

APPENDIX 1 - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Will Cabinet Advisory Groups be public meetings?

It is not proposed that the meetings are public, the Cabinet Advisory Groups are working groups of Councillors set up to allow early discussion on policy formulation, including looking at all sorts of different options long before they reach the stage of public consideration.

2. Will Cabinet Advisory Group meetings be set up in the schedule of meetings approved by Council in May?

No – it is proposed that whilst the initial meetings will be set up to ensure that they meet and discuss the proposed approach of the Cabinet Advisory Group Chair for that particular group, the meetings will be arranged as and when they are needed. For some groups focusing on, for example, a new policy they meet more often for a period and then less often when that particular piece of work has been concluded.

3. Who appoints the Cabinet Advisory Groups?

It is proposed that the power to appoint the membership and the Chairs of Cabinet Advisory Groups is reserved to the Leader under the constitution.

4. Will Cabinet Advisory Groups be politically balanced?

No – the rules on political balance do not apply as these are not formal committees advising the Cabinet but rather working groups to assist in policy formulation and discussion at an early stage.

5. How many Cabinet Advisory Groups will there be?

The Constitution will allow for flexibility in the number of Cabinet Advisory Groups, however, at this stage, it is envisaged that there will be 7, namely:

- An overarching Cabinet Advisory Group for resources (made up of the Chairs from each of the Cabinet Advisory Groups)
- Cabinet Advisory Group for Climate Change
- Cabinet Advisory Group for Regeneration
- Cabinet Advisory Group for Children and Young People
- Cabinet Advisory Group for Our Residents
- Cabinet Advisory Group for Healthy Communities
- Cabinet Advisory Group for Regional Working

6. What sort of things will the Cabinet Advisory Groups discuss?

It is proposed that to give some focus, initially, that a work programme is produced at the start of the Municipal year however the key is that there is flexibility so that the particular Cabinet Advisory Group can focus on the important issues. For example, the Cabinet Advisory Group on Children and Young People could look at:

- The Council's Young People offer
- Co-Production with Children and Young People
- Post 16 Education, Training and Employment

- Considering proposals to re-fresh the Council's "Early Help Offer"

7. How many Councillors will be on a Cabinet Advisory Group?

Again the intention is for the Constitution to be flexible enough to allow for the number to change should it be needed, at this stage it is anticipated that there will be up to 6 members, including the Chair.

8. Will the Cabinet Member be on the Cabinet Advisory Group?

No, but they will, where appropriate, attend the relevant Cabinet Advisory Group to understand the discussions and will have close liaison with the relevant Cabinet Advisory Group Chair(s).

9. Can a Councillor not on a Cabinet Advisory Group attend that Group?

Yes, with the agreement of the Cabinet Advisory Group Chair.

10. Which officer will be responsible for the Cabinet Advisory Group?

Each Cabinet Advisory Group will be assigned a lead member of Strategic Executive Board, and where appropriate a lead Head of Service. Those officers will be responsible for ensuring that the right information is provided to the Cabinet Advisory Group.

11. How will Councillors access the papers for the Cabinet Advisory Group?

Papers will not always be provided in advance of the meeting, it will depend on what the meeting is focused on, for example if there was to be a discussion on what options there might be for a rapidly emerging issue then it may be that there would simply be a presentation and a discussion. The key is that the approach is intended to be focused on adding value and policy formulation rather than producing papers for the sake of papers. Where papers are provided in advance these will generally be provided through the Council's Committee system, Mod.Gov.

12. How will Councillors not on the relevant Cabinet Advisory Group know what is going on at that Group?

It is intended that the Chair of the relevant Cabinet Advisory Group will provide an update to other Councillors on what work is being undertaken.

13. Who will choose the topics for the Select Committee?

The Councillors on the Scrutiny Board.

14. What sort of things will the Select Committee look at?

The Select Committee will look at issues that reflect the Council's emerging priorities/opportunities. They will in turn then review the progress of previous reviews and keep a rolling account of this. Topics that could be looked at include:

- New Communities
- Youth Violence
- International Relations
- Events within the City
- Wolves@Work

- Organisational Development
- Deprivation- place based approach

15. Where will the reports of the Select Committee go?

They will go to Scrutiny Board and then to Council, a response from Cabinet/the relevant Cabinet Member will be provided to Scrutiny Board/Council. However, the report will not be changed by Cabinet.

16. Will the Select Committee meetings be public?

Yes. These will be in depth investigations into key issues and as such it is important that the meetings are public.

17. Will the Select Committee meetings be filmed?

Generally, yes.

18. Will the Select Committee be able to invite non-Council officers/Councillors to attend the meetings?

Yes.

19. How will we know if the changes have worked?

Through regular review, focused on the key factors identified at para 1.1 of the report, it is intended that the changes would be a standing item on the Governance Committee. As part of the changes the Governance Committee's meetings will be made more regular and a work programme will be set for it.

It is also an option for there to be Councillor surveys to find out what is work well and what might need to be changed, the proposed approach is a flexible one so that we can quickly change anything that is not working as we might want.

20. Will the Scrutiny Board change?

The Scrutiny Board will retain the legal responsibility for Overview and Scrutiny under the legislation. It will be focused on:

- Developing, co-ordinating and implementing the scrutiny and review groups annual work programme - commissioning 'task and finish' Review Groups via lead members
- Reviewing executive decisions under the Call-in procedures and pre-decision scrutiny
- Ensuring Education statutory co-optees are provided with the support they require
- Leading consultation on the Budget
- Receiving petitions and consider Councillor Calls for Action (CCfA) as set out in the Constitution

- Taking responsibility for the scrutiny of monitoring reports both external and internal, e.g. reports from OFSTED, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and Healthwatch.

Terms of reference between Cabinet and Scrutiny Board will be available setting out how the bodies work and the flow of information to and from Scrutiny Board.

21. Will Call-in procedures change?

Yes. Under the revised approach all Councillors will have a greater opportunity to call decisions to Scrutiny Board, namely if 3 or more Councillors, or certain Councillors/officers call a proposed decision to Scrutiny Board it will be scrutinised by the Board.

22. Can a Councillor be on the Scrutiny Board when it is reviewing a policy that was partially formed by the Cabinet Advisory Group that she/he sat on?

Generally, no. There would be a potential conflict if a Councillor was pivotal in designing a policy and then was there sitting on the Scrutiny Board as the challenge to that policy. There will be power, under the constitution, as there is currently for Declarations of Interest, for the Council's Monitoring Officer to give a dispensation where otherwise a meeting could not be held, eg it would otherwise be inquorate.