



## Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating & Call-in Committee

Date: 2 September 2008

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## Scrutiny Commission on the role of Borough Council: Scoping Report

Report of the Executive Director Regeneration and Resources

Council Leader: Councillor I Malcolm

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### **Why has the Report come to Scrutiny?**

1. This report seeks Members' approval on the proposed scope for the Commission on the role of Borough Council.

### **How is this linked with the Community Strategy aims and objectives?**

2. 'Involving people to have a greater voice and influence over decision-making and the delivery of local services' is a top ten-priority objective. It is intrinsic across all of our priority themes with specific objectives detailed in the 'making communities safer and stronger' theme.

### **What are Members asked to do?**

3. Members are asked to consider the proposals detailed in the report, which include agreeing the terms of reference and scope of the Commission.

### **How will Members' views make a difference?**

4. Members' views are important to ensure that the Commission focuses on the areas they feel are the most important. The involvement and experience of Members and their role as civic leaders is crucial to involving people to have a greater voice and influence over decision-making and service delivery.

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Performing Together Reference: S2 – Empowering people to have a greater voice and influence

Contact Officer: Jacqueline Appleton, Scrutiny Policy Officer, 424 6022

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## Introduction

5. At an extraordinary meeting of Borough Council, held on 24 January 2008, it was requested that the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating and Call-In Committee undertake a scrutiny commission to examine the role and function of Borough Council, examining best practice in other authorities.
6. At the Scrutiny Work Programme Workshop held on 13 June 2008, to discuss the Committee's future Work Programme, Members considered the request and agreed to undertake a review within the 2008/09 Municipal Year.

## Background Information

7. Over the last decade the Government has modernised the democratic system, which has included important changes in our participatory democracy. Local Councils have become more visible and accountable, with greater devolution to local neighbourhoods.
8. Consultation is ongoing on the White Paper, 'Communities in Control; Real People, real power', which centres on passing power into the hands of local communities, building on the work still in progress from the 2006 White Paper, Strong and Prosperous Communities.
9. Members will already be aware of the changes brought about through the Local Government and Public Involvement In Health Act 2007, which aims to develop and strengthen the overview and scrutiny function. Some functional changes in terms of Scrutiny Committee have already been implemented to assist in accommodating the Act.
10. Due to the changes required in response to the 2007 Act, there are a number of pieces of work being carried out, involving various aspects of the Council, committees and the constitution. In addition to the Commission to be undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Members should be aware of:
  - The 4 \* Plus Project 'to implement appropriate and meaningful initiatives to increase public involvement in Council meetings, Scrutiny and CAFs in consultation with partners.'
  - The Local Government Act 2007 – Steering Group.
  - A comprehensive review of the Constitution.

## **The role of Council**

11. Borough Council is a meeting that all 54 Members are entitled to attend and to speak and vote. The Council is responsible for the determination of its Budget and Policy Framework. It is responsible for regulatory and other non-Cabinet functions and has a role in holding the Cabinet to account.

## **Purpose of the Commission**

12. All Scrutiny Commission work undertaken by Members has a key role in our performance management framework.
13. The Commission will give Members the opportunity to examine the role of Borough Council, ensuring that, in line with the Constitution it:
  - Facilitates the community leadership role of the Council.
  - Promotes partnership working with other public bodies, residents and stakeholders.
  - Provides enhanced opportunities for residents to be involved in decision-making.
  - Assists in achieving improvements in services and the drive for Best Value.
  - Helps the Council to deliver its vision and top 10 priorities.
14. In order to examine the role of Borough Council, Members may wish to consider the following terms of reference:
  - Investigate how other authorities operate full Council meetings.
  - Examine what initiatives are being used to increase public involvement.
  - Assessment of current performance and associated costs and evaluate how we compare to other authorities.
  - Examine national policy drivers and advice from leading academics in this field.

## **Consultation**

15. The Commission will gather information from a variety of sources, including information provided by Members, Officers and external partners.
16. A significant part of the information gathering will involve Members investigating how other authorities conduct full Council meetings,

including methods employed to create opportunities for residents to be involved.

### **Timetable**

17. The Commission will be conducted over a number of meetings. Time will be programmed to allow Members to visit other authorities. The timescales relating to the visits will be dependant upon the availability, cooperation and meeting dates and times of the authorities Members agree to visit.

### **Financial and value for money Implications**

18. The Scrutiny Committee will not make any decisions with financial implications; their role is to make recommendations to Cabinet.

### **Legal Implications**

19. The Scrutiny Committee will not make any decisions with legal implications; their role is to make recommendations to Cabinet.

### **Risk Implications**

20. There are no risk implications at present.

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

21. We must provide enhanced opportunities for all of our residents to be involved in decision-making. To facilitate the community leadership role of the Council we should ensure that, if residents do want to be involved in decision-making, meetings are accessible and do not have a negative impact or discriminate in any way.

### **Environmental and Sustainability Implications**

22. There are no environmental and sustainability implications at present.

### **Recommendations**

23. Members are asked to consider the report and agree the proposed scope and timetable of the Commission.

24. Members are also asked to consider whether they wish to call anyone else to provide further evidence or to employ any other methods to gather information during the Commission.

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## Scrutiny Commission on the role of Borough Council Scoping Report

Report of the Executive Director Regeneration and Resources

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**The following is a list of the background papers (excluding exempt papers) relied upon in the preparation of the above report:**

<b>Background Paper</b>	<b>File Ref:</b>	<b>File Location</b>
Nil		



# South Tyneside Council

## Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating & Call-in Committee

Date: 7 October 2008

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### Scrutiny Commission on the role of Borough Council: programme

Report of the Executive Director Regeneration and Resources

Council Leader: Councillor I Malcolm

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#### **Why has the Report come to Scrutiny?**

1. This report follows on from the agreement of the scope for the Commission on the role of Borough Council to consider a programme for the commission.

#### **How is this linked with the Community Strategy aims and objectives?**

2. 'Involving people to have a greater voice and influence over decision-making and the delivery of local services' is a top ten-priority objective. It is intrinsic across all of our priority themes with specific objectives detailed in the 'making communities safer and stronger' theme.

#### **What are Members asked to do?**

3. Members are asked to consider the programme to see whether they feel it will fulfil the agreed terms of reference and scope of the Commission.

#### **How will Members' views make a difference?**

4. Members' views are important to ensure that the Commission focuses on the areas they feel are the most important. The involvement and experience of Members and their role as civic leaders is crucial to involving people and ensuring that they have a greater voice and influence over decision-making and service delivery.

