

**MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**COUNCIL**

**24 APRIL 2013**

**REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY COORDINATING COMMITTEE**

**1. Cabinet and Enhanced Scrutiny Model**

- 1.1 Council on 4 February 2013 considered the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee report on Governance. At that meeting it was agreed that the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee would take the review forward and develop the agreed Cabinet and Enhanced Scrutiny Model as agreed.

- 1.2 Extract from the minutes of full Council, 4 February 2013:

*"Councillor Mrs Gooch, the Chairman of the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee, introduced the report of the Working Group which had been set up to undertake a review of the Council's governance arrangements. Councillors Black, English, Newton and Vizzard then gave a short presentation on the work of the Group and its findings. The Council was then asked to evaluate the four governance models presented and to agree which option to take forward.*

*It was moved by Councillor Garland, seconded by Councillor Mrs Wilson, and:*

*RESOLVED: That Council Procedure Rule 19.1 be suspended for this meeting only, and that all of the options be voted on (each Member having one vote). If there is not a clear majority of votes in favour of one option, then the option with the least number of votes will be taken off the list and a new vote will be taken. The process will continue until there is a majority of votes for one option.*

*The voting on each of the options was as follows:*

<i>i</i>	<i>No Change</i>	<i>None</i>
<i>ii</i>	<i>Hybrid System (Committee System and Scrutiny)</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>iii</i>	<i>Retain Cabinet System with Enhanced Scrutiny</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>iv</i>	<i>Retain Cabinet System and Engage Advisory Committees/Boards</i>	<i>None</i>

*Note: Two Members abstained from voting.*

*RESOLVED: That with a clear majority of votes in favour, option iii be taken forward as the preferred model of governance for the Council.*

*It was moved by Councillor Hogg, seconded by Councillor English, and:-*

*RESOLVED:*

- 1. That the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee (being the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees) be authorised to carry forward the option selected and to bring back to full Council proposals for its implementation.*
- 2. That no action be taken on the recommendation relating to the appointment of a Member Working Group to investigate the development needs of Members, and how this should be approached by the Council, as this work is already in hand.*

### 1.3 **RECOMMENDED:**

**Council consider the attached report and approve the recommendations outlined below : That**

- a) Option B, be agreed with four Overview and Scrutiny Committees with nine members each, meeting on a calendar monthly cycle for the 2013/14 Municipal Year. Scrutiny Coordinating Committee to monitor and review this.**
- b) Cabinet should revisit its portfolios to avoid overlap, for example Cobtree and Maidstone Leisure Centre between the Economic and Commercial Development and Community and Leisure Services portfolios.**
- c) Spatial Planning Advisory Group and the Housing Consultative Board be subsumed into scrutiny to avoid duplication and strengthen the scrutiny process.**
- d) A phased approach is taken to the induction for new Members.**
- e) Information supplied to new Members is accessible including contact details for key staff and information on the services provided by the Council, and who to contact regarding those services and alignment to Cabinet Portfolios.**
- f) A glossary of acronyms and terminology and a Frequently Asked Questions list be made available to all Members using the expertise of current Members to identify common areas.**

- g) The development needs for scrutiny and an appropriate programme be developed by the Overview and Scrutiny Chairmen and the Scrutiny Team. This could include an annual event with other Councils and use of the Parliamentary Outreach support.**
- h) All new Members to attend a scrutiny committee meeting as part of the induction process.**
- i) Mentoring of Members be encouraged.**
- j) Each Overview and Scrutiny Committee to identify development needs at the beginning of the year and then on a quarterly basis via the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee.**
- k) Cabinet Members attend Committee meetings to present completed Scrutiny Committee Recommendation Action Improvement Plans and the action that will be taken following recommendations; and**
- l) The Scrutiny Coordinating Committee meet quarterly and monitor Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommendations as part of its role.**
- m) Cabinet Member decision reports are amended so they contain contact details for the Cabinet Member and Officer.**
- n) Cabinet Members make themselves available to discuss forthcoming decisions with Members.**
- o) The decision notice for Cabinet Member decisions contains a section summarising any views put forward by other members on the decision and how these have been taken into account in the decision.**
- p) Overview and Scrutiny Chairmen be encouraged to include visiting members at committee meetings.**
- q) Cabinet Members seek to involve scrutiny pre decision wherever possible.**
- r) That Party/Group Leaders continue to improve the appointment process to Overview and Scrutiny Committees to encourage the right Members.**

- s) Pre-meetings be used for Overview and Scrutiny Committees where appropriate.**
- t) Cabinet Members attend scrutiny at three points during the year to discuss their portfolio and progress made.**
- u) That each Overview and Scrutiny Committee meet individually to set their work programme with the relevant Cabinet Members invited to give their forward plan for the year ahead.**
- v) The Scrutiny Coordinating Committee meet following the individual Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings to review the work programmes to address overlap and identify opportunities for joint working.**
- w) Scrutiny remain with Policy because there is a natural synergy between the two services and closer matching of skills than in Democratic Services**
- x) Any amendments to the constitution necessitated by the approval of the recommendations a-w, are drafted by the appropriate officers and reported back to the next meeting of Council for approval.**