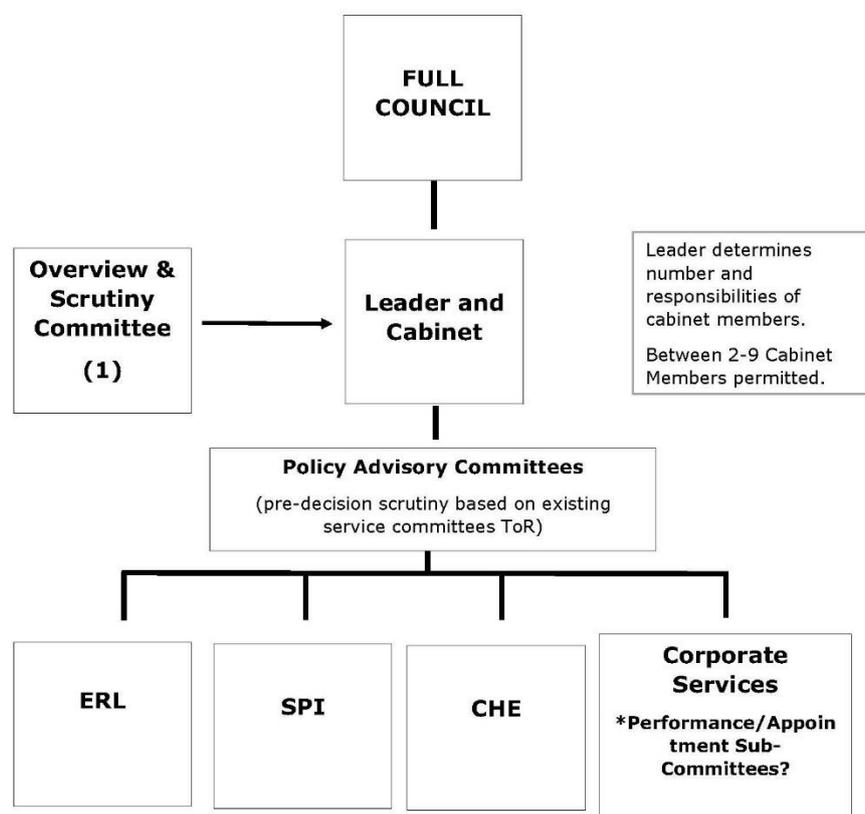


Executive Arrangements Survey Results

Introduction

The survey was open to all members from 5 August 2021 until 19 August 2021. Members were invited to respond by email and during the course of the survey several email reminders were sent. A total of 32 responses were received, this represents a 60% response rate.

The following diagram was included as part of the survey.



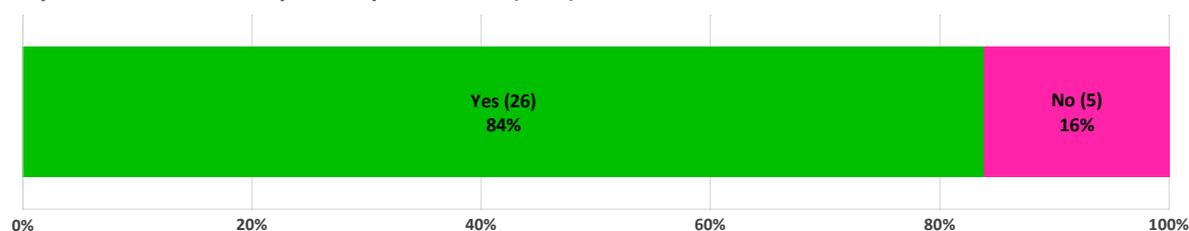
*Minus regulatory/statutory/other Committees; Audit, Governance and Standards, Licensing, Planning, Crime and Disorder Committee, Democracy and General Purposes Committee.

Policy Advisory Committees

Do you think four Policy Advisory Committees (PACs) is the correct number

There were 31 responses to the question 'Do you think that four Policy Advisory Committees (PACs) is the correct number?'. Overall, 26 responders agreed that four was the correct number of PACs.

Do you think that four Policy Advisory Committees (PACs) is the correct number?



There were 12 comments received in relation to this question which are shown in full below. These comments show support for having four PACs.

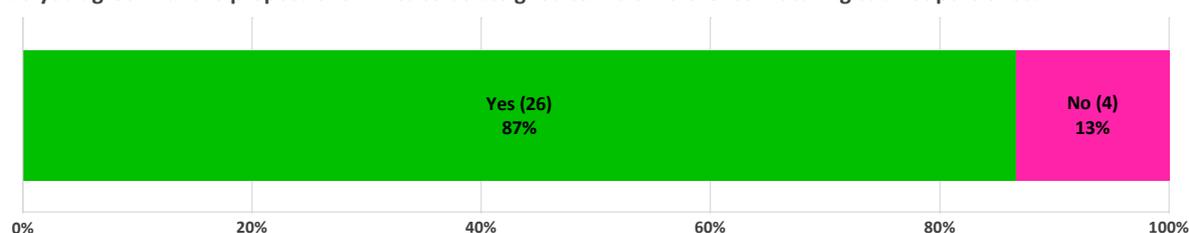
Executive Arrangements Survey Results

Comments
This enables the probable portfolios to be covered by a reasonable number of Committees of a practicable size
Because I came up with the number.
There should be sufficient committees (whatever they are called) to effectively prescrutinise and act as advisory with recommendations to the executive
There is little point in deviating from the current committee structure, to add more will diminish their roles and Members accountabilities
Keeping the committee structure similar to the current arrangements provides a better transition with the scope to reconsider later on.
Too many PACs would make it harder for members to keep up with the issues being discussed by each committee
I wonder whether Environment should be split away from Communities and Housing as that is a large area to place together.
To increase that number would only increase work and THE NEED FOR engagement for Members and Officers.
in this structure yes
These committees reflect the Strategic Plan
To keep procedures simple and straightforward
A committee system with leader as chair of P&R more democratic and inclusive

Do you agree with the proposals for the PACs to be assigned terms of reference matching cabinet portfolios?

There were 30 responses to the question 'Do you agree with the proposals for the PACs to be assigned terms of reference matching cabinet portfolios?'. Overall, 26 responders agreed the terms of reference for the PACs should match those of the cabinet portfolios.

Do you agree with the proposals for PACs to be assigned terms of reference matching cabinet portfolios?



There were 12 comments received in relation to this question which are shown in full below. These comments show support for matching the terms of reference of the PACs with the cabinet portfolios.

Comments
This is the most practical method to prevent significant duplication or overlapping or indeed to avoid gaps emerging
Because I came up with the idea.
Broadly yes but you would still need a policy and resources committee
If there were to be 9 Cabinet Members, you would need 9 PAC's, also a Cabinet portfolio may not cover a logical service area.

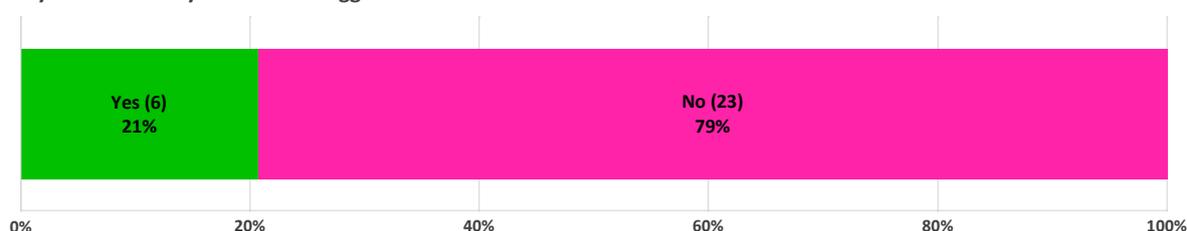
Executive Arrangements Survey Results

They will be acting as support to the cabinet.
Perfect, discussion with challenge and understanding will lead to a more effective process for decision making
Allowing the cabinet member to receive scrutiny.
key roles and key responsibilities will be matched better
anything that is inclusive is better
Each PAC should have its own cabinet portfolio

Do you have any alternative suggestions on the terms of reference for the PACs?