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Performing Together Reference: S2 – Empowering people to have a greater voice and influence

Contact Officer: Paul Baldasera, Scrutiny Policy Officer, 424 6022

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## Introduction

5. At the last meeting of the committee, the scope of the commission on the role and function of Borough Council was agreed.
6. The terms of reference for the commission are to
  - Investigate how other authorities operate full Council meetings.
  - Examine what initiatives are being used to increase public involvement.
  - Assess current performance and associated costs and evaluate how we compare to other authorities.
  - Examine national policy drivers and seek advice from leading academics in this field.
7. This report gives further suggestions as to how the commission can be undertaken.

## What we need to find out

8. To answer the above questions, we will need to undertake the following pieces of work

Question	What we need to do	How are we going to do it
How do other authorities operate full Council meetings?	We need to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Conduct a survey of councils asking a number of key questions about the operation of their meetings</li> <li>– Visit councils who Members feel have something innovative to see</li> </ul> Look at what we could consider changing to make council meetings more effective	Survey to be developed in consultation with members and sent to all councils in England  Analysis of returns and visits to innovative councils  Visit To Birmingham who undertook a similar Scrutiny Review in 2005  Desk research into innovative ideas such as

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Submission of Leader's / Lead Member Reports</li> <li>- Leader's Question Time</li> <li>- Annual State of the Borough Address</li> <li>- Assembly Session with Partners</li> <li>- Themed Debates</li> <li>- Dealing with the "pink" reports for decision on the budget and policy framework</li> <li>- Debate on "notices of motion"</li> <li>- Debating petitions at the Council meeting</li> <li>- Deputations / representations from individuals or organisations</li> <li>- Presentations / presentation of awards</li> <li>- Civic Advisory Panel</li> <li>- Physical improvements</li> <li>- Timing of meetings</li> <li>- Webcast of meetings</li> </ul>
<p>What initiatives are being used to increase public involvement?</p>	<p>Find out what we are doing to attract people to council meetings</p> <p>Look at any good practice in this area</p>	<p>Presentation from Julie Turner (Senior Area Manager) Tracey Moore (Youth Participation Officer) Russ Cochrane (Democratic Services Manager)</p> <p>Summary of good practice from beacon councils for Youth Engagement in the Democratic process</p>



		(Gateshead, Lancashire, Lewisham, Derwentside, Wakefield, West Sussex, Wirral)
What are our performance and associated costs and how do we compare to other authorities?	<p>Find out our own costs and what measures of success we use. We can include questions in council survey</p> <p>Find out what members think about the council meetings</p> <p>Find out what the public thinks</p>	<p>Analysis of costs/performance based on questions to be included in survey</p> <p>Workshops asking members about council meetings – what is good, what can be improved</p> <p>Survey forms to be handed out at council meetings in October and November</p>
What are the national policy drivers and advice from leading academics in this field.	<p>We need to look at the implications of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 2006 White Paper, Strong and Prosperous Communities/ The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.</li> <li>– The White Paper, ‘Communities in Control; Real People, Real power’</li> </ul> <p>We also need to find out what academics in the field say about what councils should be doing.</p>	<p>Brian T.Scott (Head of Corporate Governance)</p> <p>Discussion about new legislation/guidance and how the constitution needs to change.</p> <p>Coordinating approach with other South Tyneside panels and groups looking at the implications of this legislation/guidance</p> <p>Contact is being made with IDeA/Inlogov with a view to a “leading light” in the field to come and give views to the commission</p>

## **Timetable**

9. Given the breadth of work that needs to be undertaken and the time to undertake survey work, the following timetable is suggested:-

- October to December
  - Agree Survey
  - Send out and analyse results
  - Determination and Benchmarking of costs
  - Agree councils to contact/visit with Members
  - Survey of people attending council meetings
  - Desk research
  - Brian T Scott – present “witness” statements to the committee
  - Tracy Moore – present “witness” statements to the committee
  - Russ Cochrane – present “witness” statements to the committee
  
- January to February
  - Asses and evaluate good Practice from Beacon councils
  - Visit to other councils
  - Leading academic to be invited to a meeting of the commission
  - Member Workshops

## **Financial and value for money Implications**

10. There are costs associated with this activity, particularly visiting other councils. The thorough analysis of survey information and desk research will ensure that Members will only be asked to visit other councils where there is clear value in doing so.

## **Legal Implications**

11. The Scrutiny Committee will not make any decisions with legal implications; their role is to make recommendations to Cabinet.

## **Risk Implications**

12. There are no risk implications at present.

## **Equality and Diversity Implications**

13. We must provide enhanced opportunities for all of our residents to be involved in decision-making. To facilitate the community leadership role of the Council we should ensure that, if residents do want to be involved in decision-making, meetings are accessible and do not have a negative impact or discriminate in any way.

## **Environmental and Sustainability Implications**

14. There are no environmental and sustainability implications at present.

## **Recommendations**

15. Members are asked to consider the report and agree the proposed programme and timetable for the Commission.

16. Members are also asked to consider whether they wish to call anyone else to provide further evidence or to employ any other methods to gather information during the Commission.

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## Scrutiny Commission on the role of Borough Council: programme

Report of the Executive Director Regeneration and Resources

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**The following is a list of the background papers (excluding exempt papers) relied upon in the preparation of the above report:**

<b>Background Paper</b>	<b>File Ref:</b>	<b>File Location</b>
Nil		



## Overview Scrutiny Co-ordinating and Call-in Committee

Date: 27 February 2009

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## Scrutiny Commission on Full Council: Survey Results

Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Coordinating and Call-in Committee

Cabinet Portfolio/Lead Member: Deputy Leader, Cllr Alan Kerr

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### **Purpose of Report**

1. This report gives details of the full council survey that closed on 30 January 2009

### **Why Has the Report Come to Scrutiny?**

2. The survey will give Members a picture of how other councils run their council meetings, what reviews have taken place around this area in other council areas and whether there are any areas of good practice or innovative arrangements that would warrant further investigation.

### **What Are Members Asked To Do?**

3. Members are asked to consider the result of this survey, discuss the conclusions and how we can use the information to shape our development of council meetings and advise officers on further follow up work.

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Performing Together Reference: M5 1/1

Contact Officer: Paul Baldasera ext.6002

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## Background

### Summary of survey results

- Appendix 1 shows the full results of the survey. These are summarised as follows
- 199 councils responded to the survey out of 375 sent the survey link by email. This represents a response rate of 53%, which is quite favourable for a survey of this type.
- In terms of the type of councils that responded, this was as follows

<b>type of council</b>	<b>number</b>	<b>percentage</b>
County council	22	11.1%
District council	120	60.3%
Metropolitan council	14	7.0%
Unitary Authority	31	15.6%
London Borough	9	4.5%

- In the light of the heavy bias of district councils in the response, the results of the survey need to be taken in that context.
- Only 10 responding councils had an elected mayor.

