

Governance Working Group

Held at:	Boulogne Room - Civic Centre Folkestone
Date	Tuesday, 5 November 2019
Present	Councillors Connor McConville, Ian Meyers, David Monk, Tim Prater and Lesley Whybrow
Apologies for Absence	David Kitson, Bevan Brittan
Officers Present:	Amandeep Khroud (Assistant Director), Sue Lewis (Committee Services Officer) and Susan Priest (Head of Paid Service)
Others Present:	Andrew Campbell, LGA

1. **Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

2. **Terms of reference and introductions**

Members noted and agreed the Terms of Reference.

3. **A Cabinet or Committee Model of Governance - Options for Folkestone and Hythe District Council**

Andrew Campbell, LGA presented members with his initial findings from earlier discussions paying particular attention to the following:

Transparency - it was clear that there was desire from some that more councillors become involved in the decision making process and that would give rise to perception of greater transparency.

Working Groups - members welcomed the Leader's recent decision to set up a number of working groups but felt this was not sufficient alone as they are advisory.

Scrutiny – members' views on Scrutiny are mixed, some see it as ineffective, others see it as having some influence but did agree that it was a positive move to have a member of one the Opposition parties chairing. If it is decided that the Committee route is the chosen option, then scrutiny needs to be built into how the committees operate.

Regulatory Committees – these would remain unchanged.

Cabinet Model – could be more inclusive by introducing advisory committees, assistant cabinet members, or giving group leaders a position and associated portfolio on Cabinet.

Mr Campbell felt that some members were leaning more towards a Committee system over Cabinet, but with only a small number of committees which would include a strong role for Policy and Resources, with scrutiny being carried out within the committees themselves. There would also be a need to include call in and urgent decision making procedures.

Committees – if members preference is for all councillors to have an input on committees then further discussions would need to take place in respect of the following:

- The number of committees.
- The number of meetings.
- The number of seats to be allocated to each party.
- Allowances and how these may change.
- Call-in procedures.

With this in mind it was agreed that the Member Briefing scheduled for 7 November would be rescheduled to 21 November 2019 so that group leaders could hold discussions with their groups before attending the briefing. It was also agreed that the presentations used at the working group be circulated to members for further cascade.

It was also agreed to reschedule the next meeting of the working group, which will now be held on 25 November instead of 19 November 2019.