



Centre for Public Scrutiny

Folkestone & Hythe District Council Member Survey

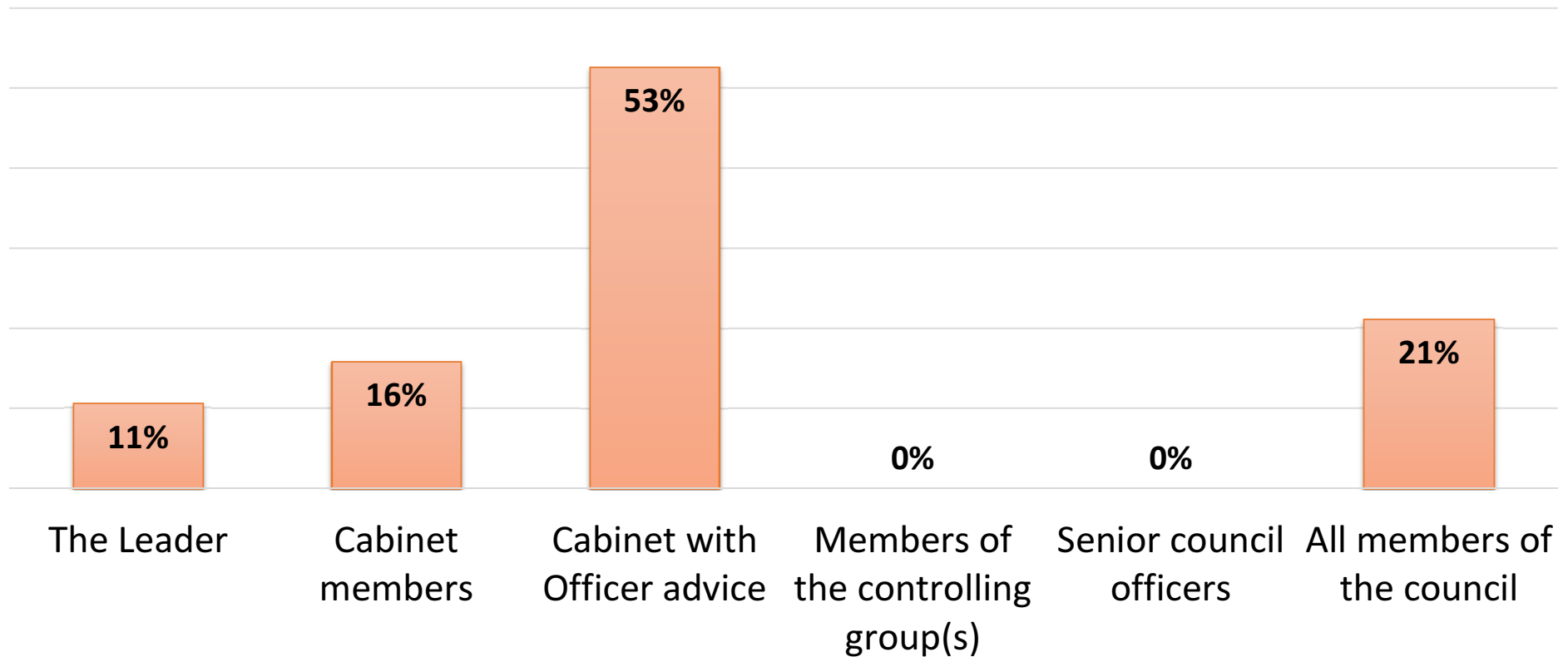


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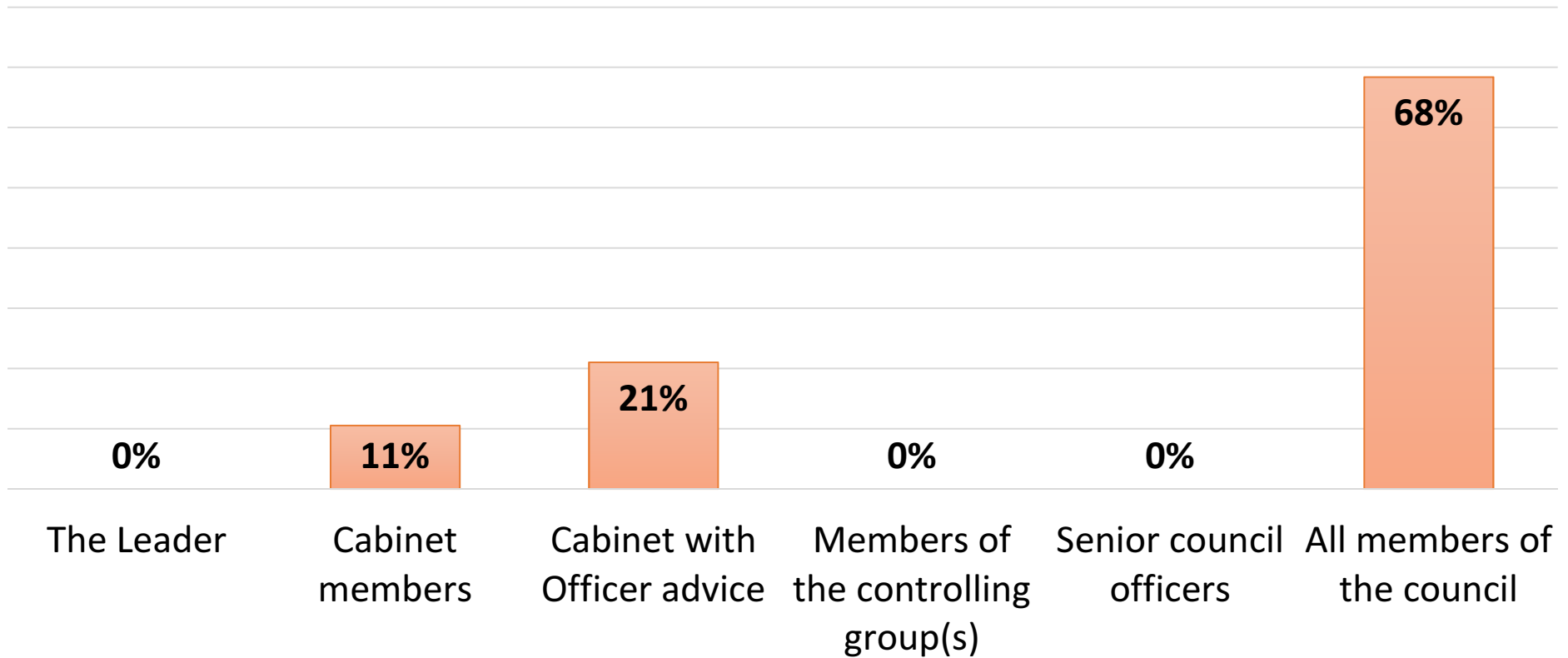