### Timing of meetings

- The large majority of councils (73%) hold full council meetings every two months with around 13% holding them every month and 10% holding them every quarter.
- 126 or 63% of councils held their meetings on an evening (start time after 5.30) with 35 (17.5%) holding them in the afternoon and 25 (12.5%) in the morning. Interestingly, one council alternates between a 2pm and a 7pm start time.

### Restrictions on motions

- 149 (75%) of councils had some restriction on motions and when they can be proposed. Most of these restrictions related to time limits in which motions must be submitted. These range from 5 to 15 days before the meeting (ours is 8). Many mentioned that this only applies to motions with notice. Standard motions (i.e. amendments, procedural motions, accuracy of minutes) can be moved without notice, as is the case in South Tyneside.

12. Other restrictions mentioned include:

- Motions must only be about matters for which the council has responsibility or affects the area;
- Motions with financial implications cannot be moved except at the budget meeting;
- One motion per political group;
- Must be at least two Members (ours is five);
- Cannot rescind or amend any resolution which has been passed in the previous six months or be the same motion rejected within the previous six months;

### Features in Council meetings

13. The following table shows how many councils include the following features within their meetings:

State of the Borough Debate	39	19.6%
Leader/Mayor's annual speech (addressing policy areas for the year)	70	35.2%
"Green paper" policy debates	10	5.0%
Leader's question time	85	42.7%
Lead Member/Portfolio holder question time	123	61.8%
Themed Debates	34	17.1%
Debating petitions	34	17.1%
Annual meeting with partners	11	5.5%
Public Questions	141	70.9%

14. Nearly three quarters of the responding councils fielded public questions, two thirds had a Lead Member question time and nearly half had a Leader's question time.

15. Respondents were further questioned as to whether they thought these measure were effective. Most of the measures generally were positively rated. The measures that seemed to work best were.

- Leader/Mayor's annual speech;
- Leader's questions time;
- Lead Member question time.

### Style of minutes

16. Only three (1.5%) councils from the respondents used verbatim minutes. The majority either recorded "debate summary and decision" or "questions/answers and decisions".

17. "Other" answers mainly referred to various forms of summarised styles. One council produced a full sound recording on the website supplemented by a very concise minute.

## **Council meeting and Scrutiny reports**

18. Only 14 councils (7%) had featured a debate on a scrutiny report before it went to the Executive.

## **Attendance at council meetings**

19. The vast majority of councils (149 or 75%) said that they had an average of 1-10 members of the public at council meetings. 11 councils said they attracted more than 30.

## **Webcasting meetings**

20. Webcasting full council meetings is still a relatively new innovation, with only 19 councils providing this service. However, quite a few more councils said that they do plan to bring this in.

21. Given our own council chamber's inaccessibility to wheelchair users, it may be worth pursuing these councils to see how they organise this service, its cost, how effective it is and what the take up of the service is.

## **Innovative ideas**

22. A high percentage of respondents reported that they have either undertaken or are planning to undertake a review of the constitution, council meetings, scrutiny or area working.

23. Full details of the results can be seen in the appendix to this report (see results to Q11). Some of the more interesting ideas are as follows

- 15 minutes of public questions with a time limit of three minutes for any person speaking. Written replies received. (Devon, Bath and NE Somerset, North Warwickshire);
- Opposition topics for debate at alternate meetings (Wychavon);
- "Hot topic" debates (Ossendale);
- Sound recordings of council meetings available on website (Sutton, Cornwall);
- An annual policy council meeting held in November to debate and decide the Council's corporate plan priorities for the forthcoming year (Orley);
- Annual portfolio holder reports (NE Lincs);
- Themed debates from partner organisations (South Bucks, Castlepoint);
- Leader reports on work of cabinet (Wiltshire, Rochford);
- Council sometimes meets in "committee mode" which allows more freedom for debate, officers to give advice etc (Calderdale);



- Question time which allows councillors to raise ward issues (Mid Beds, Lewes);
- Questions time for portfolio holders (Warwick);
- Presentation of petitions by public (Maidstone, Huntingdonshire Dorset);
- Agenda and recommendations displayed on screens (Sunderland, Sutton, Derbyshire, Shrewsbury);
- Youth Council regular report to council (Arun);

## Reviews undertaken

24. The appendix gives the answers in full when councils were asked to give details of reviews that have been or are being undertaken.
25. As you would expect in the light of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, most had either reviewed or were reviewing their constitution (173 or 97%) and Scrutiny (129 or 65%). Just under half (91 or 46%) had reviewed their Area Committees or area based working.
26. As for reviewing the full council meetings, 57 (29%) said that they had completed a review and a further 30 (15%) said they were planning to do so.
27. When asked to elaborate on these reviews, the most interesting ones in terms of looking at the full council meeting were as follows:
- Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead recently undertook a review of the Council's decision-making processes, mostly relating to the Cabinet/Scrutiny relationship, procedures for handling petitions, debate at Cabinet, etc;
  - Some councils who have done reviews of full council meetings have removed the reporting up of Cabinet and Committee minutes to the Council agenda which has freed up time for more meaningful debate. (North Dorset, Alnwick, Chorely);
  - Review of Standing Orders to remove some of the restrictions on debate (Exeter);
  - Brent Council Members have asked that a review of the operation of Full Council is carried out in order to reduce the number of meetings (currently 8 which includes 2 in May) and to remove some of the less productive items;
  - A Democratic Commission has been set up to examine the democratic process as a whole as Redcar & Cleveland. A series of six workshops comprising multiple sessions will cover: Effective & Ethical Governance, Forthcoming Legislation, Neighbourhood Working, Member Development, Models of Localism and a Final Report;

- Milton Keynes have a Constitution Commission whose role is to review the Constitution and particularly the Council Meeting;
- Review of Constitution and Council meetings planned for June in Surrey County Council;
- Hull County Council did a scrutiny review of council meetings in 2007;
- An overview and scrutiny review of the Full Council meeting was done by Bath NE Somerset Council in 2006, as a result of which a number of changes were introduced to the operation of the meeting. These were modified following changes to the democratic structure following the May 2007 election;
- Northampton have reviewed their council meeting as part of a constitutional review;
- Liverpool Council have completed their review of council meetings;
- Oxford have undertaken a review which has resulted in the rewriting of their constitution in plain English, and Council meeting procedures tightened up in an attempt to reduce the time taken for meetings;
- Worthing have very recently streamlined their Council meeting process to move away from "doing Committee work in Council" to concentrating on the more strategic, Policy Framework issues;
- October 2006, Sedgemoor Council reviewed their Council meetings;
- Blackpool reviewed the role of the Council meetings several years ago which led to the change in frequency of meetings from fortnightly to the current system and the introduction of the Executive Reports;
- Newcastle: review of their City Council is ongoing.

