision making, with more member and officer having delegated authority must be balanced with effective scrutiny and should be built on the following principles:

- Allow scope for individual or collective decision making within a transparent cabinet structure e.g. through a Forward Plan, call-in powers, and ward councillors being allowed to address directly individually or collective cabinet members at all levels of the decision making process;

- Recognition that a number of leading councillors will always lead strategic direction and development of policy and that the Cabinet system can actually be more transparent than the existing committee system;

- Engage with partner bodies in a realistic way, allowing individual councillors (whether they be committee chairs or cabinet members) to

represent the council on outside bodies and partnership boards with clear delegated decision making authority;

- Give a strong role to all councillors in directing strategy and policy through effective performance management as part of the Audit and Scrutiny processes;

- Provide the maximum possible opportunity for actively engaging the public in influencing policy and improving services, with there being a specific way to feed public views into the decision making process;

- Limit the bureaucratic and administrative burdens on the decision making process;

- Enable councillors to work together on a cross party basis to resolve issues of local concern;

- Provide a means for all councillors to hold to account the work of the authority.

3.7 What is important to realise is that any governance system allows both good and bad practice. Any system relies on the goodwill and ability of those involved, councillors and officers, to be effective. Most importantly a change in the culture of decision making is necessary. Scrutiny is about councillors coming together to investigate, to research, to probe and to make objective evidence based recommendations for improvement, on a cross party basis.

3.8 It should be seen as a means to provide internal assurance that business is being transacted properly, that issues of local concern are being considered, that stakeholders have a voice and that mistakes are being learned from.

3.9 What it is not is a forum for attributing blame.

3.10 A new transparent cabinet governance model, with strong scrutiny where the ward budget process is advanced from its current levels, with devolved decision making, gives the potential for direct operational involvement by backbench councillors in service delivery (being able to get things done) is likely to increase in importance. This will allow individual councillors to be given more independence to use funds for the benefit of local people.

4. Advantages and Disadvantages of Fourth Option and Cabinet Models

4.1 Below, listed in table 1, are potential advantages and disadvantages for and against both Cabinet and fourth option. The list is not meant to be definitive. Table 2 details how each model would meet criteria identified to improve the governance processes wanted as part of this review.

Table 1

Strong Leader and Cabinet	
Advantages	**Disadvantages**
Strategic decisions can be taken in a swifter and more coordinated way	Councillors not on the Cabinet can feel disengaged with the decision making process
Easier for partnership organisations to work with a Cabinet rather than a number of committees	Great deal of responsibility in the hands of a few
Portfolio Holders offer a clear point of contact within the council. This is a mechanism through which partners, ward members and the public can access and navigate the organisation and its information	Significant and timely changes to our constitution and working practices
Brings members with different responsibilities together into one unit to make decisions providing a cross cutting perspective for decisions across the entire Council	The disruption would come at a time when there is reduced capacity amongst the senior management structure
Strengthening Local Democracy is a key element of the Council's transformational agenda which is in the process of being implemented	
An improved Scrutiny system provides a means of ensuring all councillors can have an improved role in the development of council policy and review specific areas of concern. Non-executive councillors can question and challenge the performance of the executive in a manner that will enable public debate	
Widely regarded as a cost effective method of political governance representing Value For Money	
The authority will have post May 2015 up to 50% new members who will be more open minded to change. It is a good time to implement change	

Committee System	
Advantages	**Disadvantages**
All Councillors are involved or feel involved in part of the process of running the Council – especially backbench Councillors from all parties	There is a significant risk that the continuation of the committee system will re-enforce silos as cross-cutting issues can be difficult to identify and address. It may not therefore support our transformational programme.
It draws on all the talents and interests of Councillors	Widely considered to be inefficient, slow in decision making and overly focused on operational matters rather than policy and results.
New Councillors learn quickly	Some Councillors are more involved than others
It takes pressure off individual Lead Councillors	It is open on the surface, but decisions in reality may be taken by a ruling group behind closed doors
It can enhance Member officer working	It can be hard to know who is responsible for decisions
	Weak chairs are not always replaced
	Committees may avoid taking responsibility for difficult decisions
	There may be a knock-on impact on partners, and on partnership decision making, or new and different methods of service delivery
	More officer intensive than the Cabinet Model subject to the levels of Scrutiny adopted.