- 19 total responses = 63% of Councillors completed the survey

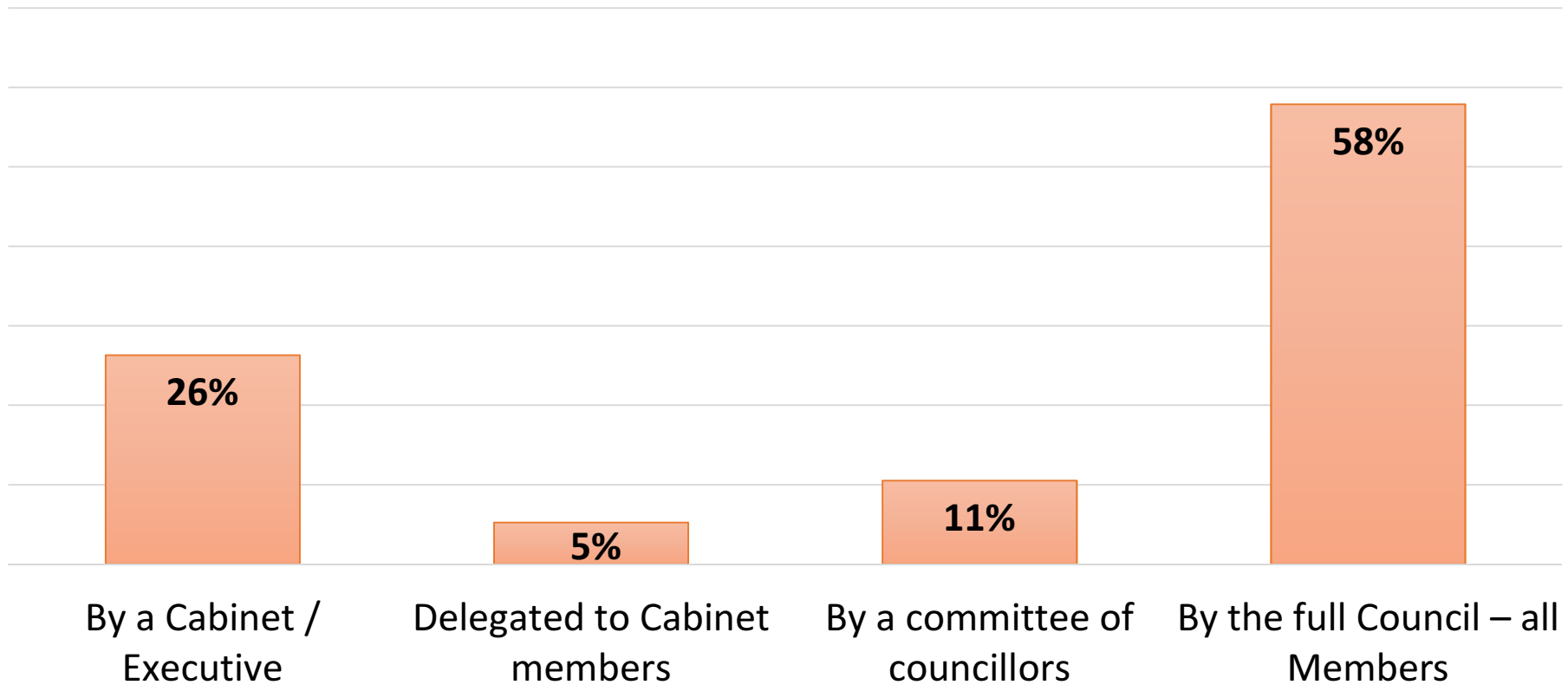
Q1: Who is currently responsible for developing policy at the council?