### **Reviews sent as a result of the survey**

28. Three Councils sent copies of their reviews. These were:

- Birmingham (which we have already seen);
- Hyndburn Borough Council;
- Kensington and Chelsea.

### **What can we conclude?**

29. Clearly, from the strength of response and the amount of interest this survey has generated, this is a "hot topic" for councils up and down the country, with the majority actively looking at how they can develop their democratic systems to meet the challenges of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

30. Some specific issues to consider:

- Many councils seem to favour evening meetings. That was one of the issues that led to Council setting up the Commission.
- Not all Councils meet on a monthly cycle. It might be worth considering when the Council needs to meet to carry out statutory business.
- There are some measures that other councils operate which they say work well. We need to look at whether we should consider them, in particular:
  - Leader/Mayor's annual speech;
  - Leader's questions time;
  - Lead Member question time.

This would need to be considered in conjunction with our current practice of including Cabinet, Scrutiny and Standards Committee minutes on the agenda.

- Verbatim minutes are not popular and do provide difficulties for those who have to record them. But two Councils do sound record the meetings and some Councils have arranged web casting.
- Attendance at our council meetings is similar to a number of councils. We may wish to look at those councils that have 30+. Measures we could take could include taking the council to different venues, screens showing agendas/resolutions etc.
- There are a number of innovations that appear in results that Members may wish to discuss and possibly follow up with individual councils.

### **What shall we do as a result?**

31. Members will want to look at the result of this survey, draw some conclusions and point out areas that they wish to pursue, particularly looking at the innovations in para. 22.

32. We may also wish to contact those councils who are either doing or have completed a similar review to benchmark Members views against.

### **Legal Implications**

33. We can reach and advise officers on further follow up work. Any changes must be reflected in the council's constitution and be within the national legal framework for the operation of Local Government.

### **Risk Implications**

34. There are no risk implications at present.

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

35. We must provide enhanced opportunities for all of our residents to be involved in decision-making. To facilitate the community leadership role of the Council we should ensure that, if residents do want to be involved in decision-making, meetings are accessible and do not have a negative impact or discriminate in any way.

### **Environmental and Sustainability Implications**

36. There are no environmental and sustainability implications at present.

### **Financial Implications**

37. None at this stage

### **What Are Members Asked To Do?**

38. Members are asked to consider the result of this survey, discuss the conclusions and how we can use the information to shape our development of council meetings and advise officers on further follow up work.

## Scrutiny Commission on Full Council: Survey Results

Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Coordinating and Call-in Committee

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**The following is a list of the background papers (excluding exempt papers) relied upon in the preparation of the above report:**

<b>Background Paper</b>	<b>File Ref:</b>	<b>File Location</b>
Results from National Survey of Councils	Survey Results	Democratic Services, Town Hall, S Shields

# Council Meeting Survey

## Actual Results – Base = 199

South Tyneside Council is undertaking a scrutiny commission on the role of the full council meeting with a view to making some recommendations on how it can be improved.

To help us get a full understanding of how other councils operate their council meetings and to make sure we capture best practice and experiences in this area, we are conducting a survey of councils across England.

We would be grateful if you could spend some time answering a few short questions on how your full council meetings are organised and conducted.

We will send the results of the survey to all participating councils so that we can share the learning as widely as possible.

<b>Q1</b>	<b>What type of council are you?</b>						
		22	County council				
		120	District council				
		14	Metropolitan council				
		31	Unitary authority				
		9	London borough				
<b>Q2</b>	<b>Do you have an elected mayor?</b>						
		10	Yes				
		185	No				
<b>Q3</b>	<b>How often does your full council meet?</b>						
		26	Every month				
		145	Every two months				
		21	Every quarter				
		0	Twice a year				
		0	Annually				
<b>Q4</b>	<b>Which day of the week does your full council meet and at what time?</b>				197		
<b>Q5</b>	<b>Are there any restrictions on who can propose motions and when they can be proposed?</b>						
	Yes	149					
	No	46					
<b>Q5a</b>	<b>If yes, please specify.</b>				144		
<b>Q6</b>	<b>Do your council meetings include the following? (please tick as appropriate).</b>						
		39	State of the Borough Debate				
		70	Leader/Mayor's annual speech (addressing policy areas for the year)				
		10	"Green paper" policy debates				
		85	Leader's question time				
		123	Lead Member/Portfolio holder question time				
		34	Themed Debates				
		34	Debating petitions				
		11	Annual meeting with partners				
		141	Public Questions				
<b>Q6</b>	<b>And, if so how well do you think they work:</b>						
			Never works well	Sometimes works well	Works well more than not	Mostly works well	Always works well
	State of the Borough Debate	2	10	10	9	5	
	Leader/Mayor's annual speech (addressing policy areas for the year)	0	5	8	33	17	
	"Green paper" policy debates	0	1	2	5	2	
	Leader's question time	1	11	9	47	13	

Lead Member/Portfolio holder question time	1	14	22	65	17
Themed Debates	0	9	2	19	3
Debating petitions	0	10	8	13	2
Annual meeting with partners	0	0	2	8	1
Public Questions	6	27	26	60	19

**Q7 Which of the choices below best describes the style of minute taking used for your full council meetings at present?**

*Debate summary and decisions*

117

60 *Questions, Answers and Decisions*

3 *Verbatim*

31 *Other*

**Q7a Other (please specify)**

28

**Q8 Thinking about the last 12 months, has your council meeting featured a debate on any scrutiny review report before it went to the Executive?**

14 *Yes*

180 *No*

**Q9 Thinking about the last 12 months, on average, how many members of the public attend your full council meeting?**

6 *None*

149 *1-10*

23 *11-20*

7 *21-30*

11 *30+*

**Q10 Does your council webcast full council meetings?**

19 *Yes*

175 *No*

1 *Some meetings*

**Q11 Are there any innovative features you have introduced that you feel improved your council meetings? If so, please give us details below.**

78

**Q12 Are you or have you done a review of:**

	<i>At present/done</i>	<i>Planning to</i>
Constitution	134	39
Council meetings	57	30
Scrutiny	109	20
Area Committees/Area based working	71	20

**Q13 If you have done or are doing a review in any of these areas, please give details below.**

157

**Q14 Your contact details:**

195

Thank you for completing this survey.

**Please complete by Friday 30th January 2009**

# Council Meeting Survey

## Percentage Results – Base - 199

South Tyneside Council is undertaking a scrutiny commission on the role of the full council meeting with a view to making some recommendations on how it can be improved.