Table 2 – Governance System Matrix

Feature	Committee System	Hybrid Cabinet with Committee System	Cabinet and Leader System
Notice of decisions to be taken at the meeting published at least 5 clear days before the meeting	✔	✔	✔
Decisions published and available for all councillors within two days of meeting	✔	✔	✔
Call-in facility available for matter to be considered by scrutiny committee prior to implementation	✔	✔	✔
Senior officers have the ability to make decisions on matters of urgency which would otherwise require committee approval	✔	✔	?
Executive Members permitted to make decisions on matters of urgency which would otherwise require cabinet approval	✖	?	✔
Executive Members permitted to make decisions which are within policy or budgetary limits	✖	?	✔
Decision made by executive Members may be called-in by Scrutiny	✖	?	✔
Executive Members permitted to make decisions where the authority is in partnership in accordance with policy direction	✖	?	✔
Clearly defined responsibility and accountability for decision making that is easily understood by the public	✖	✖	✔
Co-ordinated approach to cross-cutting issues requiring decisions	✖	✖	✔

Summary

Committee System	Hybrid Cabinet with Committees System	Cabinet and Leader System
Pedestrian Decision-making	Less pedestrian decision-making	Faster decision-making
No executive powers	Limited executive powers	Full executive powers with (transparent & accountable)
Inefficient	Inefficient – High cost	Cost effective

5. Governance of the Council - How decisions might be made

5.1 The Cabinet is part of the Council and responsible for most day-to-day decisions.

5.2 The Cabinet is headed by the Leader of the Council, Deputy Leader and 5 other Councillors appointed by him/her.

5.3 When key decisions are to be discussed or made, these are published in the Cabinet's Notice of Intent to Make Key Decisions in so far as they can be anticipated.

5.4 If these key decisions are to be discussed with council officers at a meeting of the Cabinet, this will be open for the public to attend except where personal or confidential matters are being discussed. All members will be able to attend Cabinet and speak but may not vote.

5.5 The Cabinet has to make decisions which are in line with the Council's Constitution. If it wishes to make a decision which is outside the budget or policy framework, this must be referred to the Council as a whole to decide.

6. Potential areas of responsibility are as follows based on existing lead member roles:

Leader of the Council

6.1 Key Responsibilities - Financial Management (revenue and capital), Asset Management (including property services), Corporate Governance, Council Tax, Strategic Management, Policy Planning.

The role of the Leader is to:

• To provide effective political leadership and to actively engage with those who live in, work in and visit the District and reflect this in a clear strategic direction for change and improvement;

• To be the public face of the Council;

• To ensure effective corporate governance and the highest ethical standards;

• To Chair the Cabinet and lead its work, priorities and programmes;

- To ensure that the Council delivers high quality and value for money services.

Deputy Leader

6.2 Key Responsibilities - Financial Management (revenue and capital), Asset Management (including property services), Corporate Governance, Council Tax, Strategic Management, Policy Planning.

The role of the Deputy Leader is to support the Leader in his roles and responsibilities and his absence to:

- To provide effective political leadership and to actively engage with those who live in, work in and visit the District and reflect this in a clear strategic direction for change and improvement;
- To be the public face of the Council;
- To ensure effective corporate governance and the highest ethical standards;
- To Chair the Cabinet and lead its work, priorities and programmes;
- To ensure that the Council delivers high quality and value for money services;
- To monitor and report back on the transition to Executive style governance.

Lead Member – Community

6.3 Key Responsibilities – Public Health, Community Safety, Community Services, Diversity and Social Inclusion, Emergency Planning, Environmental Protection, Food Safety and Occupational Health and Safety, Grants and Community Assistance, Grounds Maintenance, Leisure and Open spaces, Licensing, Safeguarding Services, Tourism

The Lead Members Role is to:

- Provide communities with opportunities to take greater involvement in running public services ;
- Improve opportunities for young people to live healthy and successful lives;
- Work with partners to ensure crime levels in 2016 do not exceed 2011 levels;
- Improve life chances for vulnerable people;
- Deliver improvements for health and wellbeing across the Christchurch and East Dorset communities