There were 29 responses to the question 'Do you have any alternative suggestions on the terms of reference for the PACs?'. Overall, 6 responders said they had suggestions in relation to the terms of reference for the PACs.

Do you have an any alternative suggestions on the terms of reference for the PACs?



There were 8 comments received in relation to this question which are shown in full below. Half of these comments express desire to keep the current system or for no changes to be made to the executive arrangements.

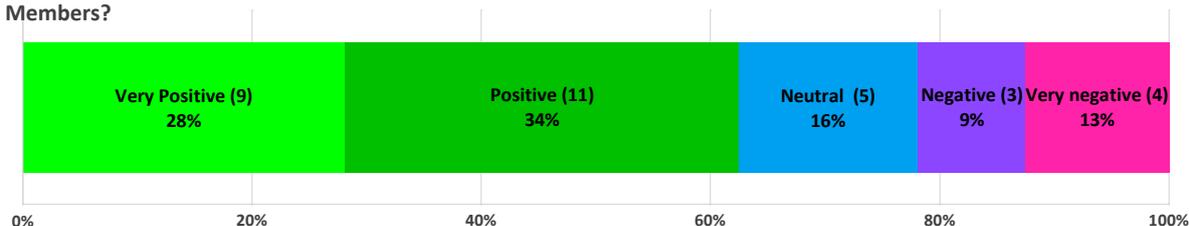
Comments
There also needs to be a performance monitoring function and the committees should be the conduit for public engagement
Keep the Existing Committee System!
Leave as it is
I wonder whether environment should be headlined more - as in across all of the PACs rather than sitting in one alone but then am equally concerned that it might be lost by doing this.
Keep with the existing system
Retain committee system
What has been suggested seems sound
Committee system structure

How do you feel about the PAC being chaired by the Cabinet Member to increase engagement with non-executive members?

There were 32 responses to the question 'How do you feel about the PAC being chaired by the Cabinet Member to increase engagement with non-executive members?'. Overall, 20 responders answered positively.

Executive Arrangements Survey Results

How do you feel about the PAC being chaired by the Cabinet Member to increase engagement with non-executive Members?



There were 13 comments received in relation to this question which are shown in full below. These comments suggest that there should be good communication between the Cabinet Member and the PAC, but also raise concerns about the Cabinet Member chairing the PAC as being a possible conflict of interest.

Comments
It is crucial to building a sense of esprit de corps and preventing an otherwise inevitable them and us situation emerging
Cabinet Members would be required to attend the relevant committee but for the cabinet member to chair the committee that is intended to advise the cabinet member would be a monumental conflict of interest. The committee chairmen should be exclusively the preserve of non executive members.
A cabinet member should not chair the PAC, in parliament scrutiny panels etc are not chaired by ministers. Having a non cabinet member chairing them would enable the cabinet member to be called to account easier
There should be a strong link between the PAC and the CABINET.
The Cabinet Member is there to listen, take account and consider the key points from the discussion and then if necessary, take the discussion back to Cabinet for ratification of the way forward.
Allowing the cabinet member to chair means that they are the person gaining the direct scrutiny of the committee.
The Cabinet member would hear open discussion on the concerns about or level support for the item being discussed
The PACs should be able to discuss and then tell the cabinet member what they wish them to take forwards/decide.
Increasing engagement and more improved ways of doing it can only be better.
Too politically biased
would prefer not could be led
it avoids duplication
This is essential to drive forward policy

What do you think is a suitable membership number for the PACs?

There were 26 responses to the question 'What do you think is a suitable membership number for the PACs?'. Overall, the most common response was 9 with 12 responding this way.

There were 18 comments received in relation to this question which are shown in full below. These

Count	26 Responses
Range	0-15
Mode	9
Mean	9.3

Executive Arrangements Survey Results

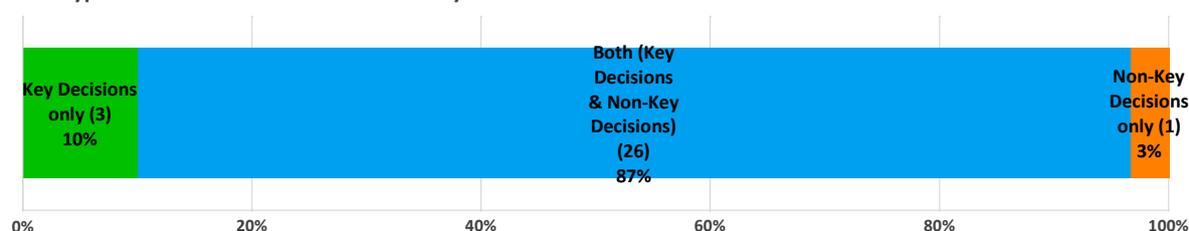
comments express concerns about representation as well as concerns that too large a committee membership would be impractical.

Comments
Firstly I always think Committees should be an odd number. Secondly 9 or 11 gives a size that allows most Members and Groups to be able to sit on Committees without them becoming unwieldy
Need to be large enough to allow representation by smaller groups but not unwieldy like P&R.
I think there needs to be a relationship between the total number of members less the executive so most backbench members would sit on two "policy overview and scrutiny committees"
It should be large enough to represent a variety of views but not too large to be unwieldy
All members need to be involved
The PAC need to be as representative as possible, a number of people has to be such that groups of 3 or more can be represented on all the PAC's
IN LINE WITH CURRENT SERVICE COMMITTEES. MUST AVOID PACS BEING TOO LARGE.
Anymore and it will become unmanageable and meaningless.
A reasonable number to have frank discussion.
Consideration should be made to be politically balanced
It needs a reasonable number of members on each PAC but not too many which could make them 'unwieldy'
You need to be able to discuss, ultimately vote but a much larger committee than 9 becomes unwieldy.
It currently works reasonably well. Any more would need more subbing in practicalities and less consistency and insight in certain Members
A larger membership may prove to be cumbersome and difficult to manage (chair)
to allow as much input as possible
similar numbers as per current service committees
to ensure a spread of views and to avoid unnecessary discussion.
Enough to be politically balanced, and for any Member not to be burdened by membership of too many Committees.

What type of decisions should be considered by PACs?

There were 30 responses to the question 'What type of decisions should be considered by PACs?'. Overall, 26 said that PACs should consider both key decisions and non-key decisions.

What type of decisions should be considers by PACs?



There were 15 comments received in relation to this question which are shown in full below. Several comments mentioned empowering and informing members and increasing member involvement.

Comments

Executive Arrangements Survey Results

Its not always easy to define a key decision and in any case what is important to a Councillor or Community may not be considered key (technically)
We don't want certain Officers nobbling the cabinet.
To only do one would be to limit the voice of the ordinary member - the committees should empower that voice not mute it.
the committee should not second-guess everything irrespective of how small the issue, this would slow down the administration
To enable the greatest accountability all member decisions should be considered by a PAC
They are advisory committees to the Cabinet so should be as flexible as possible.
I believe both, but the agenda and time weighting focussing on both, with the emphasis on the key decision for timings.
Only key decisions should be considered before they are taken, however other decisions can be decided retrospectively.
But members must be able to bring decisions and issues to the pacs
All decisions unless a very urgent decision is required
Concentrate on key decisions but in order for the PAC to function within its remit it should be able to discuss and advise on both key and non-key decisions with the cabinet member ultimately deciding and being held accountable for the decisions made.
All members need to be encouraged to be involved in MOST decisions and thus this gives wider opportunity for dialogue before final decisions.
I think we should Retain the committee system
key decisions to define a strategic direction based on democratic majorities of the council, non-key to ensure all members being suitably informed
Essential to maintain a democratic mandate

What limits do you think there should be on the ability of Full Council to refer matters directly to the Cabinet without involving the relevant PAC?