To help us get a full understanding of how other councils operate their council meetings and to make sure we capture best practice and experiences in this area, we are conducting a survey of councils across England.

We would be grateful if you could spend some time answering a few short questions on how your full council meetings are organised and conducted.

We will send the results of the survey to all participating councils so that we can share the learning as widely as possible.

<b>Q1</b>	<b>What type of council are you?</b>						
		11.1%	<i>County council</i>				
		60.3%	<i>District council</i>				
		7.0%	<i>Metropolitan council</i>				
		15.6%	<i>Unitary authority</i>				
		4.5%	<i>London borough</i>				
<b>Q2</b>	<b>Do you have an elected mayor?</b>						
		5.0%	<i>Yes</i>				
		93.0%	<i>No</i>				
<b>Q3</b>	<b>How often does your full council meet?</b>						
		13.1%	<i>Every month</i>				
		72.9%	<i>Every two months</i>				
		10.6%	<i>Every quarter</i>				
		0.0%	<i>Twice a year</i>				
		0.0%	<i>Annually</i>				
<b>Q4</b>	<b>Which day of the week does your full council meet and at what time?</b>				99.0%		
<b>Q5</b>	<b>Are there any restrictions on who can propose motions and when they can be proposed?</b>						
		74.9%	<i>Yes</i>				
		23.1%	<i>No</i>				
<b>Q5a</b>	<b>If yes, please specify.</b>				96.6%		
<b>Q6</b>	<b>Do your council meetings include the following? (please tick as appropriate).</b>						
		19.6%	<i>State of the Borough Debate</i>				
		35.2%	<i>Leader/Mayor's annual speech (addressing policy areas for the year)</i>				
		5.0%	<i>"Green paper" policy debates</i>				
		42.7%	<i>Leader's question time</i>				
		61.8%	<i>Lead Member/Portfolio holder question time</i>				
		17.1%	<i>Themed Debates</i>				
		17.1%	<i>Debating petitions</i>				
		5.5%	<i>Annual meeting with partners</i>				
		70.9%	<i>Public Questions</i>				
<b>Q6</b>	<b>And, if so how well do you think they work:</b>						
			<i>Never works well</i>	<i>Sometimes works well</i>	<i>Works well more than not</i>	<i>Mostly works well</i>	<i>Always works well</i>
	State of the Borough Debate	1.0%	5.0%	5.0%	4.5%	2.5%	
	Leader/Mayor's annual speech (addressing policy areas for the year)	0.0%	2.5%	4.0%	16.6%	8.5%	
	"Green paper" policy debates	0.0%	0.5%	1.0%	2.5%	1.0%	
	Leader's question time	0.5%	5.5%	4.5%	23.6%	6.5%	



Lead Member/Portfolio holder question time	0.5%	7.0%	11.1%	32.7%	8.5%
Themed Debates	0.0%	4.5%	1.0%	9.5%	1.5%
Debating petitions	0.0%	5.0%	4.0%	6.5%	1.0%
Annual meeting with partners	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	4.0%	0.5%
Public Questions	3.0%	13.6%	13.1%	30.2%	9.5%

**Q7 Which of the choices below best describes the style of minute taking used for your full council meetings at present?**

- 58.8% *Debate summary and decisions*
- 30.2% *Questions, Answers and Decisions*
- 1.5% *Verbatim*
- 15.6% *Other*

**Q7a Other (please specify)**

90.3%

**Q8 Thinking about the last 12 months, has your council meeting featured a debate on any scrutiny review report *before* it went to the Executive?**

- 7.0% *Yes*
- 90.5% *No*

**Q9 Thinking about the last 12 months, on average, how many members of the public attend your full council meeting?**

- 3.0% *None*
- 74.9% *1-10*
- 11.6% *11-20*
- 3.5% *21-30*
- 5.5% *30+*

**Q10 Does your council webcast full council meetings?**

- 9.5% *Yes*
- 87.9% *No*
- 0.5% *Some meetings*

**Q11 Are there any innovative features you have introduced that you feel improved your council meetings? If so, please give us details below.**

39.2%

**Q12 Are you or have you done a review of:**

	<i>At present/done</i>	<i>Planning to</i>
Constitution	67.3%	19.6%
Council meetings	28.6%	15.1%
Scrutiny	54.8%	10.1%
Area Committees/Area based working	35.7%	10.1%

**Q13 If you have done or are doing a review in any of these areas, please give details below.**

78.9%

**Q14 Your contact details:**

98.0%

Thank you for completing this survey.

**Please complete by Friday 30th January 2009**

# Council Meeting Survey

Results to Q4 – Which day of the week does your full council meet and at what time?

1. Thursday at 10.30 am
2. Usually Tuesday at 7pm
3. Wednesday 2 pm
4. Thursday at 10 am
5. Monday 2.00pm
6. Wednesday
7. Thursday 6pm
8. Monday Evening at 6.30 p.m.
9. Tuesday at 10.00am
10. Meet every three months apart from special meetings on a Tuesday at 7pm
11. Wednesday 7:30 pm
12. Tuesdays at 7.30pm
13. Tuesday 7.30pm
14. Tuesday, 10 am
15. Friday at 10.00am
16. Tuesday 6.30pm
17. Tuesday
18. Thursday - 7.30pm
19. Thursday 7pm
20. Friday 10.30am
21. Tuesdays 5.30pm
22. Wednesday 6.00pm
23. Tuesdays at 7pm
24. Wednesday 5.45pm
25. Thursday
26. Tuesday 19.30
27. Tuesdays at 7.30pm
28. Monday at 2.30 pm
29. Thursdays at 10.00am
30. Tuesday at 6.15pm
31. Thursdays - 6.15pm
32. Wednesday 10 am
33. Tuesday at 10.30am
34. Wednesday 7.00pm
35. Wednesday at 6:30 pm.
36. Tuesday at 7pm