Lead Member – Economy

6.4 Key Responsibilities – Development Management, Economic Development, Planning Policy, Transport and Highways,

The Lead Members role is to:

- Create conditions for existing and new businesses to thrive;

- Encourage thriving and welcoming town centres and a strong rural economy

Lead Member – Environment

6.5 Key Responsibilities – Building Control, Car Parks, Cleansing Services, Countryside Management, Markets, Waste Management

The Lead Members role is to:

- Minimise waste to landfill and optimise recycling;

- Manage the conflicts between developing the built environment and protecting the natural environment ;

- Ensure that the principles of sustainability are embedded in the conduct of the Councils' business;

Lead Member - Housing

6.6 Key Responsibilities – Homelessness, Housing strategy, Improving housing conditions, Private sector housing,

The Lead Members role is to:

- Enable provision of housing appropriate to meet all needs;

- Promote sustainable housing development;

- Facilitate innovative approaches to housing need;

Lead Member – Performance

6.7 Key Responsibilities – Audit, Benefits, Committee and Member support, Electoral Matters, Information Technology and communications, Local Land Charges, Performance Management, Procurement, Risk Management, Staffing (general)

The Lead Members role is to:

- Maximise Partnership activities which maintain services and increase efficiency;

- Ensure Council resources are used efficiently and effectively;

- Promote a positive reputation with residents, customers and businesses

6.8 Plus any other Lead Member roles the Leader may wish to appoint

7. What Decisions may be reserved for Full Council?

7.1 The following functions are examples and not a complete list of decisions likely to be retained by Full Council:

- Adopting and changing the Constitution

- Approving or adopting the Council's budget

- Approving a range of plans and strategies

- Decisions which are the responsibility of the Cabinet but where the Cabinet or other Cabinet decision makers wish to take a decision which would be contrary to the policy framework or not wholly in accordance with the budget.

- Appoint the Leader of the Council and the members of the Cabinet

- The Annual Council shall establish the Council committees and member level bodies for the municipal year.

- Appoint representatives to outside bodies

- Adopt a scheme for the payment of members allowances

- Confirm the appointment of the Head of Paid Service

8. What Executive Powers might the Cabinet have?

8.1 Most day to day operational decisions are delegated to Officers. The majority of decisions made at member level will relate to activities which are defined as 'executive matters' and can only be dealt with by the Cabinet collectively.

8.2 The following are pure examples and are not a complete list of potential executive powers:

- To make recommendations to the Council on the Council's key priorities and in respect of plans and strategies that form the Policy and budget Framework

- To utilise Council balances (capital and revenue) in responding to matters of urgency or to deliver the agreed policy framework provided that all uses of balances are reported to full Council in the budget and medium Term Financial Plan report and Audit Committee in the Annual Out-turn report.

- To approve policies and strategies with the exception of those which the Council has reserved to it, by legislation or through its own discretion.

- To co-ordinate the policy objectives of the Council, monitor progress towards the corporate objectives and give other committees strategic direction

- To agree the policy and guidelines for all grants made by the Council.

- To write off irrecoverable debts

- To maintain an awareness of the ongoing financial position of the Council

- To take decisions on budgetary matters, including budget virements, within the budgetary framework agreed by the Council and in accordance with the Financial Procedure Rules.

- To agree non delegated fees and charges

- To agree core standards for service delivery

- To approve the Audit Plan

- To agree, waivers of, or exemptions to, Contract Standing orders

- To approve strategic disposals and acquisitions including leases and sale of land valued in excess of £10,000

- To approve the Council's Emergency Planning arrangements

- To monitor and review the Human Resources Strategy

- To exercise all duties of the Council as Housing Authority

9. What might be the generic delegated powers of the Leader?

9.1 The Leader of the Council shall:

- Nominate the strategic lead members of the executive to the Council and allocate the portfolios ensuring that any changes to portfolios are reported to the Council for information.

- Determine the allocation and re-allocation of executive responsibilities where there is doubt where this should lie or where the matter is not specifically allocated.

- Decide when executive matters may be delegated to a Lead Member and decide which Lead Member may take a decision.

- Approve all other delegations identified in the constitution.

- Be the lead member for designated areas identified in the constitution.

- Be able to make any decisions on behalf of a Lead Member, if necessary, for any reason. Any such reason to be reported to the next executive.

