



Agenda

Meeting: **Governance Working Group**
Date: **25 November 2019**
Time: **3.30 pm**
Place: **Boulogne Room - Civic Centre Folkestone**

To: Councillors Connor McConville, Ian Meyers, David Monk, Tim Prater and Lesley Whybrow

Andrew Campbell – Local Government Association
David Kitson – Bevan Brittan

Susan Priest, Amandeep Khroud, Peter Wignall, Jemma West, Paul Butler.

THIS MEETING IS PRIVATE AND NOT OPEN TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

1. **Apologies for Absence**
2. **Declarations of interest**
3. **Minutes**

To consider and approve, as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2019.

4. **Future Governance Arrangements - Options**
5. **Consultation**

For comment and sign off of the press release.

Queries about the agenda? Need a different format?

Contact Jemma West – Tel: 01303 853369
Email: or download from our website
www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

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Declarations of Interest

Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI)

Where a Member has a new or registered DPI in a matter under consideration they must disclose that they have an interest and, unless the Monitoring Officer has agreed in advance that the DPI is a 'Sensitive Interest', explain the nature of that interest at the meeting. The Member must withdraw from the meeting at the commencement of the consideration of any matter in which they have declared a DPI and must not participate in any discussion of, or vote taken on, the matter unless they have been granted a dispensation permitting them to do so. If during the consideration of any item a Member becomes aware that they have a DPI in the matter they should declare the interest immediately and, subject to any dispensations, withdraw from the meeting.

Other Significant Interest (OSI)

Where a Member is declaring an OSI they must also disclose the interest and explain the nature of the interest at the meeting. The Member must withdraw from the meeting at the commencement of the consideration of any matter in which they have declared a OSI and must not participate in any discussion of, or vote taken on, the matter unless they have been granted a dispensation to do so or the meeting is one at which members of the public are permitted to speak for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the matter. In the latter case, the Member may only participate on the same basis as a member of the public and cannot participate in any discussion of, or vote taken on, the matter and must withdraw from the meeting in accordance with the Council's procedure rules.

Voluntary Announcement of Other Interests (VAOI)

Where a Member does not have either a DPI or OSI but is of the opinion that for transparency reasons alone s/he should make an announcement in respect of a matter under consideration, they can make a VAOI. A Member declaring a VAOI may still remain at the meeting and vote on the matter under consideration.

Note to the Code:

Situations in which a Member may wish to make a VAOI include membership of outside bodies that have made representations on agenda items; where a Member knows a person involved, but does not have a close association with that person; or where an item would affect the well-being of a Member, relative, close associate, employer, etc. but not his/her financial position. It should be emphasised that an effect on the financial position of a Member, relative, close associate, employer, etc OR an application made by a Member, relative, close associate, employer, etc would both probably constitute either an OSI or in some cases a DPI.

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Minutes

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.