There were 17 comments received in relation to this question which are shown in full below. Several comments mentioned referring to Cabinet with one reasoning that any decisions made by a Cabinet Member could be called in by Scrutiny.

What limits do you think there should be on the ability of Full Council to refer matters directly to the Cabinet without involving the relevant PAC?
The only necessary limits should be where a PAC is already considering or has recently considered (say within 6 months) the matter in question
The policy framework and a requirement for the referral to be sufficient specific should suffice.
If full council seeks to refer matters directly to a cabinet member for decision then all members would have had the opportunity to make representations as part of that full council referral. The decision taken by the cabinet member would still be subject to call in for scrutiny which would have the power to refer the decision back to Full Council. In practical terms I see very limited reason for full council to refer matters directly to a cabinet member as Full Council would take precedence over a cabinet member or cabinet and could decide what it wanted to do without any need to refer or delegate.
No limit
the full council should always be able to refer directly to the cabinet member
All referrals should automatically go to a PAC, to ensure full democratic accountability

Executive Arrangements Survey Results

I think this is correct, the Cabinet through the leader have to take direct accountability for the direction and focus of the council. The key decisions will have already been through PAC, so i believe this is correct
I don't think cabinet system is the best way to go
There should be no limits in this regard in an executive arrangement.
Full council should be able to refer to cabinet directly
Matters should be discussed before going to cabinet
Only matters requiring an urgent decision should be referred directly to Cabinet
Only key strategic time limited decisions.
Emergency measures and urgent key decisions must be dealt with quickly and thus the quickest way to get a decision in such matters is a priority, however certain "judgement calls" will have to be made, where presumably Leader/Cabinet/Chairs will be given opportunity with Officers to make such calls.
lack of consultation or cross party debate on some issues.
This is an important function, where Council can set an annual program for an administration, akin to the Queen's speech in parliament
Strict limits as it would side step the committees

Other comments about PACs

There were 8 'other' comments received in relation to PACs, these are shown in full below.

Comments
They're great.
The Chairmen should be nominated and voted into position by the non executive members of the council and all members should have the right to attend and speak at any meeting they wish (not vote!)
PAC's will be a weak replacement for Service Committees. They need to have the ability to commission detailed review work into topics within their remit
Probably work best if politically balanced.
I am content with the process as described above. It is correct for the cabinet member to chair, listen and fully engage with the range of politicians in the discussion and resulting points of reference
Matters should be discussed by a PAC and then referred to Cabinet and not 'bounced' to and fro between PACs as currently happens between committees
Not in favour
The Cabinet system disadvantages smaller groups and gives too much power to an individual cabinet member

Executive Arrangements Survey Results

Cabinet**How many Cabinet Members do you think there should be?**

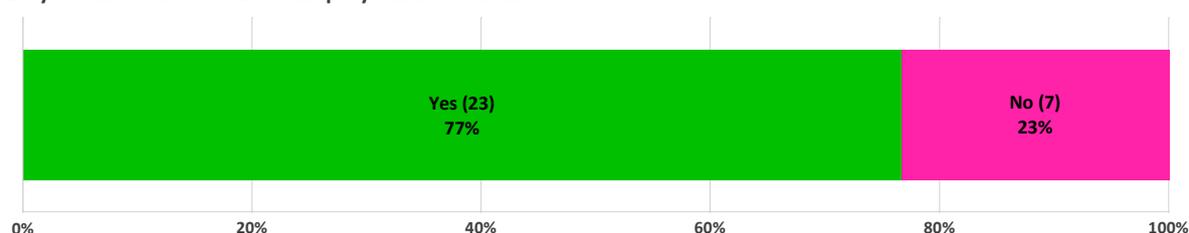
There were 30 responses to the question 'How many Cabinet Members do you think there should be?'. Overall, the most common response was 9 with 7 responding this way.

Count	30 Responses
Range	0-10
Mode	9
Mean	6.13

Do you think there should be Deputy Cabinet Members?

There were 30 responses to the question 'Do you think there should be Deputy Cabinet Members?'. Overall, 23 responders answered positively.

Do you think there should be Deputy Cabinet Members?



There were 21 comments received in relation to this question which are shown in full below. The comments show some support for Deputy Cabinet Members saying that they would be good continuity if the ever the cabinet member was away, with some stressing that this should only be used for urgent or time sensitive decisions.

Comments
My figure above would be a Leader plus 4 Members and 4 Deputies (potentially)
District Cllrs often lack the skills to handle a portfolio on their own.
However - deputy cabinet members should not be considered part of the executive and their role is merely to deputise in the event of the cabinet member being unavailable
Long term illness
it would be the jobs for the boys option
All cabinet members should be able to cover
This is not a committee system, the Cabinet members are accountable for their actions
This would help the Cabinet Member and provide a plan for the future.
If Cabinet Members are absent for whatever reason, the deputy will be from the same party and will act as a foil and support for the Cabinet member
Deputy cabinet members can focus on the details
Allowing other councillors to develop and provide direct scrutiny and assistance to the cabinet members.
Deputies should be an optional choice of the leader. They may not be needed but the option should be there, not every cabinet member may need a deputy. Reasoning is that council must remain open for those with jobs and full-time work. Deputies could possibly help burden share.
Cabinet has an important function there should always be back up for members

Executive Arrangements Survey Results

There should be sufficient cabinet members to allow constructive debate within Cabinet. Deputy members should only be used when the cabinet member is not available, ie for an urgent decision rather than being involved in regular meetings as deputy chairs are

Only to be used in a time sensitive decision that is required ie if the cabinet member is ill or away but a decision is needed.

Most MBC elected Members are VOLUNTEERS. They may work, or have active lives or have care/parenting roles. If you are more involved/more active in MBC issues then you CANNOT stretch across all avenues of interest effectively and take on key roles AND responsibility.

To ensure continuity of decision making

not democratic

This should be a decision for the leader, depending on the actual work-load

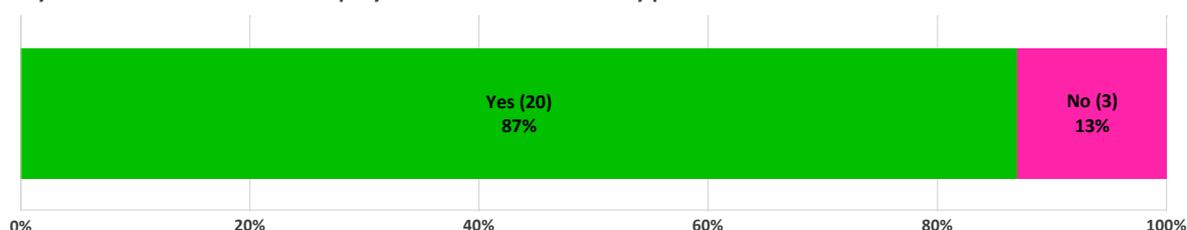
To 'stand-in' as necessary

From a different party

Do you think there should be a Deputy Cabinet Members for every portfolio?