37. Thursday at 6.30pm
38. Tuesday at 6.45pm
39. Mondays at 7pm
40. Tuesday 6pm
41. Monday 2.00pm
42. Wednesdays at 6 pm - meetings are held 8 times per year
43. Monday at 6.30pm
44. Monday at 7:15pm
45. Thursday at 4.30pm
46. Wednesday or Thursday - 4.00 pm
47. Monday 6.30pm
48. Wednesday 7.30
49. Generally Tuesdays at 7.00 p.m.
50. Tuesday at 6.30pm - in line with start time of other meetings
51. Wednesday 6.30 pm
52. Friday at 10.30 am
53. Tuesdays at 10.30
54. Thursday, 2.15pm
55. Usually Tuesdays at 7pm
56. Wednesdays at 4pm
57. Thursday at 7.00 p.m. (scheduled meetings)
58. Tuesdays at 6.00 pm
59. Wednesday at 6pm
60. Wednesday 7.30pm
61. Thursday at 2pm on a 6 weekly cycle
62. Thursday, 7.00 p.m.
63. Tuesday 5.30pm
64. Normally Tuesday commencing at 7.30pm
65. Tuesdays at 7.30 p.m.
66. Tuesday, every six weeks, at 10:30am
67. Monday at 6.30pm
68. Monday at 6.30 p.m.
69. Wednesday at 7pm
70. Thursdays at 2.00pm
71. Wednesday at 7pm
72. Wednesday at 6pm
73. The last Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm
74. Wednesday at 6.30 p.m.
75. Tuesday or Thursday, 7.30pm
76. Tuesday 7pm
77. Tuesday 6.00pm

78. Monday 2.00pm
79. Wednesdays
80. Monday at 10.00 am
81. Wednesday at 2pm
82. Tuesday 10.30am
83. Thursday 6.30 p.m.
84. Wednesday at 6pm
85. Wednesday 7.30pm
86. Thursday 6.45pm
87. Thursdays at 7.00 p.m.
88. 2pm on the 3rd Thursday
89. Monday at 2.00pm
90. Tuesday at 6pm with the exception of the budget meeting which starts at 4.30pm
91. Tuesday at 7.00 pm
92. Thursday at 6.00pm
93. Thursday 7.00pm
94. Wednesday at 6.00pm
95. Thursdays - 7.30 pm
96. Wednesday at 7.00pm
97. Thursdays at 6.30pm
98. Tuesday at 7.00 pm
99. Wednesday at 2.30pm
100. Thursday - every six weeks
101. Wednesday at 2.30 pm
102. Normally Wednesday - 7:00pm
103. Thursday at 10.00am
104. Wednesday 10.30am
105. Thursday - 6.30pm
106. Wednesday at 2 pm
107. Wednesday 6.00pm
108. Monday 7.30pm
109. Wednesday 6.45pm
110. Monday 6.30 p.m.
111. 6 weekly on a Monday at 6.30pm
112. Monday at 6 pm
113. Tuesday at 6.30pm
114. Wednesday 6.00pm
115. Wednesday at 2.00pm
116. Monday at 2pm
117. Thursdays at 2.00pm
118. Wednesday at 6.30pm
119. Monday 6.30 pm

120. Thursday at 7.30pm
121. Thursday 10.00am
122. Thursday at 10.30am
123. Thursday 2.15pm
124. Monday 6.30pm
125. Wednesdays at 5.00pm
126. Wednesday 6.30pm
127. Tuesday at 7pm
128. Wednesday at 7 pm
129. Thursday 11am
130. Tuesday 4pm
131. Thursday 6.30pm
132. Tuesdays at 10am
133. Wednesday at 6.30pm
134. Thursday's commencing at 7.30 p.m.
135. Monday at 6pm
136. Thursday at 7.30pm
137. Monday at 4.00pm or 5.00pm
138. Wednesday - 6.00pm
139. Wednesday at 1.30pm
140. Monday at 7.00pm (with reference to Q3, we actually meet 10 times PA)
141. Thursday 2pm
142. Friday 10.30 am
143. Tuesday at 7.30pm
144. Monday evening at 7pm
145. Monday, 7.00pm. (Accurate answer to Q3 above is 10 times per annum.
146. Tuesday 4.00pm
147. Tuesday or Wednesday at 7pm
148. Tuesdays at 6.00 pm
149. Wednesday 7.00pm
150. Thursdays at 7pm
151. Thursdays 7.30pm
152. Thursday
153. Tuesdays at 7.00 pm (cannot complete q3 as we have 8 council meetings per year)
154. Wednesday - 10.00 am
155. Monday
156. Thursday normally at 2.30pm
157. Wednesday 2.30pm
158. Wednesday, alternating between 2 pm start and 7pm start

159. Tuesday 6pm
160. Monday at 10.00am
161. Thursday at 7.15pm
162. Tuesday 6:45pm
163. Wednesdays at 6.30pm
164. Monday 7.30pm
165. Wednesday at 7.30pm
166. Thursday
167. Tuesday at 4.30pm
168. Tuesday at 9.30am
169. Wednesday 7.30pm
170. Wednesday at 6.30pm apart from Annual Council which meets on a Friday at 6.30pm
171. Thursday 7.30pm
172. Wednesday 5pm
173. Thursday 7:00 p.m. (Annual Council 2:30 p.m.)
174. Wednesday at 6pm
175. Thursday 10.00am
176. Usually Thursday 7.30 pm
177. Tuesday's - currently at 4.00pm
178. Thursday
179. Monday at 6.00 pm
180. Thursday 6:00pm
181. Any day Monday to Thursday, commencing at 7pm.
182. Monday at 7pm (except Statutory Council which is Wednesday at 7pm)
183. Thursdays at 7pm
184. Thursday at 6.00pm
185. Tuesday 7.30 pm
186. Thursday 7 pm
187. Thursday at 7.00pm
188. Wednesday 6pm (Annual Meeting: Mayor-making at 2pm)
189. Normally Thursday (occasionally Tuesday) at 6.30 pm
190. Thursdays in the evening
191. Wednesday 6 pm
192. Wednesday 6pm
193. Wednesday 7pm
194. Saturday
195. Currently Friday 10 am
196. Monday 7pm
197. Thursdays at 4pm

# Council Meeting Survey

Results to Q5a – (Are there any restrictions on who can propose motions and when they can be proposed?) If yes, please specify.

1. Councillors only
2. Notice has to be given by noon on the seventh working day before the meeting
3. Notices of Motion for the Agenda (unless urgent) need receipt 14 days prior
4. See our Council Procedure rules on the interactive Constitution on our web site
5. See our Constitution published on web site
6. A Councillor can submit a motion 10 days before the date of a meeting
7. Must be delivered to Legal and Property Services at least 10 clear days before the meeting so can be put on the agenda.
8. Motions on Notice have to be submitted in writing 7 clear working days in advance of the meeting, in accordance with the Council's Constitution
9. Motions must be submitted in writing to the Proper Officer by 2 pm on the tenth working day before the meeting.
10. Motions must be about matters for which the Council has responsibility or which affects the District
11. Motions with financial implications cannot be moved except at the budget meeting when notice must be given. We have a proposal to disallow NOM at the annual meeting.
12. Motions have to be with us by noon on the Tuesday before Council
13. 10 days' notice must be given. Motions to amend decisions or a motion similar to one rejected cannot be moved unless 1/3 of the Council signs.
14. Motions must be received 7 clear working days before a Council meeting
15. Notice of motions and amendments is required
16. Motion have to be submitted more than 7 days before the meeting and must meet certain criteria
17. 5 working days notice for motions on notice
18. Any member can submit before a specified deadline
19. All Councillors can give notice of motion but should give notice by 5pm of the Thursday prior to the meeting
20. Must be proposed by Noon on the 9th day before the meeting (the Monday of the preceding week normally)
21. 14 days notice required for written questions and motions. Motions must relate to the Council or County in some way.
22. One motion per political group
23. Formal notices of motion have to be notified in advance. General debate motions need no advance notice
24. Must be submitted 7 clear days before the meeting