9.2 Any changes to Executive responsibilities shall be reported to Council for information.

9.3 Any decisions taken by the Leader of Council, Deputy Leader and Lead Members will be reported via a weekly Executive Bulletin.

10. What might be the generic delegated powers of the Lead Members?

10.1 Each Lead Member:

- Shall hold a portfolio for part of the Council's activities, such as one or more services or cross-cutting issues, and steer the preparation, development and implementation of policies and plans relevant to the portfolio.

- Shall develop an annual programme of work to deliver the relevant Council objectives, and liaise with relevant officers to bring forward items and monitor progress.

- Shall approve annual service plans, monitor the performance of the services within their portfolio and bring issues of underperformance to the attention of the Executive.

- Shall assist with ad hoc reviews of policy as directed by the Scrutiny Committee within the remit set by that Committee.

- Shall represent the Council as required on issues relating to the portfolio, including briefing the media as appropriate, and be the spokesperson for the portfolio in consultation with the Leader.

- Shall develop and maintain effective consultation with all members of the Council, partner bodies and outside organisations, and take account of their views when making decisions.

- Shall organise representation on relevant executive outside bodies as required.

- may appoint other members of the Council to act as lead member for such purposes as the Leader and portfolio holder may agree but the lead member shall not be able to take decisions.(e.g. Digital Champion)

- Shall make annual portfolio statements outlining their achievements for the previous year and objectives for the coming year based on the Council's agreed priorities set out in the Corporate Plan and other appropriate matters.

- Shall take decisions within the remit of their portfolio as allowed for in the Executive Scheme of Delegation.

11. Scrutiny Role and Function

11.1 The generic roles and responsibility of Scrutiny dependent on its size and structure will be to:

- Review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge of any functions which are the responsibility of the Executive, including the power to recommend that the decision be reconsidered by the person who made it.

- To make reports or recommendations to the Council or the Executive with respect to the discharge of any functions which are the responsibility of the Executive or on matters which affect the authority's area or its inhabitants.

- To review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge of any functions which are not the responsibility of the Executive, including the power to recommend that the decision be reconsidered by the person who made it. *(This does not include decisions in respect of individual applications or permissions such as decisions made in respect of planning or licensing applications).*

- To make reports or recommendations to the Council or the Executive with respect to the discharge of any functions which are not the responsibility of the Executive.

- To require Executive members or officers to appear before it.

12. Role of Ward Members

12.1 A key role of all elected members is to represent their ward and the people who live there. Elected member are uniquely placed to take an active lead locally because they have been democratically elected to represent the interests of their community and the Council. This should involve building relationships with individuals and groups within their ward and informing, consulting and empowering local people.

12.2 In general, the ward activities of an elected member include:

- representing the community within the Council and to other agencies, such as the police and health services;

- communicating the work of the Council and other public agencies to constituents;

- leading the community and others in developing a vision for the area and the steps to achieve it;

- holding surgeries and undertaking case work on behalf of individual constituents;

- developing links with all parts of the community, and seeking to help to negotiate solutions to meet their local needs;

- campaigning on local issues;

- attracting resources for the ward;

- meeting with other elected members, MPs and MSPs;

- supporting local partnerships and organisations.

13.   Programme of Committee Meetings

13.1 The proposed cycle of meetings under a Cabinet model maybe as follows:

Full Council – every 8 weeks (6)

Cabinet – 1 a month (12)

Scrutiny – every 2 months with option for call-in or special meetings every other month (min 6 max 12)

Planning Committee – 1 a month (12)

Licensing Committee – every 12 weeks (4)

Joint Audit Committee – every 12 weeks (4)

Ethical Governance – as required

Other meetings (Partnership meetings, JCG, Task & Finish Groups) – as required

1. Do you want decisions taken by Cabinet Members on behalf of the Council to be swifter resulting in faster decision making?

Yes - 6	No - 3
Response to the public better. To the benefit of residents to get quicker decisions and to reflect faster moving society today. In best interests of residents. More practical in partnership setting. If they were not there would be no point in having a Cabinet. Most decisions are unanimous. Why wait 8 weeks. Public demand suggests Councils are too slow to act.	Risk of making wrong decision. If decision is needed urgently then can be implemented now. If Scrutiny looks just then. Not until assured of the quality of contribution from said members. All members should be party to decisions.
Majority view of members – is that it is in the best interest of residents and for the Council to be in a position where it can make important decisions more quickly.	