There were 23 responses to the question 'Do you think there should be a Deputy Cabinet Members for every portfolio?'. Overall, 20 responders answered positively.

Do you think there should be a deputy cabinet member for every portfolio?



There were 10 comments received in relation to this question which are shown in full below. The comments show openness from Members towards the number of Deputy Cabinet Members.

Comments

If there is a Leader and 4 Principal Cabinet Members the Portfolios would be broad enough to warrant it

If we are to have deputy cabinet members then yes.

Being open to all

Not necessarily, one should remain flexible.

As above a discretionary choice of the leader.

So that as much knowledge regards subject can be obtained

Policy areas/roles of work will probably be best served by deputy Members but NOT Corporate business and legal roles...perhaps? Some would say its more important though!

To ensure continuity of decision making

To 'stand-in' as necessary

From a different party

Suggestions for terms of Reference

Survey respondents were given the opportunity to make suggestions about the terms of reference for cabinet portfolios. 9 comments were made, these are shown in full below.

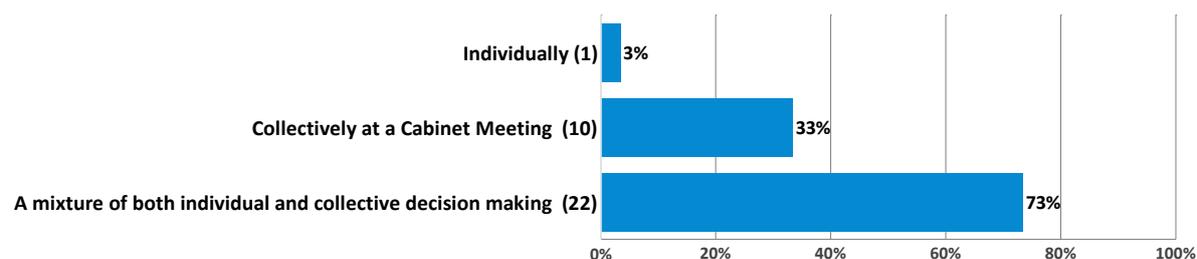
Executive Arrangements Survey Results

Comments
There is some discussion to be had as to whether the Leader has their own Portfolio as well as being Executive Chairman. The obvious areas are Planning/Regeneration/Economic Development, Corporate/Finance, Housing/Community/Safety, Environmental Services (inc waste collection crematorium etc)
Similar to the current committee terms of reference would be sensible.
I think the exact number of cabinet members and the portfolios is a matter for the Leader to decide.
They should follow the current committees except that responsibility for Parks, Allotments and Bereavement services should transfer to ERL, as they were with ERL's predecessors prior to 2019.
For ease of transition the terms of reference should remain close to the current service committees. In addition there should be cabinet representation covering statutory committees such as Planning, Licensing and Audit.
I think the terms of reference should be reviewed, as they currently are, but broadly reflect the current ones, as they 'appear' to work. There is little point in wasting time in reinventing the wheel, equally, to revisit will secure greater understanding for the Cabinet member and PAC
Leader, Deputy Leader/probably a key Corporate "governance" role (Audit/Standards/Democracy/Gen Purposes); Parks/Leisure/Culture/Heritage; Housing/Environment/Licensing; Planning; Econ Dev, Community and Tourism; Crime and Disorder.
as per Strategic Plan / per advisory committees
Cabinet member should accept the democrat decision making of a politically balanced committee

How do you think Cabinet Members should be able to make decisions?

There were 30 responses to the question 'How do you think Cabinet Members should be able to make decisions?'. Respondents could tick as many options as applied. Overall, 22 respondents said that Cabinet Members should be able to take a mixture of decisions.

How do you think Cabinet Members should be able to take decisions?



There were 16 comments received in relation to this question which are shown in full below. Several comments express transparency concerns around Cabinet Members making decisions individually.

Comments
I have no objection to tis provided decisions are made in public
Don't want individual cabinet members getting nobbled.
Should not be down to one elected member
Where decisions have cross portfolio implications or are strategically important to the whole council it makes sense to broaden the decision making forum
simply good sense

Executive Arrangements Survey Results

Decision making by an individual is subject to abuse and a lack of transparency. Also individuals only see things from one side a Cabinet will see a wider perspective.
The Cabinet needs to work as effectively and efficiently as possible. Sometimes it will need to be able to act fast and be accountable.
Discussion is key to effective management, especially at local government level; Cabinet member to recommend, with cabinet agreeing or amending proposals
it shouldn't be one person
Dependent on the urgency and scope of the decision.
Transparency
No one member should have complete control of a decision
If you have cabinet members they need to be able to be held accountable and as a result must be able to make individual decisions, however an ideal arrangement is that the PAC advises before a decision is made.
The key will be SPEEDY responsiveness and effective management, yet still with answerability/transparency.
"loose canon" ad-hoc decisions are dangerous and can reflect on the reputation of the administration
Depends on the scale of the spending and impact of the decisions to be taken

Do you agree that all cabinet decisions including individual cabinet decisions should be taken in public meeting to assist transparency and member engagement in those decisions?

There were 29 responses to the question 'Do you agree that all cabinet decisions including individual cabinet decisions should be taken in public meeting to assist transparency and member-engagement in those decisions?'. Overall, 21 responders answered positively.

Do you agree that all cabinet decisions including individual cabinet decisions should be taken in public meetings to assist transparency & member-engagement in those decisions?



There were 17 comments received in relation to this question which are shown in full below. The comments show that with the exception of confidential matters, members support increased transparency in decision making.

Comments

It allowed for significantly better Councillor and Public engagement and will reduce Member call-ins.

Facilitates constructive challenge.

There should be public register of decisions which shows when the decision was presented to committee for consideration - my view being the public engagement is conducted via the committees.

Matters of confidentiality

I think some minor issues don't need this

We need maximum openness

Transparency is a vital part of the democratic decision making process.

Executive Arrangements Survey Results

Yes, for transparency and also the work before that would be undertaken politically so they are correct at that time.
Cabinet members should be judged on their overall work, not constrained by individual decisions.
Yes where possible for transparency. No for commercial sensitivity and taxpayer value (some tenders, procurement, land issues)
It is important that transparency of discussions is always open to all
There is always a need for frank discussion to take place which may not be appropriate for a public meeting and time constraints on the calling of a public meeting may prevent an urgent decision bring Madame if beeded
Not all decisions should be public and may not be in the public interest ..and may then delay decisions if they were.
To ensure transparency for all decisions made
although attendance by members could be small
subject to the current yellow paper rules
Decision-making must be seen to be open, honest and transparent.

Comments about Cabinet

There were 11 'other' comment received in relation to Cabinet arrangements, these are shown in full below.

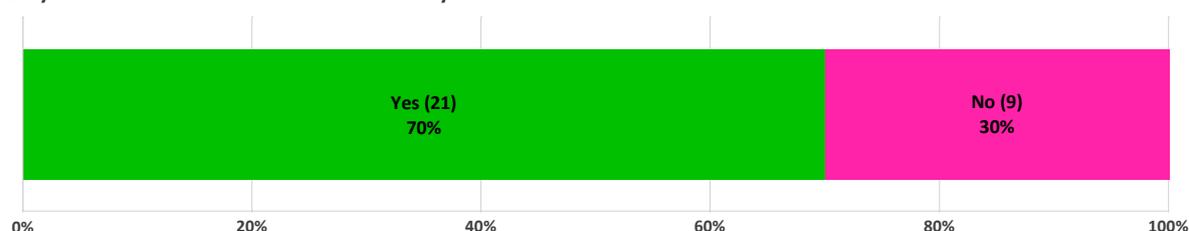
Comments
The maximum predecision discussion helps. It is so hard to change minds after decisions are made
They're great.
When urgent decisions have to be taken precluding prescrutiny and advise from the relevant committee, these still need to be reported to committee to be noted and commented upon at the first opportunity.
Cabinets are undemocratic by nature and are an exclusive rather than an inclusive way of decision making
Overview and scrutiny should have teeth and not be a talking shop
Cabinet gives a much clearer chain of responsibility
The use of Yellow Papers now needs discussion!
I believe cabinet system reduces engagement and transparency
not democratic and believe the committee system has served the council well
to ensure a quality administration, adequate remuneration must be provided to cabinet and committee members.
The cabinet arrangement would be less democratic than a committee system

Overview and Scrutiny (O&S)

There were 30 responses to the question 'Do you think that one Overview & Scrutiny Committee is sufficient?'. Overall, 21 responders answered positively.