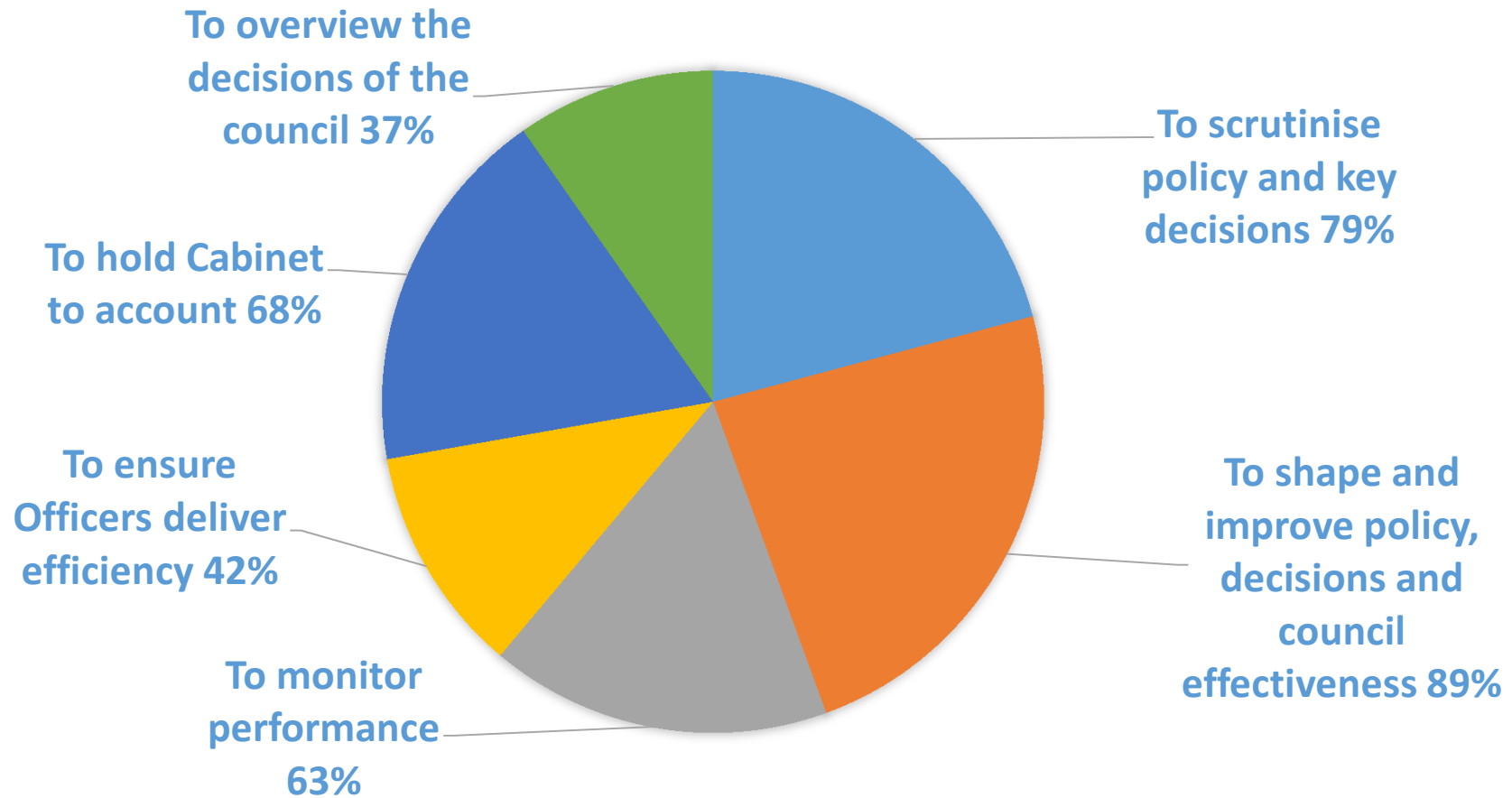
Q2: Who should be responsible for developing policy?