2. Would you agree that Cabinet Members when representing the Council need to have the authority to make strategic decisions on behalf of the Council without having to refer back to Cabinet or Council?

Yes - 6	No - 3
There should be some limitation on the level of decision making allowed. Selection of Cabinet members very important. Experienced and in touch with ordinary members feelings. Demands of partnership. Speed of decision. Ideally – depending on outstanding calibre of members. Difficult to have partnership joint committees where members cannot vote without waiting for the next committee/council but if major impact e.g. voting huge financial commitment need control/check mechanism. Yes but limit value/cost. Cap	Need consultation with chair of committees. Not strategic – should be whole Council. Too risky.
Majority view of members – is that Cabinet members should have ability to make strategic decisions but that there should be checks and balances in place and perhaps some capping of financial decision making limits.	

3. Should Cabinet members write (with support from officers) and present their own reports (officers only acting as technical advisors).

Yes - 4	No - 5
Most accurate first hand reporting more likely. Cabinet members need to demonstrate that they are in control of their brief. Present but not write. Vary as appropriate.	Need technical advice. Unlikely to be as qualified as professional officers. Officers are the professionals and presumably have had superior training in most cases. Professionals should write reports. Believe officer input is of very high standards and value – Cabinet members should steer/lead but not write.
Majority view of members – is that officers should continue to write and present reports as they are the professionals and have a greater level of experience.	

4. If a decision is taken to move to a Cabinet style governance arrangement should the current range of portfolios be retained (Community, Economy, Environment, Housing and Performance)?

Yes - 9	No - 0
Good spread. To start with then review. But should be flexible and change as necessary. To start with. Is there a better mix? Seems the areas we are most involve with. Not sure - but would like to see a clear rational – probably continue & test. Partnership a theme or one to oversee. Yes, but review would need to take place.	
Majority view of members – is that the current range of portfolios is a good place to start from and that the scope and range of these areas should be kept under review.	

5. Would you support the scrutiny process being chaired (led) by a member of the Opposition Group?

Yes - 9	No - 0
Good for transparency Provide the necessary checks and balances. The public would consider this as a serious policy. Cause. I have heard that it works elsewhere. Some compensation. Maybe a Group policy – but open to	

either system – need to avoid political posturing for publicity i.e. call- in that is not needed. Shared - see Skeats Scrutiny model.	
Majority view of members – is that having Scrutiny chaired by a member of the Opposition Group is a workable idea.

6. Should Scrutiny Committee only be made up of those Councillors who enjoy this type of work or by all members not appointed to the Cabinet?

Yes - 7	No – 2
No point including members that don't want to be there – i.e. 15ish Principally <u>but </u>if a councillor is not on Cabinet nor on Planning nor Scrutiny, is that a sufficient role. Minimum? 12 (might be organised us sub committees by theme – could be more). Some members will hate Scrutiny but will then not be aware of anything going on. Not the best qualification – knowledge & experience essential – but how do you get it? No point if they don't want to do it. Nine. Little point in having Scrutiny members not fully engaged in the process. Interest – 10.	Not the best qualification, knowledge. To ensure appropriate cross section of members are represented.
Majority view of members – is that Scrutiny should be made up of members who want to be on it. Number on Committee ranges from 9-15.	

7. Would you support Cabinet Members as individuals having the authority to directly allocate resources from approved budgets (subject to call-in)?

Yes - 4	No - 5
Reasonable level of determination. Need time to reflect – but if within a budget already approved & senior officers views OK for other headings, high cap. Whatever is agreed by Council? Really don't know to start with. Worth looking at what others do. Modify as experience builds.	Too risky. All members should have input into how our money is spent. Not entirely in favour. Cabinet would be better but do officers not carry out this function? Collective decision making. Would need a collective decision.
Majority view of members – is that collective decision making would be best to start with but as time and experience is gained levels of authority can be reviewed.	

8. Would you support all ward members having the opportunity to attend both Scrutiny and Cabinet in order to question Cabinet Members and take part in debates but not vote?