25. Motions can only be proposed by Councillors and have to be submitted at least 10 clear days before a Council meeting.
26. Notices of Motion to go on the agenda must be notified at least 5 days in advance of meetings. Any Councillor can propose a motion either in advance or on the night in relation to items on the agenda.
27. Motions must refer to issues relevant to the Council's powers and responsibilities
28. Constitution stipulates that motions are received 9 days in advance of the meeting.
29. There is only specific provision made for the leaders of the 3 main parties to submit motions for debate.
30. There is a deadline of 10am on the 8th working day before the Council meeting for Notices of Motions to be submitted, although motions can be made at the actual meeting should the need arise.
31. Motions have to be proposed and seconded and submitted 10 working days in advance of the meeting.
32. Must be submitted seven clear days prior to the meeting
33. Proposal of Motions is restricted to Councillors within certain time/printing deadlines
34. Any member can put forward motions - within timescales permitted by Constitution
35. Motions on notice need to be signed by at least 5 members and delivered to our Chief Executive not later than 10 clear days before the date of the meeting. These are then included on the agenda and are also entered into a book open to public inspection. Motions without notice are accepted but are limited to procedural issues such as appointing a chairman for the meeting, changing the order of business on the agenda, adjourning a meeting or amending a motion - that sort of thing.
36. Must be registered seven clear days before the meeting.
37. There are deadlines for submissions of motions, though not amendments
38. Subject to the rules of the constitution usually time related
39. Must be proposed immediately after the substantive motion and a vote is taken on alternative motion prior to the substantive motion.
40. Any Member of Council may submit Notice of Motion if seconded by another Member; deadline for submission applies - 6 working days before the date of the Council meeting.
41. Motions with notice must be signed by 2 members. Motions without notice only as per limited list in Procedure Rules.
42. Motions to be submitted 7 working days before meeting (other than procedural motions). Motions must be about matters for which the council has responsibility or which affect the borough
43. Within a timetable; signed by Group Leader or Group Secretary; or signed by two members
44. Motions can only be submitted by Councillors, noon seven days before the meeting. In addition, Councillors may submit Questions noon two days before the meeting.



45. Please see attached link:  
[http://idocs.blaby.gov.uk/external/admin/constitution/part\\_4\\_section\\_1.pdf](http://idocs.blaby.gov.uk/external/admin/constitution/part_4_section_1.pdf)
46. Except for motions which can be moved without notice, written notice of every motion signed by at least the mover and seconder of the proposed motion, must be delivered not later than seven days before the date of the meeting.
47. Motions can be submitted by any Member but they must be submitted 7 clear days before the meeting.
48. Only one per person per meeting and must be relevant to a matter on which the Council has powers or duties or which affects the County. Cannot rescind or amend any resolution which has been passed in previous six months or be the same as a motion rejected with previous six months.
49. Except for a number of specific motions they must be set down in writing 10 days in advance of the meeting.
50. Needs a proposer and seconder. When on notice must be 7 working days prior - emergency motions at Mayor's discretion.
51. Deadline for submission of notices of motion is 5 clear working days before the meeting
52. Limitations on the number per party and only one per councillor, and must be submitted the day before the agenda dispatch (although there is a facility for motions without notice)
53. Motions on Notice need the authority of at least 2 Members and must be delivered at least 5 working days in advance.
54. See Council Procedure rules in our interactive Constitution on the Council's web site
55. Motions on notice need to be notified not later than 7 working days before the meeting. Otherwise - standard procedural rules regarding motions
56. Written notice to be submitted to Solicitor to Council not later than 10.00am on the Monday in the week preceding Council.
57. Normal rules of procedure apply i.e. motions which can be moved without notice and motions which require notice - 14 clear days notice required. Please note, we will become a unitary authority on 1 April 09 and constitution is currently being reviewed which may involve notice periods for questions and motions. Re questions 6 below, State of Wiltshire debate meetings - one specific meeting per year (march) to inform the update to the corporate plan and budget preparations.
58. Notice required of at least seven clear working days before the meeting and signed. The motion will then be set out in the summons for the Council meeting.
59. Any member may give notice; 5 clear working days written notice is required
60. Must be in writing no later than 6 days prior to meeting & no more than 3 motions per member for each meeting.
61. Details in our constitution. There is insufficient room here to give details
62. Nature of the question and deadlines for submission

63. Motions which do not relate to Cabinet recommendations must be received at least seven clear days before the Council meeting for inclusion on the Agenda.
64. Motions need to be submitted 6 clear days before the meeting and must be about matters that affect the Borough
65. Motions have to be submitted in writing by 12.00 noon on the Friday before the meeting
66. Deadline of 7 clear days prior to meeting
67. Motions on Notice must be received not later than 15 clear days before the date of the meeting. Certain other motions may be moved without notice.
68. Motions on Notice are subject to the Council Procedure Rules
69. Motions must be on notice submitted 7 days before meeting (other than specified in the Constitution)
70. See p142 of NYCC Constitution on website:  
[www.northyorks.gov.uk](http://www.northyorks.gov.uk)
71. Must be submitted within agreed period of notice, i.e. 10 days before and motions must be in respect of a council responsibility or an affect on its area
72. Set period for notice of motions; other fairly standard restrictions as per constitution.
73. Signed written motion delivered to Chief Exec at least 7 days pre meeting
74. Motions on Notice have to be submitted by close of business 7 working days before the day of the meeting
75. 5 signatures from members and submitted by 12 noon, 5 clear days before the meeting.
76. Deadline for submission
77. Motions need to be submitted by Councillors 15 days before the council meeting if they have a financial effect and nine days otherwise.
78. Motions must be delivered to the Committee Services Team by not later than 7 working days before the date of the meeting. The CX may reject a motion if it is not a matter which the Local Authority has a responsibility or which affects the District, is defamatory, frivolous or offensive, same as a previous motion put to Council within the previous 6 months, requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.
79. Need to be signed by Mover and Seconder and received 5 clear days before the meeting
80. If you mean "when" then formal motions are received 8 days before the meeting. If on the day, then amendments to motions can be moved from the floor.
81. Motions on notice must be received 14 days before the Meeting
82. Motions must be from a Councillor and submitted 9 days before meeting
83. Any member may submit a motion providing the CX receives it in writing at least 7 clear days before the meeting.
84. To be submitted one week in advance of the Council meeting with limited exceptions that can be moved at the meeting itself