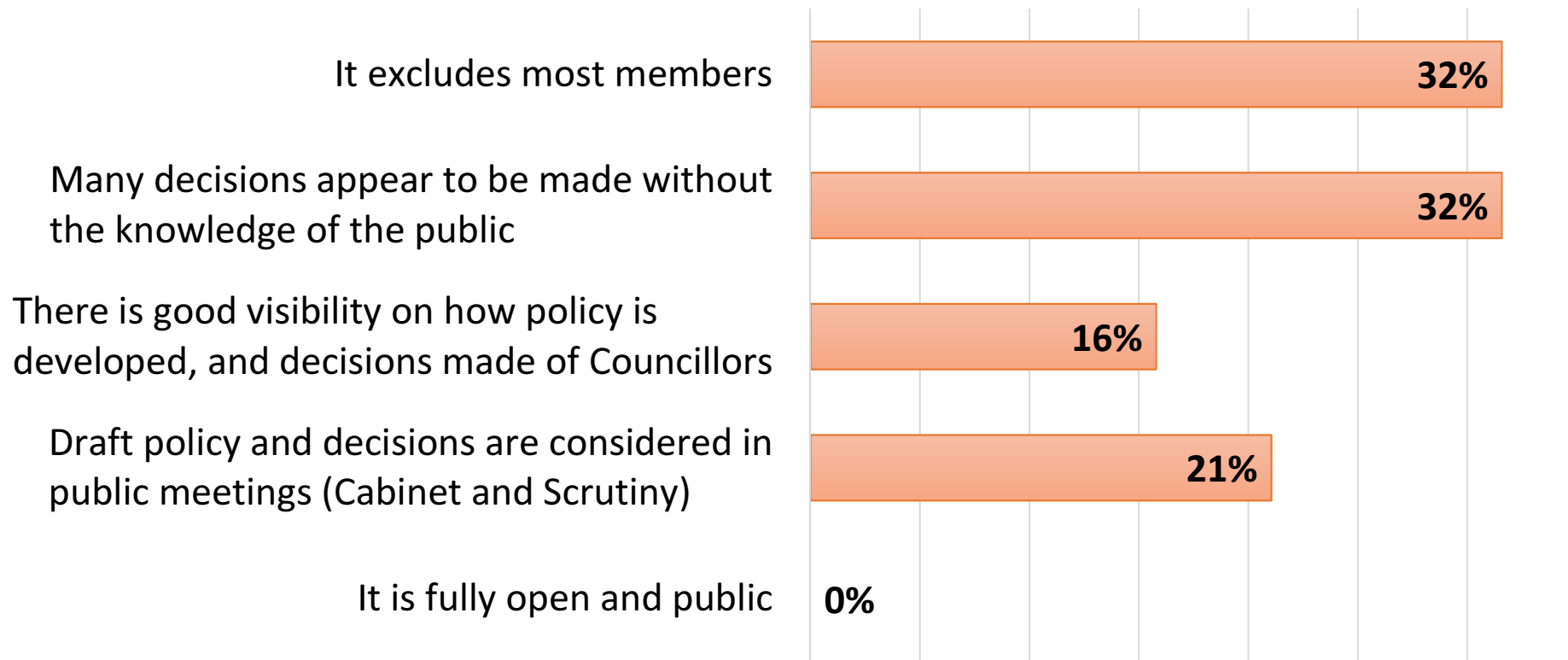
Q3: How should key decisions be made?



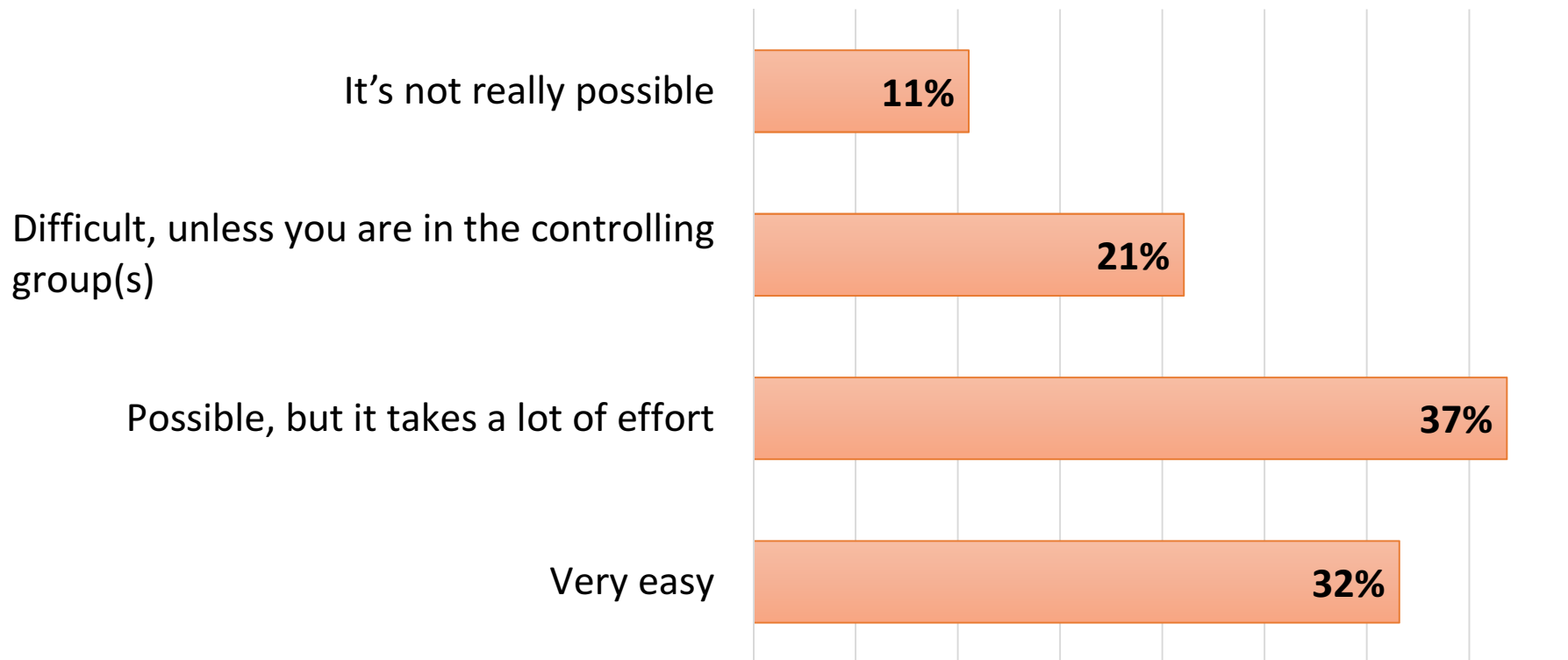
Q4: How should scrutiny be used? (Tick all that apply)



Q5: How open and transparent is key decision-making?