Yes - 8	No - 1
Maintain levels of control & input & influence on decision making. To hold Cabinet members to account. As we were recently advised such a system can be effective. Definitely or we'll never know what is going on at all. If a matter is not called in, this is the only chance to express a strong view. Because that is what Scrutiny is about.	Not all councillors are available to attend all meetings (work etc.).
Majority view of members – is that this is a good idea and good for democracy.	

9. In order to help Members have a more direct influence in supporting their wards would you support an increase in the level of budget given to Members (currently £2,000)?

Yes - 6	No - 3
But perhaps a pool of money to allow bids for larger projects - i.e. £2k of £3k each + £50k pool to bid for if a project is a large one (pool might not always be used). Only if we can give it to the Parish Council to spend on things district & county no longer do. + Share funds evenly - may need more or less. Within budget to remove current T&F process & distribute non SLA grants evenly across the membership. £3,000.	£2,000 allows an impact. We haven't the money to spare.
Majority view of members – is that the use of ward budgets is a good idea and consideration should be given to its development.	

10. As a ward member would you rather spend more time working directly with and for those you represent than sitting in committee meetings?

Yes - 5	No - 3
Main reason for being a councillor. Contact & engagement with residents improved and would help better input to the decision makers. They elected me. Don't know - want to be proactive. Both vital & I presently probably give more time to the electorate.	I am a Parish Councillor and spend time dealing directly already and do not spend much time sitting in committee meetings. There is not a lot of ward work – most public moans are about county. We only get planning issues usually.

Ok as now <u>but</u> need resources to enable community projects – officer support and finance. Both are vital but as we all know you have to be in the game at the right level at the right time.	

Majority view of members – is that representing their electorate remains the primary function of members but that the responsibilities of decision making must be maintained.

Officer Presentation to Governance Workshop – Wednesday 26th November 2014

New Governance Arrangements
Open, transparent, responsive and democratic

Slide 1 - History says
• In short, the traditional committee system, designed to provide an open and public framework for decision - making, has grown into an opaque system with the real action off-stage. People lose confidence in their council's decisions, individual councillors become disillusioned with their ability to influence local decisions, and local people are discouraged from standing for election…unclear decision - making weakens the links between local people and their democratically elected representatives (DETR,1999:8-9).

Slide 2 - History also says
• Smaller authorities would have perhaps neither the political or administrative resources to implement one of the new executive models. Therefore a further fourth option was offered, of adopting 'alternative arrangements' based on adaptations of the existing committee system. This was available only to districts in two tier areas with a population under 85,000.
2000 (84,550) 2013 (87,900)

Slide 3 - Your Roles
• Elected members are politicians; you represent electors as citizens of the local community, reflecting party differences.
• You represent the interests of those who pay for and those who receive the services the council delivers.
• You are responsible, like directors of a company board, for the organisation of the council they control.
A shift in balance

Slide 4 - Decisions, Decisions, Decisions
Yesterday
• Tended to focus on day to day issues
• On our own individual Council business
• Decisions were on the whole easier to take
Tomorrow
• Its about Policy, Strategy and Results
• Its about working with others on joined up services for common ends
• More frequent and difficult decisions to take

Slide 5 - Fourth Option is like a Silence Cabinet with no executive function
• Key decisions are politically led
• Chairs act as cabinet members
• Lead members are quasi cabinet members
• Policy decisions are split between 2 committees (less transparent)

• Scrutiny is just a bolt on (less effective)
• Members only debate and make decisions on key issues before the committees they serve on

Slide 6 - Cabinet is not silence - it has executive function
• The public and government expect us to be more open, transparent, responsive and democratic
To do this we must:
• Make swifter strategic and policy decisions
• Make senior Members more accountable
• Put all Councillors at the heart of decision making
• Ensure effective Scrutiny is linked to key decision making

Slide 7 - Governance Model Matrix (1)

Feature
(i)   Notice of decisions to be taken at a meeting published at least 5 clear days before the meeting
        Committee System – yes. Hybrid Cabinet System with Committees – yes. Cabinet and Leader System – yes.

(ii)   Decisions published and available for all councillors within two days of the meeting
        Committee System – yes. Hybrid Cabinet System with Committees – yes. Cabinet and Leader System – yes.