Executive Arrangements Survey Results

Do you think that one Overview and Scrutiny Committee is sufficient?



There were 15 comments received in relation to this question which are shown in full below. The comments show support for one Overview & Scrutiny Committee with reasoning that with PACs one committee would be sufficient.

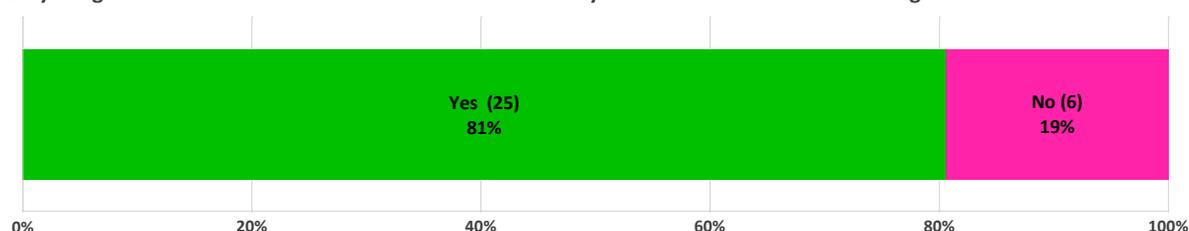
Comments
PACS and other measures should reduce call ins allowing a focus on overview and policy review
The PACs will do a lot of the work. Other councils adopting a similar approach have just the one O&S.
Scrutiny for each cabinet area would involve more members in scrutiny
it meets the test of reasonableness
To much work for 1
The PAC could also act as overview and scrutiny committees for areas in their remit, with the 'top' one being to look at Council wide issues.
We would also have the PACs so one Overview and Scrutiny Committee should be sufficient.
PACs will openly discuss; therefore, all political parties have an input. No need for more
Yes if it is sufficiently empowered
It is too bigger a responsibility for just one committee
I think workload may require two OSC's, each overseeing two PAC's
Full Council if able to refer back to PACs will also therefore act as scrutiny so one would be enough.
Less is best, or more Members need to do more work, or the same "old ones" frequently seen frequently DO!
If the proposed format for PAC's is effective there should only be a requirement for one Overview and Scrutiny Committee
There should be one O&S Committee for each PAC

Do you agree that the O&S Committee should be chaired by a Member who does not belong to the administration?

There were 31 responses to the question 'Do you agree that the O&S Committee should be chaired by a Member who does not belong to the administration?'. Overall, 25 responders answered positively.

Executive Arrangements Survey Results

Do you agree that the O&S Committee should be Chaired by a Member who does not belong to the administration?



There were 15 comments received in relation to this question which are shown in full below. The comments show support for the Chair of O&S being separate from the executive/ from the opposition.

Comments
This will ensure greater involvement and act as a public guarantee of independence
Facilitates constructive challenge
More democratic
While it is recommended it is not mandatory and the Vice Chairman should be a member of the opposition. It needs to be remembered that most if not all decisions will have been subjected to prescrutiny and call in should require a minimum of two members from different member groups.
They should be politically balanced with the ruling party choosing chair
scrutiny should be separate from the executive
It will enable the public to have more confidence in the arrangements
This would maintain its independence. Possibly the Leader of the Opposition would be appropriate.
Excellent, for clear transparency
An opposition group member (presumably an appointee of the leader of the largest opposition group) is best placed to give direct scrutiny.
A casting vote could be used for tactical political voting against the political control position within the council.
The chair of the O&S Committee should be a non-exec chair from outside of politics. The deputy chair should be a member from the opposition but otherwise there is a danger that the O&S committee will just become a political game piece rather than actual fair scrutiny.
Overview and Scrutiny! The words say it. Its ideally better when no direct group interest is involved.
O&S have the inherent danger to turn into talking shops. Safeguards must be provided that cabinet decisions can be scrutinised adequately, without undue delay
To introduce impartiality and proper scrutiny

What do you think is a suitable number for the O&S Committee?

There were 28 responses to the question 'What do you think is a suitable number for the O&S Committee?'. The most common response was 9 with 9 responding this way.

Count	28 Responses
Range	3-15
Mode	9
Mean	9.35

The council is able to co-opt a small number of non-Cllrs on to the Overview & Scrutiny committee.

Executive Arrangements Survey Results

There were 24 comments received in relation to this question which are shown in full below. The comments show that support for co-opting Parish Councillors and Community Group representatives is dependent on the topics being discussed.

Comments
With one Committee a slightly larger number is justified, especially if scope is needed for co-options on a longer term basis is a Parish Rep. Shorter term co-options for specific tasks should not count towards the number as they are temporary.
Parish Council representatives, as per the AGS Committee.
This should be discretionary subject to the agreement of the Chairman with a view to non members being invited to attend to present information that they may have specialist knowledge of.
Matters of audit and in particular standards
I don't approve of this option
From each party
Topic specialists, will depend on the topic eg Allotment, Arts, Transport etc
This could be a very good idea. We currently have Parish representatives on our Audit, Governance and Standards Committee.
Of the 5, we could invite 2 non councillors, yet experienced individuals from the locality
reps from parish councils, disability groups, faith groups voluntary organisations
I do not think that it is wise to co-opt outside focus groups - this should be the reserve of elected councillors.
Only for the addition expert knowledge required for the function
It might be needful to co-opt in regards to gaining best knowledge and understanding of particular situations
A good idea to increase public involvement. Either Parish councillors or representatives of recognised neighbourhood forums.
I agree this is a good idea - I think that that person should be the chair to stop the O&S Committee from just becoming an "alternative to the decision made committee".
Definitely support this and representatives should be considered for expert advice on particular matters.
Make the most of Parish Councils AND local interest groups/organisations like BID and Community Groups.
enhances objectiveness which is a good idea.
It is accepted that members of the O&S Committee are required. to have in depth knowledge of subjects under scrutiny. By co-opting individuals with the necessary knowledge and skills to provide expert input/experience in essential given the diverse subjects this Committee will cover
Yes co-opting of experts e.g those with environmental expertise
While broader democratic involvement is desirable and this option is positive in principle, selection of non elected members shall be considered with great care
Could be useful when specific and specialised expertise is required.
County Councillors, Parish Councillors, Transport, Health, Charities as appropriate.
Any participants who are not elected members should not have the ability to vote on items

Other comments – Overview & Scrutiny

There were 6 'other' comments received in relation to Overview & Scrutiny, these are shown in full below.