Q6: How easy is it for all members to contribute ideas or improvements to policy?

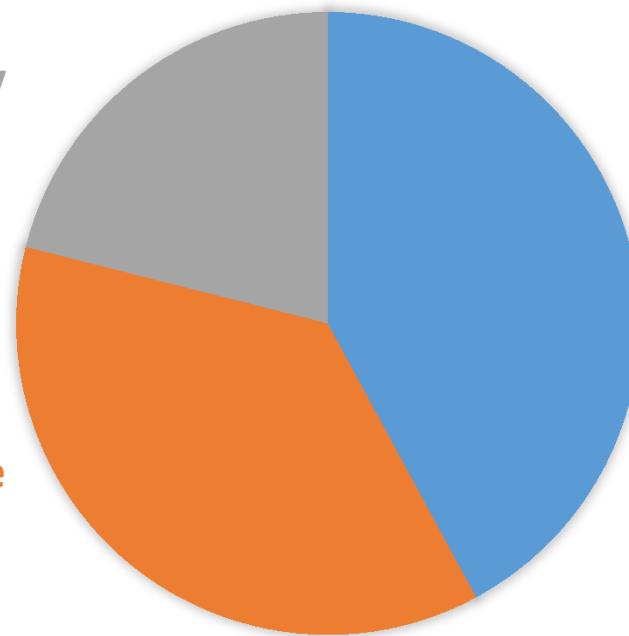


Q7: What role do you think an individual councillor should play in policy development and key decisions?



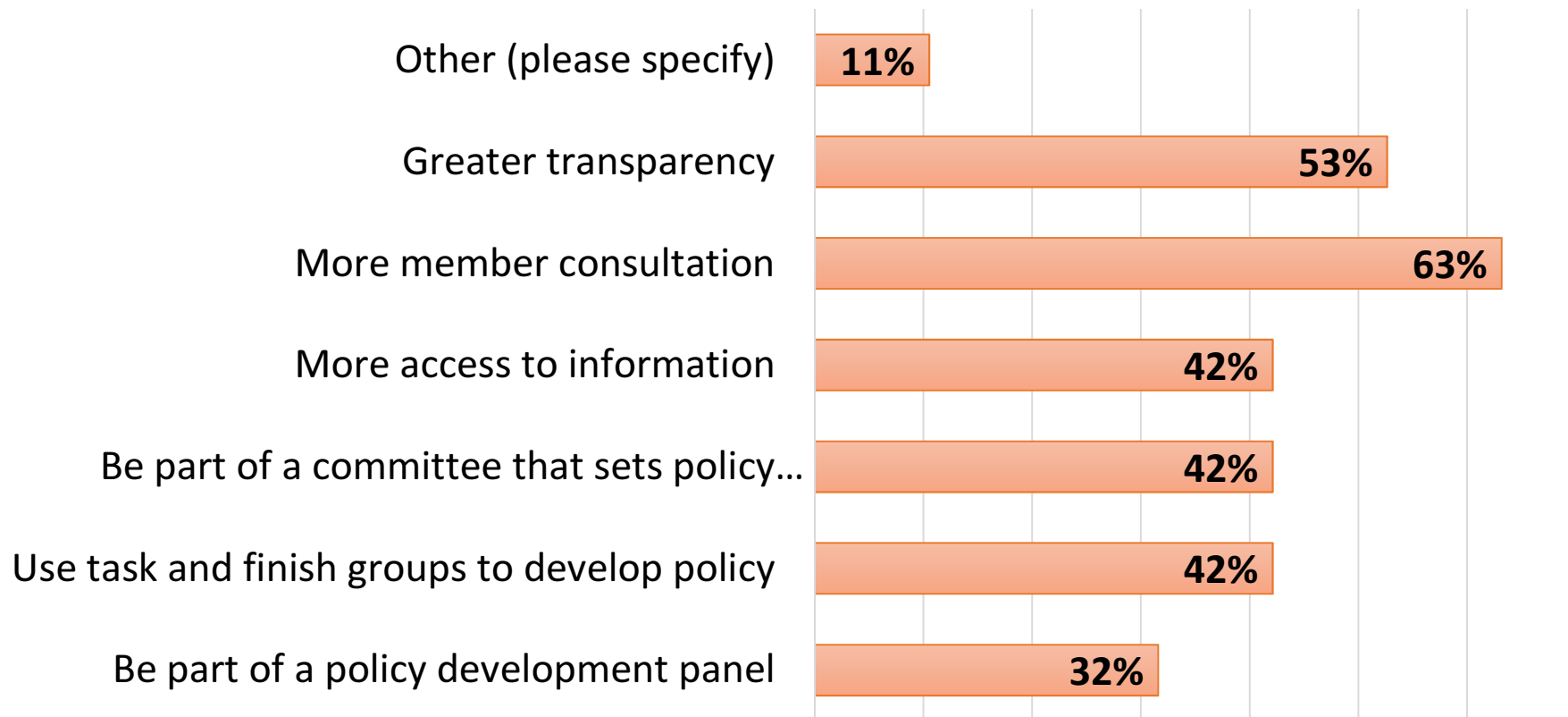
To test and challenge policy
21%

To help to shape policy ideas
37%



To have full access and to be able to contribute to all policy areas
42%

Q8: What might help members to have a greater role in policy development? (Tick all that apply)