(iii)   Call -in facility available for issue to be considered by scrutiny committee prior to implementation
        Committee System – yes. Hybrid Cabinet System with Committees – yes. Cabinet and Leader System – yes.

(iv)   Senior Officers have the ability to make decision on matters of urgency which would otherwise require committee approval
        Committee System – yes. Hybrid Cabinet System with Committees – yes. Cabinet and Leader System – depends of scheme of delegation.

Slide 8 -Governance Model Matrix (2)

Feature
(v)   Executive Members permitted to make decisions on matters of urgency which would otherwise require cabinet/committee approval
        Committee System – no. Hybrid Cabinet System with Committees – depends on scheme of delegation. Cabinet and Leader System – yes.

(vi)   Executive Members permitted to make decisions which are within policy or budgetary limits
        Committee System – no. Hybrid Cabinet System with Committees - depends on scheme of delegation. Cabinet and Leader System – yes.

(vii)   Decision made by executive Members may be called - in by Scrutiny
Committee System – no. Hybrid Cabinet System with Committees - depends on scheme of delegation. Cabinet and Leader System – yes.

Slide 9 - Governance Model Matrix (3)

Feature
(viii)   Executive Members permitted to make decisions where the authority is in partnership in accordance with policy direction
Committee System – no. Hybrid Cabinet System with Committees – depends on scheme of delegation. Cabinet and Leader System – yes.

(ix)   Clearly defined responsibility and accountability for decision making that is easily understood by the public
Committee System – no. Hybrid Cabinet System with Committees – no. Cabinet and Leader System – yes.

(x)   Co-ordinated approach to cross-cutting issues requiring decisions
Committee System – no. Hybrid Cabinet System with Committees – no. Cabinet and Leader System – yes.

Slide 10 - Full Council might
• Adopt and change the Constitution
• Approve the Council budget
 • Approve a range of plan and strategies
 • Make decisions which are contrary to policy framework or budget
And more ………

Slide 11 - Cabinet might (1)
• Recommend to Council key priorities in respect of plans, strategies that form the policy and budget framework
 • Co -ordinate policy objectives of the Council and monitor
• Maximise use of Council balances and approved budget within agreed policy framework
• Agree core standards of service delivery

Slide 12 - Cabinet might (2)
• Agree non delegated fees and charges
 • Approve Emergency Planning arrangements
• Monitor and review Human Resources Strategy
• Exercise all duties of the Council as the Housing Authority
And more ….

Slide 13 - Council Leader might
• Select and report to Council his Cabinet members
• Decide which executive matters may be delegated to Cabinet members
• Make decisions on behalf of his Cabinet members

• Be a portfolio holder in his own right
And more ….

Slide 14 - Cabinet Members might
• Steer preparation, development and implementation of policies and plans relevant to their portfolios and make decisions within the scheme of delegation
• Approve annual service plans
• Support Scrutiny Committee in its work
• Be decision makers on behalf of the Council in its partnership working • Be the face of the Council
And more ….

Slide 15 - Scrutiny might
• Review where it feels necessary or requested to do so all decisions taken (except quasi-judicial) and recommend changes to those decisions
• Make reports or recommendations to the Cabinet or Council
• Require Cabinet members or officers to appear before it
• Scrutinise both internally and externally
 And more ….

Slide 16 - Ward Members might
• Represent their community and respond to their concerns by holding the Cabinet and Council to account
• Communicate the work of the Council to the Community
• Lead community development within their wards
• Hold surgeries and undertake case work on behalf of individual residents
• Attract resources for their ward
And more ….

Slide 17 - Programme of Meetings
Full Council Every 8 weeks (6)
Cabinet Once a month (12)
Scrutiny Every 2 months with option for call - in or special meetings every other month (min 6 max 12)
Planning once a month (12)
Licensing Every 12 weeks (4)
Joint Audit Every 12 weeks (4)
Ethical Governance as required
Other meetings as required

Slide 18 - Workshop Questions
• 10 questions
• 3 minutes each
• Majority decision
• If yes why
 • If no why
 • No right and wrong answers just a sense check

Slide 19 - Democratic Decision making must be
• More open,

- More transparent,
- More responsive
- More democratic
- More inclusive
- Much quicker and
- Cost effective