Executive Arrangements Survey Results

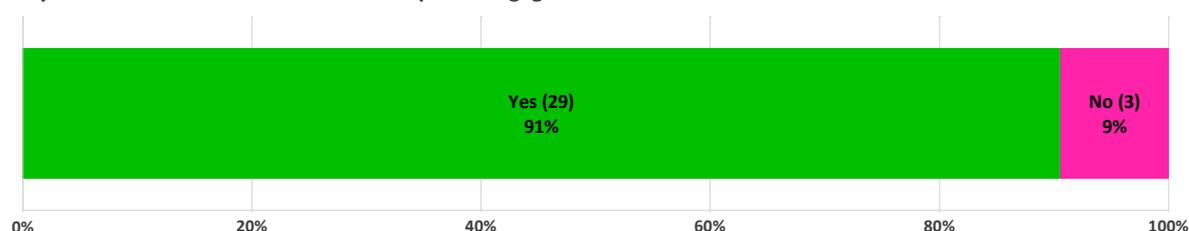
Comments
They're great
it should only be able to raise items directly relevant to the council's actual work and legal obligations and should not be able to raise party political issues or motions out with the council's remit
It is inferior to the current arrangements
I think the number balance is important; so with Cons in control, we should still have a majority on the committee. Otherwise there will be too much wasted time from other political parties.
I would like a O&S with real powers to hold the cabinet to account. The ability to pause a decision if deemed necessary, but not with the ability to frustrate and abuse its role. So it can request a pause, refine and a delay but not stop a cabinet action. Perhaps O&S can have power to refer to full council for a vote on a key decision.
O & S arrangements should allow good, open, cross party discussion of a proposed decision prior to recommendations to Cabinet for the final decision

Public Engagement

Do you think that the current methods of public engagement should be maintained?

There were 32 responses to the question 'Do you think that the current methods of public engagement should be maintained?'. Overall, 29 responders answered positively.

Do you think that the current methods of public engagement should be maintained?



There were 15 comments received in relation to this question which are shown in full below. Many commenters expressed the importance of public engagement and link this to accountability. A couple of commenters mentioned tactical asking of questions stunting discussions.

Comments
The Council and public both benefit from this and reducing it will only limit the Council's interaction with the wider community
There are more than adequate ways for members of the public to lobby support for their views
i think it's ok but sometimes the number of these items takes over too much of the council's official meetings
Let more public write in
accountability
Public engagement is very important.
I think we could or should improve this, but I'm not sure how.
Public engagement should be expanded and existing methods maintained.
It is very important that public and MBC resident have a chance to offer their views
Questions are currently being used for tactical reasons and do not really generate a good discussion. Questions should be made in writing and then referred to the committee for consideration

Executive Arrangements Survey Results

should always look to improve this.

But the constant onslaught of the same questions -worded differently-by the same people every Council/P&R/SPI etc may be democracy but its irritating. Members should be reminded and prompted to engage in meetings with their residents and then engage with appropriate Officers and Chairs/Cabinet Members.

MBC currently has a good reputation of being accessible to our residents whether by raising questions at Full Council or other Committee meetings. This should continue

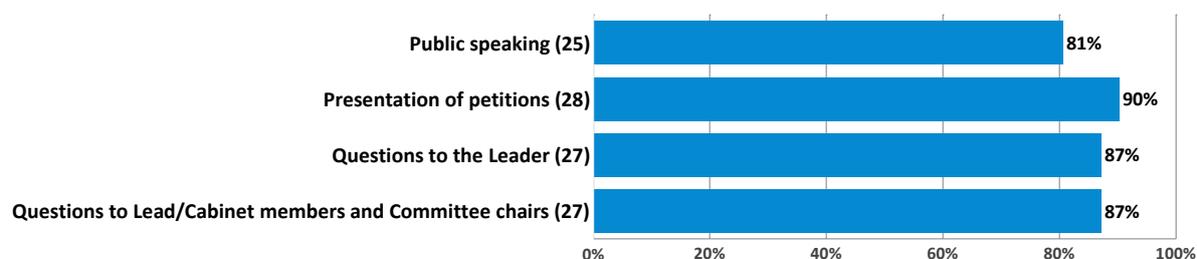
public engagement is vital, maintained & improved

Councillors must be publicly accountable.

Which types of engagement do you think should be applicable to meetings of Full Council?

There were 31 responses to the question 'Which types of engagement do you think should be applicable to meetings of Full Council?'. Respondents could tick as many options as applied. All answer options received high levels of support with at least four in five respondents selecting each option.

Which types of engagement do you think should be applicable to meetings of Full Council?



There were 12 comments received in relation to this question which are shown in full below. Comments showed support for public engagement though some raised concerns about how public engagement impacts on the running of Full Council.

Comments

This helps demonstrate that the Council is accountable and transparent

Petitions should be presented at Full Council and then dependent upon the size of petition brought to committee or back to Council to be debated

i don't think a free-for-all is suitable for our meetings

democratic

Gives the widest possible options for the public

To facilitate the running of meetings in a democratic way only members of the council should be able to direct questions to cabinet members and the leader.

Referendum request on the basis of a significant number of signatures from exclusively the maidstone population

Members of the public should be able to make a statement but not ask questions in the live meeting.

We must find ways of making a Full Council meeting more engaging and interesting.

By continuing to have full public interaction with our residents MBC will reinforce it's reputation of being both transparent and approachable in it's decision making process

democratic

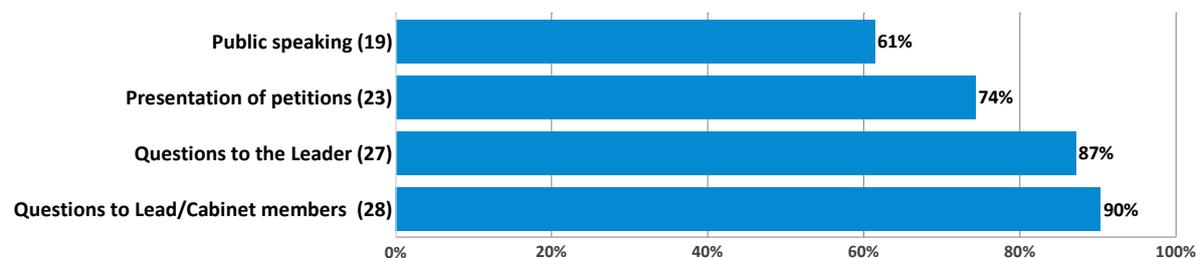
Making councillors and the Council publicly accountable.

Executive Arrangements Survey Results

Which types of engagement do you think should be applicable to meetings of Cabinet?

There were 31 responses to the question 'Which types of engagement do you think should be applicable to meetings of Cabinet'. Respondents could tick as many options as applied. Questions to the Leader and Questions to the Lead/Cabinet Member had the greatest amount of support for inclusion in Cabinet meetings with more than four in five respondents selecting these options.

Which types of engagement do you think should be applicable to meetings of Cabinet?



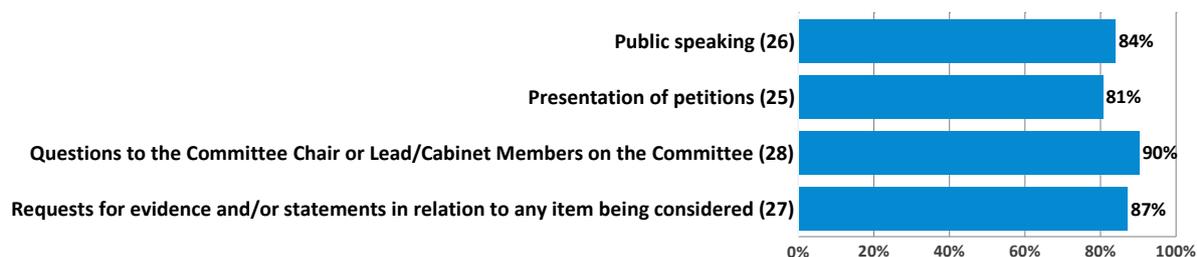
There were 10 comments received in relation to this question which are shown in full below. Comments showed support for public engagement and mention links to accountability and transparency.