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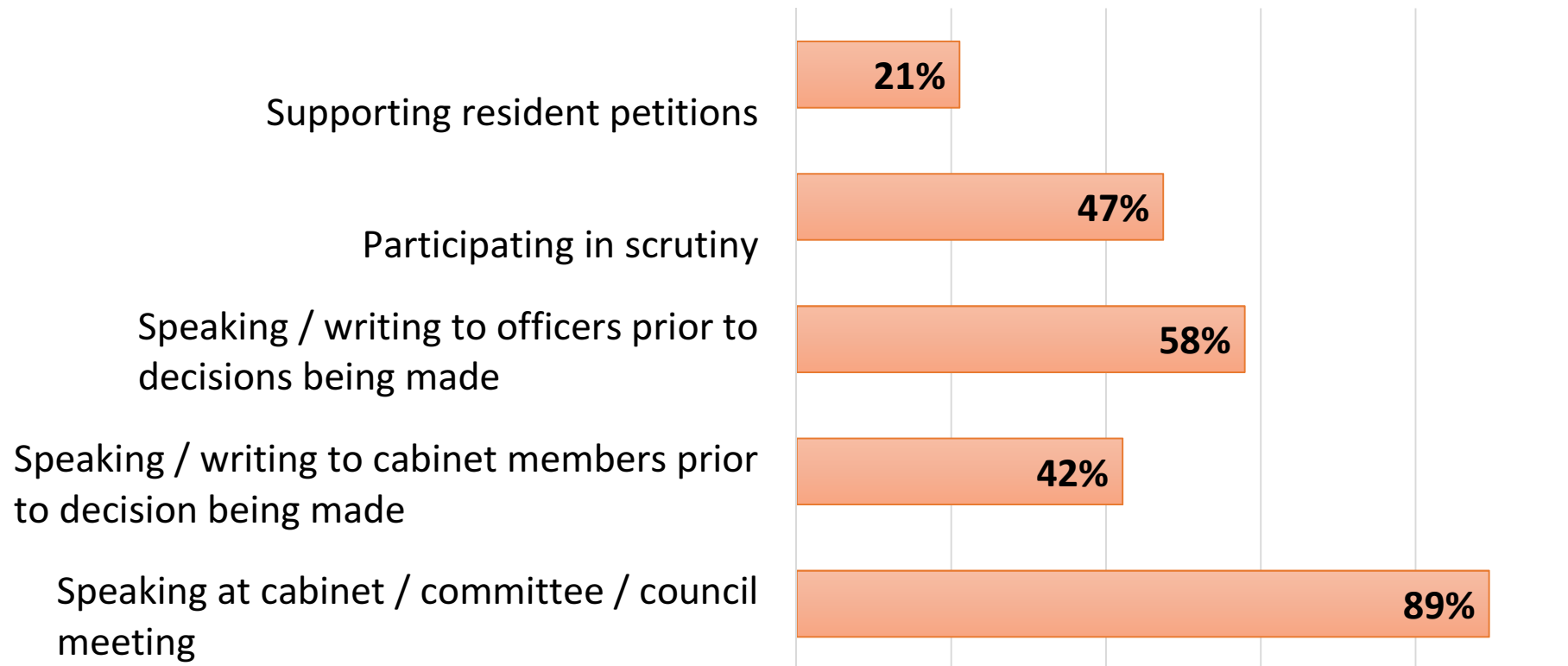
Other (please specify)