Comments
This helps convince the public that their views are listened to
it's a working meeting and shouldn't be full of public intervention
democratic
Keep it simple and straightforward
Cabinet meetings should not be overtly political and therefore none of the above should apply.
Written presentation only
Transparency is key.
All engagement = wider and better democracy
To be seen as both transparent and approachable in its decision making process.
Making councillors and the Council publicly accountable.

Which types of engagement do you think should be applicable to meetings of Policy & Advisory Committees?

There were 31 responses to the question 'Which types of engagement do you think should be applicable to meetings of Policy & Advisory Committees?'. Respondents could tick as many options as applied. All answer options received high levels of support with at least four in five respondents selecting each option.

Which types of engagement do you think should be applicable to meetings of Policy and Advisory Committees?



Executive Arrangements Survey Results

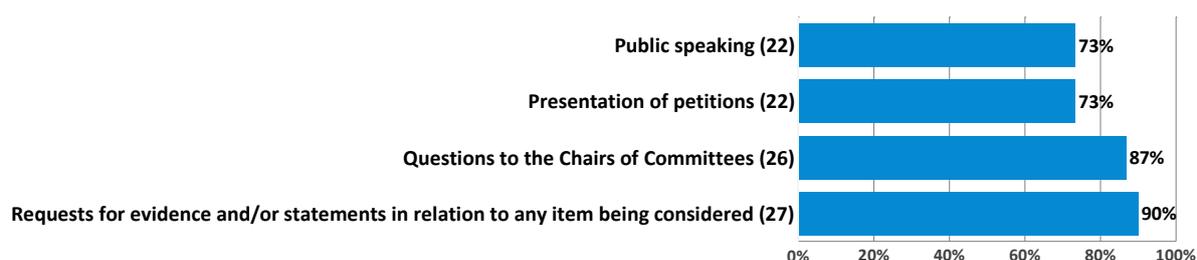
There were 12 comments received in relation to this question which are shown in full below. As with previous comments in this section, the comments showed support for public engagement and mention links to accountability and transparency.

Comment
It does help to show that views are listened to before and joining the making of important decisions
Depending upon the size of a petition the subject matter of a petition can be discussed and recommendations formed at committee in response to petitions meeting the criteria for discussion and response
this is the proper place for public comment and intervention
But can still be in writing
democratic
May be necessary to address the Committee.
Keeps it straight forward
Only members of the council should be able to ask questions, albeit in consultation with their residents.
To enable a proper discussion on the residents concerns to be had at the preliminary stage.
To be seen as transparent in our decision making process
Request for evidence may lead to undue delays if spurious requests are being made
Making councillors and the Council publicly accountable.

Which types of engagement do you think should be applicable to meetings of Overview & Scrutiny Committees?

There were 30 responses to the question 'Which types of engagement do you think should be applicable to meetings of Overview & Scrutiny Committees?'. Respondents could tick as many options as applied. Questions to the Chairs of Committees and Requests for evidence had the greatest levels of support with more than four in five respondents selecting these options.

Which types of engagement do you think should be applicable to meetings of Overview & Scrutiny Committees?



There were 10 comments received in relation to this question which are shown in full below. The comments here showed an openness to ensuring that appropriate evidence is available to the Committee to consider the item they are scrutinising.

Comments
An Overview and Scrutiny Committee needs to be especially open to hearing from multiple viewpoints and collecting data from a wide range of respondents
To ensure the appropriate knowledge base is available to support member discussion and decision making
suitable,

Executive Arrangements Survey Results

Both go together
democratic
May be necessary to address the Committee.
Only members of the council should be able to ask questions, albeit in consultation with their residents.
Residents should be allowed to raise their concerns and ask the committee to consider them but not be allowed to ask a question requiring an immediate answer
To be seen as transparent in our decision making process
Making councillors and the Council publicly accountable.

Other Comments – Public Engagement

There were 10 'other' comment received in relation to Public Engagement, these are shown in full below.

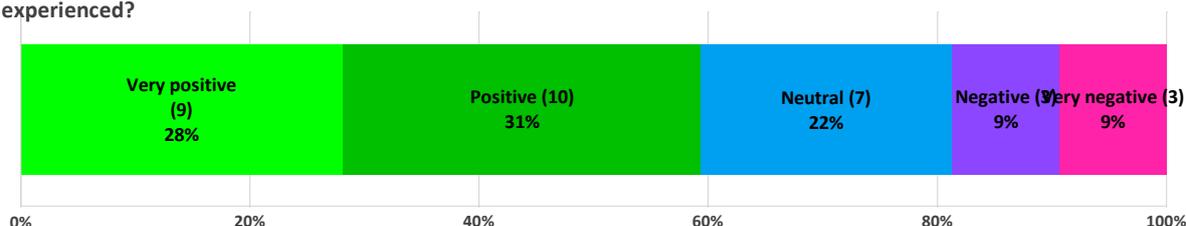
Comments
In relation to Overview and Scrutiny if it establishes a Working group to look at a certain subject the possibility of outside contributors joining in some or all of the discussion should be looked at. Probably needs thinking about beforehand to prevent being caught out later by not knowing how we handle that.
Very important that the public are *seen* to have access.
It is important that the Scrutiny committee has the power to refer decisions back to a) the cabinet member for reconsideration or b) to cabinet to reconsideration, even if the decision was one of an individual cabinet member or c) refer the decision to Full Council
to be accepted, it must be relevant to the council's work and legal obligations
Unless there is full ability of the public to address all levels of MBC, the system will not be accountable or transparent
Happy to consider other options, if there are any.
Statements during a live meeting but no questions. Questions should be submitted in writing in advance and the committee can decide whether or not to discuss and answer them in a subsequent meeting.
It is imperative that we remain approachable to the residents of MBC
Engagement needs to be increased to raise MBC to a beacon of transparency
everything should remain open for all

Feedback on the Executive Model Proposed**How do you feel about the proposed model's design compared to other executive models you may have seen or experienced?**

There were 32 responses to the question 'How do you feel about the proposed model's design compared to other executive models you may have seen or experienced?'. Overall, 19 responders answered positively.

Executive Arrangements Survey Results

How do you feel about the proposed model's design compared to other executive models you may have seen or experienced?



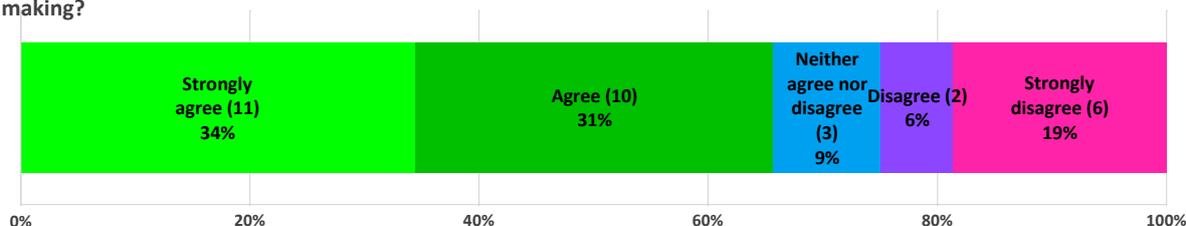
There were 14 comments received in relation to this question which are shown in full below. Many commenters were positive about the proposed changes mentioning it as being inclusive, promoting engagement and improved decision making.