11%

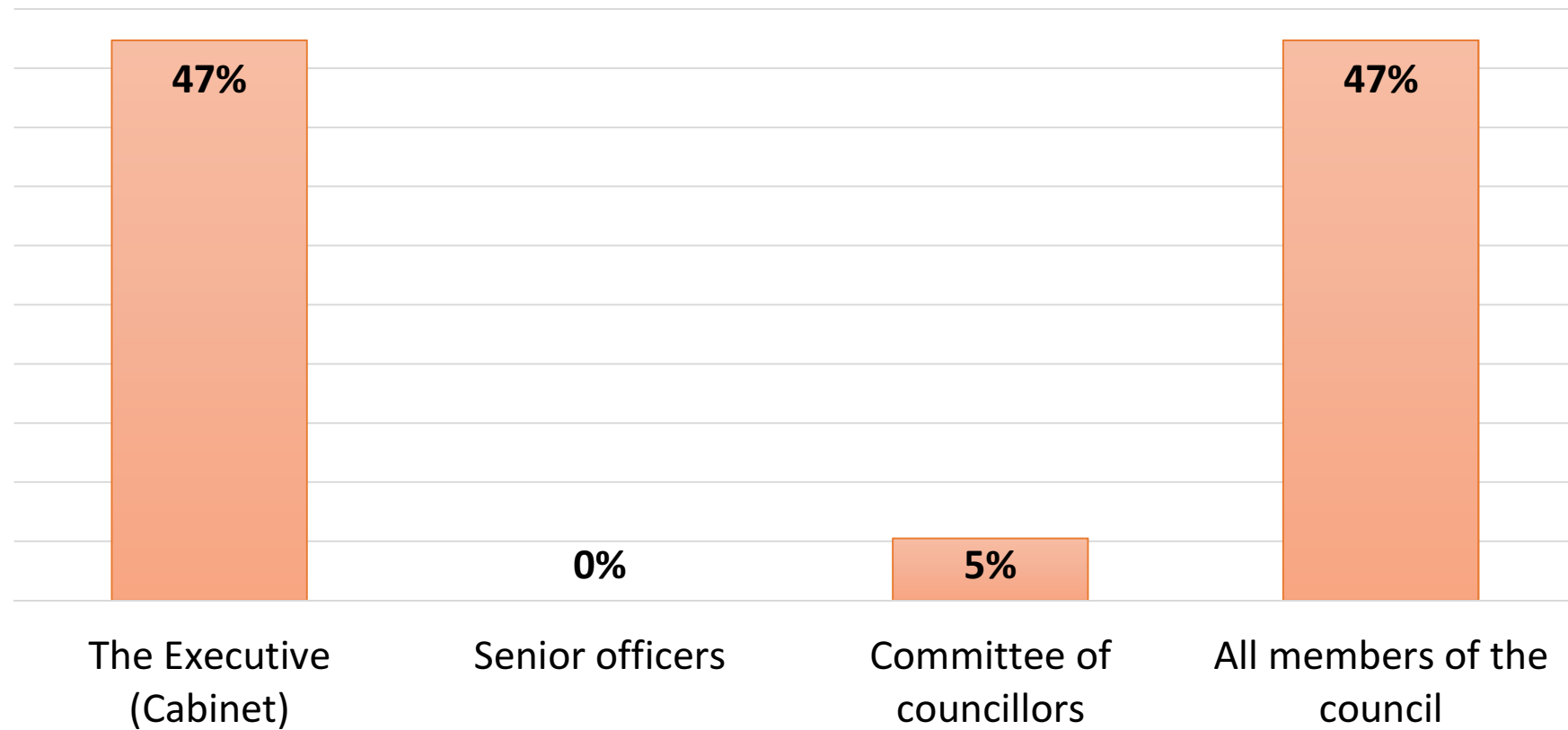
“It is possible that creating an informal forum that invites all Council members to meet on a quarterly basis to put forward ideas and make suggestions for existing policy amendments. If the general consensus is that an idea is positive then further research could be undertaken by officers before the matter goes before the relevant Committee or Full Council”

“Individual members need to make use of all the information already available to them so they can play a useful part of the process. They should not expect to be in control of all aspects of the running of the council but concentrate on some key areas where they have an interest or wisdom to share.”

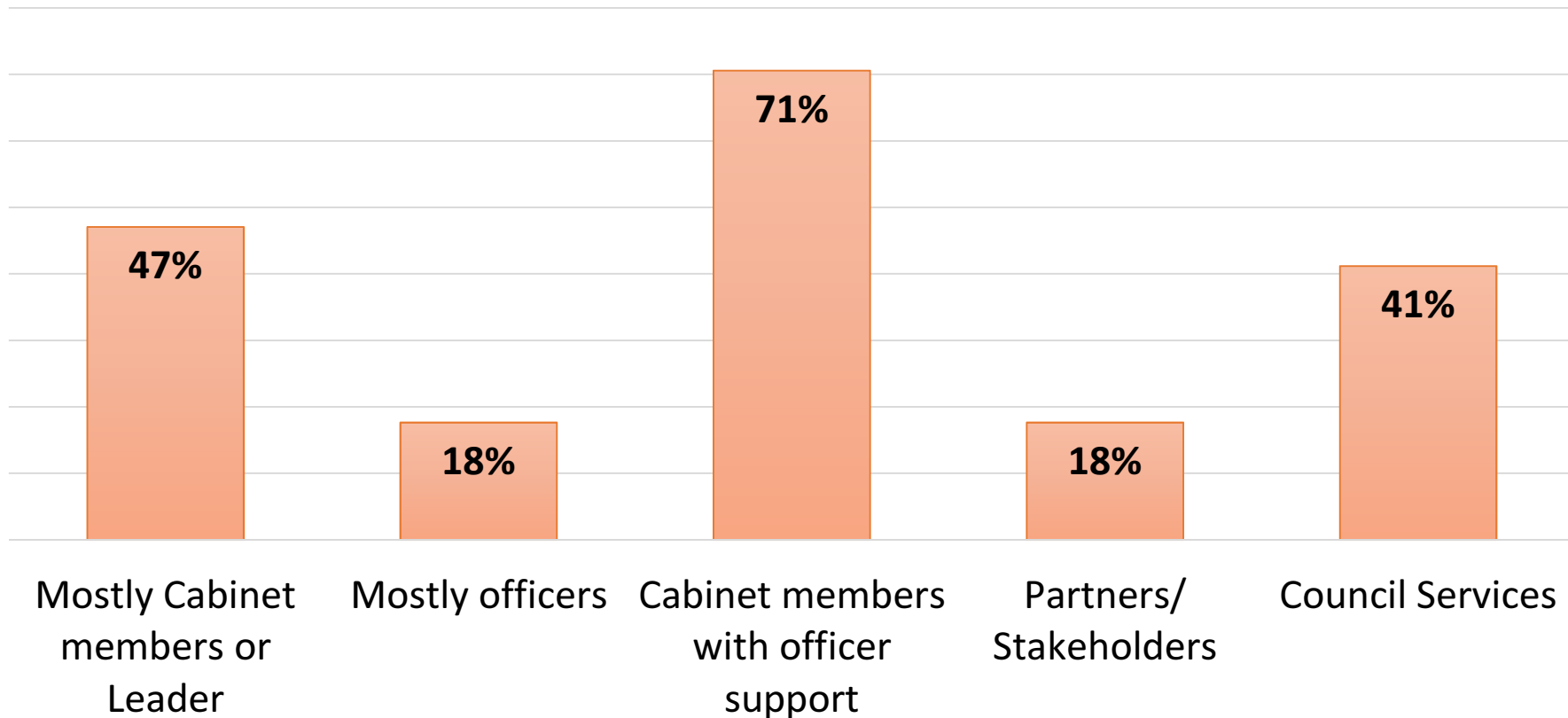
Q9: What do you currently do to participate in council decision making? (Tick all that apply)