Comments
Much more inclusive than older models
I cme up with it.
Scrutiny needs to be more aligned with the full council than the leader and cabinet.
Could come back to affect us has a group
An Executive model is inferior to a Committee system
Represents a good compromise to achieve maximum support from Members.
Great open way forward
I have limited experience of other models
This process should allow full discussion at two levels prior to a decision being made by cabinet
Its an EXECUTIVE model. It will hopefully lead to more and better quicker decisions by Members
As a Councillor under the last Executive system there were many Members who simply lost interest
This model will streamline the work of both elected members and officers.
it seems that good councillor & public engagement can be achieved
I have no experience of other executive models

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed executive model will ensure effective decision making?

There were 32 responses to the question 'To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed executive model will ensure effective decision making?'. Overall, 21 responders answered positively.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed executive model will ensure effective decision making?



Executive Arrangements Survey Results

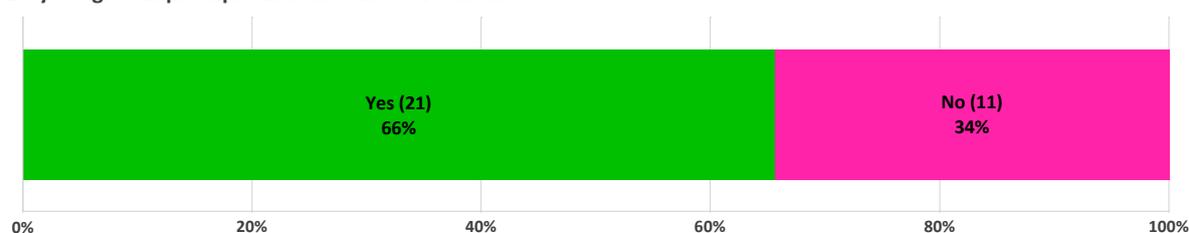
There were 11 comments received in relation to this question which are shown in full below. Several comments mentioned the need to speed up decision making and several mentioned that decisions would still be taken by the Cabinet Member.

Comments
This one has a good chance to. Less inclusive models are no better and can be worse than Committee decision making see the previous MBC Local Plan debates
Still is going to be one elected member decision
But there are some key areas that need to be strengthened notably you can not have cabinet members chairing the committees - poacher and gamekeeper comes to mind. If that were the case I would prefer we kept a committee structure!
An Executive model is inferior to a Committee system and less democratic or inclusive
Decisions can be made more promptly and there is greater accountability.
Let's get on with it.
It would be effective to make decisions but when there is a majority and a cabinet it will always be dictatorial
As long as we don't add in layers that don't actually speed decision making up.
The final decision will be with still be taken by the cabinet member so little faith in this new model.
The proposed model appears complicated at first view. Effective decision making will require the ability for fast decision making
Decision-making will be more objective

Do you agree in principle with the executive model?

There were 32 responses to the question 'Do you agree in principle with the executive model?'. Overall, 21 responders answered positively.

Do you agree in principle with the executive model?



Other rights/opportunities for individual councillors for consideration for inclusions in the new executive model

It was outlined in the survey that individual members rights & opportunities for participation will include: -

- Matters reserved for Full Council
- Full Council motions, including to refer matters directly to the cabinet for decision
- Ability to ask questions in Full Council, Cabinet and Committee meetings on any subject
- Member agenda item requests
- Committee participation (& visiting member rights)
- Overview & Scrutiny 'call in' of cabinet decisions
- "Councillor calls for action" via Overview & Scrutiny

Executive Arrangements Survey Results

They were subsequently asked if there were any other opportunities or new rights that they felt should be considered in the new executive model. A total of 13 comments were received. Here many stated they were happy with what was proposed or that everything was already covered.

Comments
I think its covered,
Access to information. Cllrs need-to-know should be ver widely scoped.
Think that's about right but those rights apply to all members of the council and are not limited to members of a particular committee especially where agenda requests are concerned. Another reason why cabinet members should not chair committees!
Full visiting members access and opportunity should be retained through out the system
I agree with the above.
I am not sure what else there could be.
A strict and obvious line between powers of elected members and council officers should exist to improve the officer/member relationship.
none
That covers most. HOWEVER some "calls for action" may be very Ward biased or Area biased where certain Members will have no insight or understanding. This may need some further consideration.
These opportunities to participate in the proposed new format encapsulate and increase the ways in which I can represent my residents.
Remote and virtual attendance should be encouraged to allow the increased engagement from gjd public that has been seen under the covid legislation
not much different
None

Suggested Amendments

Survey respondents were given the opportunity to suggest amendments to the proposed Executive Model, a total of 6 comments were received, these are shown in full below. Three comments suggested keeping the current Committee system.

Comments
Perhaps for the exclusion of doubt formally require individual Cabinet Member decisions to be advertised as formal meetings.
Full visiting members access and opportunity should be retained through out the system
A politically balanced member committee to make decisions related to the interpretation of the constitution, rather than allowing an officer to make a decision on this.
Leave The Committee System as it is. It took months to discuss and agree the protocols and structures for Committees and is balanced and fair to the Electorate of the whole Borough of Maidstone
Keep the committee system
Shelve and keep committee system

Elements to Retain and/or Redevelop

Survey respondents were given the opportunity to suggest elements of the current system that they think should be retained or redevelopments for inclusion in the proposed Executive Model, a total of

Executive Arrangements Survey Results

12 comments were received, these are shown in full below. A couple were negative about the proposed model and others mentioned increased involvement for Members.

Comments
The important matters are Agenda Requests and the right to attend all meetings and participate as set out above.
I think we need to set out in greater detail all the committees of the council to demonstrate clearly how business will be conducted
We should do away with
The new system should mirror the current system as closely as possible
There is an effort to retain political balance which does work and which the PACs can replicate. It is also important that all Members feel involved and this can be achieved through the PACs and Overview and Scrutiny.
I'll leave this to more experienced colleagues
All Members of a Committee can influence Chair and VC and other Members as much as Chair/VC, Members can influence them. In practice this should remain in any democracy and in a new model.
All protocols and procedures were extensively discussed in a fair and proper manner and were inclusive, making balanced decisions
The Regulatory and Statutory Committees, ie. Planning, Licensing, Audit Governance and Standards, work extremely well under the current system and I look forward to learn how they will be integrated into the new model
Information should be freely available to all ward councillors and parish councillors and where possible the public
committee system gives a louder voice to minority parties and independents as made up from all groups, could be excluded. we need to be accountable for the residents ,
The whole model

Other comments – Proposed Executive Model

There were 10 'other' comments received in relation to the proposed Executive Model, these are shown in full below.

Comments
Nice survey.
This new system is not democratic. It will not matter what is said, the final decision will be what Cabinet member wants.
Do away with p & R committee
It is a mistake going to an Executive Model, however it can be reversed in the future with a simple majority if required
Thank you for the opportunity to comment and feedback.
The current committee system sees decisions being 'bounced' between committees backwards and forwards without decisive decision making. The proposed system should stop that yet still allow good and open discussion at an early stage
The committee system works well and represents all members views and those of smaller political groups. Reports have significantly improved under the committee system and decision making has been much more transparent than previous executive arrangements so I have serious doubts if full representation will be achieved under this new model. Explaining the new arrangements to residents will only create distrust and be seen as smoke and mirrors approach by the public as the final decision maker on most occasions will be by a cabinet member ?

Executive Arrangements Survey Results

Leave the Committee System as it is ~ it works and is fairer to all Members

Openness, transparency and communication should be priority in any system that becomes the model

The committee system model is much simpler for the public to understand and it allows better involvement of their own elected member(s)