Q10: Who should be accountable for decisions and council policies?



Q11: Who do you think scrutiny currently holds to account? (Tick all that apply)



Q12: Which models of governance you would favour? *(1st and 2nd preference weighted average)*



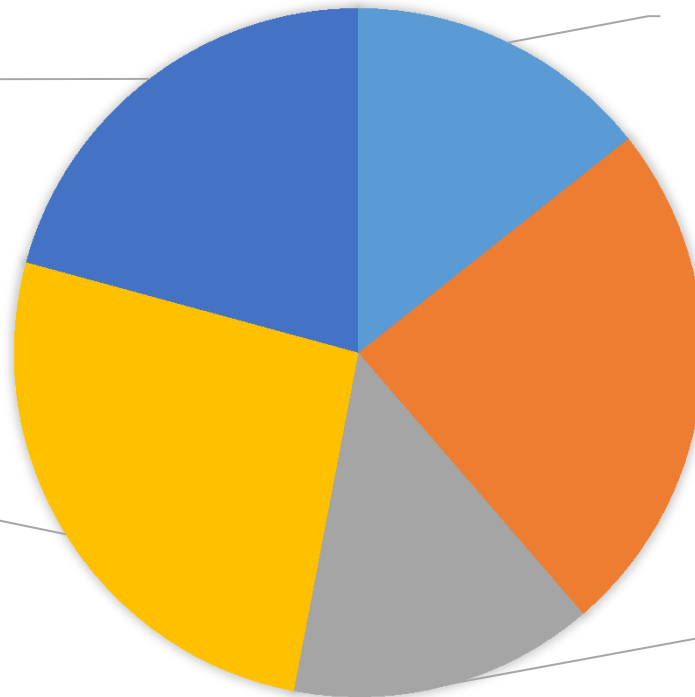
Hybrid Committee system with overview and scrutiny function
21%

Leader – Cabinet – Scrutiny
14%

Hybrid – Leader Cabinet with enhanced scrutiny
26%

Leader – Committee Structure
25%

Elected Executive Mayor – Cabinet – Scrutiny
14%



Q13: What are the benefits of your first preference?



- Leader – Cabinet – Scrutiny** : “Clear-cut governance structure and effective quick (when required) decision making.”
- Leader – Committee Structure** : “Cross party decision making where the voices of all the groups of the council have their views and ideas heard.”
- Elected Executive Mayor – Cabinet – Scrutiny** : not a 1st preference
- Hybrid – Leader Cabinet with enhanced scrutiny** : “More scrutiny, less power to cabinet. I believe members of the public will trust this system more than the current system”
- Hybrid Committee system with overview and scrutiny function** : “It retains scrutiny’s role.”

Q14: What are the disadvantages of the current system?



“Not all councillors are involved in the decision making process. Scrutiny is toothless. The public sees council apparently making a decision (e.g. to withdraw the planning application of Princes Parade) but not only is this not binding on cabinet but cabinet haven't even debated the issue in public so the public feel cheated.”

“Some would say it is not as inclusive as it could be. To that end, improving the role and remit of Scrutiny Committee could address some of the concerns raised by members not involved in the Cabinet.”

“Members of the public have little or no trust in the current system. Lack of proper scrutiny.”

“Members of opposition/minor parties feel they have little influence or opportunity to make contribution to policy and decisions.”

Q15: What do you feel is missing or lacking the current system that makes it weaker or less functional?



“A better system would see the involvement of all Councillors (or at least groups) in the formation of policy at an earlier stage, a willingness and structure designed to take input and make amendment to policy proposals throughout their development period (and even through into their application) and an involvement of all Councillors (or at least groups) in then evaluating, collating and deciding on the final scheme to vote it into policy.”

“Any sense that recommendations by the scrutiny committee to the cabinet are listened to or actioned.”

“Teamwork, a culture change is needed.”

“I do think that giving Overview and Scrutiny greater powers could strengthen the Council's policy and decision making process.”



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