85. Motions must be submitted at least 10 working days before the meeting
86. No restrictions on who can propose but they must be seconded and submitted within 7 working days of the meeting
87. 7 working days prior to the meeting
88. Motions must be delivered to the Proper Officer not later than eight working days before the date of the meeting.
89. Must be received five working days before the meeting
90. Notice to be given
91. Motions on notice: any councillor can submit motions, submit in writing, signed by mover and seconder, by 9am 5 clear working days before council, one motion per group. Also may have motions without notice to deal with procedural matters such as re-ordering business on the agenda.
92. There are no restrictions on who but deadlines as to when
93. Only a deadline for submitting motions
94. Motions are submitted 2 weeks before the Council meeting unless of a specified procedural nature
95. Other than on accuracy of minutes and other procedural items, notice required by the Wednesday of the week before the Council meeting.
96. Only councillors. Motions are needed 8 working days before Council
97. Motions in the name of individual members usually need to be notified 8 days in advance of the meeting. Council Procedure Rules also limit the number of individual motions (termed as "White Papers") which can be debated at any meeting and also allow for the submission of motions, over and above that number, which shall be put to the vote without debate. For more detail Council Procedure Rules can be accessed as part of the Constitution on the Council's website.
98. Motions proposed and seconded by Members and delivered to the proper officer at least 9 clear working days before the meeting of Council.
99. Deadline for submission is 6 working days before meeting.
100. There is a deadline for notices of motion of noon on the Tuesday of two weeks before the Council meeting. Motions can be accepted with less notice if the Chairman decides the matter is urgent
101. Motions need to be received in writing or by electronic mail not later than 10.00am six clear working days before the date of the meeting
102. Written notice signed by at least one member to be delivered to the Chief executive no later than 5pm 7 clear working days before the day of the meeting.
103. Motions to be proposed and seconded by Members and to be received by the Proper Officer at least 9 clear working days prior to the Council meeting.
104. Motions must be submitted seven working days before meeting, amendments up to 6 hours before meeting
105. Only 1 Motion per Member - notice to be given in writing or electronically 7 working days before the meeting

106. Minimum notice period of 5 working days and must relate to the Borough or issues that the council has powers over
107. Notice of motions for debate must be submitted 7 working days before meeting and signed by at least one member
108. Elected members only by 5pm on the Monday of the week before the meeting
109. Timescale and content
110. Motions can be proposed by anyone but must be received the Thursday lunchtime before the meeting
111. There is a deadline by which motions have to be submitted by members.
112. Deadline for submission/can not repeat a subject or issue covered in last 6 months
113. Motions, except in exceptional circumstances, must be received not later than seven working days before the date of the Council meeting
114. By Elected Members only. Except for motions which can be moved without notice, written notice of a motion to be detailed on the Council Summons must be signed by the mover/seconded and delivered to the Managing Director not later than mid-day of the 7th working day before the date of the meeting. The motion can be rejected if its not a matter which the local authority has a responsibility or is defamatory, frivolous or offensive, or is the same motion put to Council in the last 6 months or requires disclosure of confidential/exempt information.
115. Barring certain procedural motions (such as appointing a chairperson, changing the order of the agenda etc), written notice of every motion, signed by members proposing it, must be delivered to the Executive Director or Head of Legal and Democratic Services at least eight days before the meeting
116. In accordance with our constitution, several specific motions can be moved without notice, but those not set out as able to be passed without notice must be passed to the relevant officer at least 5 clear working days before the meeting. The motion is then entered in a book open to public inspection.
117. No member may sponsor more than one motion for main or general debate.
118. Council Procedure rules specify motions which can be moved without notice but other motions have to be received no later than 7 days before the meeting for inclusion on the Council summons
119. Motions on notice (at least 6 working days before the meeting) can be proposed by any member. Motions without notice may also be moved in relation to certain elements of business and in response to reports on the agenda, again by any member.
120. One per political group per meeting
121. Motions must be received seven working days before date of meeting unless urgent circumstances
122. Motions must be signed by at least one member and delivered 6 working days in advance of the meeting.

123. Apart from the standard motions which may be moved without notice (e.g. amendments, procedural motions, accuracy of minutes etc), motions may only be made by Members and should be given in writing, signed by the mover and seconder, and submitted to the Chief Executive (usually via Committee Services) at least 7 clear working days prior to the meeting in order that it can be set out in the Summons. If the subject comes within the remit of any Panel, Board or Committee, it stands referred to that body without discussion unless the Mayor considers it conducive and convenient to the despatch of business to allow it to be dealt with at the Council meeting. Every motion should be relevant to some matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties or which affects the Borough.
124. Specific agenda item and must not conflict with responsibilities of Cabinet
125. Every notice in writing & proposed/seconded. Eight working days notice of Motion.
126. Any member can propose but normally must serve notice by eighth working day before meeting (to ensure compliance with Access to Info legislation)
127. 7 working days notice has to be given of a motion if this relates to a new proposal
128. Constitution - time limits and must be relevant to borough council responsibilities.
129. Written notice of a motion, signed by at least two Elected Members, must be delivered to the Chief Executive no later than noon 7 clear working days before the date of the meeting.
130. There is a deadline for motions of 10am 6 working days before the meeting
131. It must be on matters for the Council has a responsibility or which affect the District. It must not have been submitted in the previous six months.
132. A Motion given on Notice must be given in writing to the Director of Corporate Services at least seven clear working days (that is not counting the day of the meeting or the day of delivery) before the relevant meeting, and be signed by the Members giving notice. Certain Motions may be moved without notice, and details may be found in Darlington Borough Council's Constitution at [http://www.darlington.gov.uk/dar\\_public/documents/Corporate%20Services/Democratic/Constitution/Part%203.1%20-%20Council%20Procedure%20Rules.pdf](http://www.darlington.gov.uk/dar_public/documents/Corporate%20Services/Democratic/Constitution/Part%203.1%20-%20Council%20Procedure%20Rules.pdf)
133. Must be received by 10 am 6 clear working days before meeting - for other restrictions see App 1 of Councils constitution on [www.norwich.gov.uk](http://www.norwich.gov.uk)
134. Each Member is restricted to moving and seconding one written notice of motion.
135. Motions need to be delivered to the Chief Executive not later than seven clear days before the meeting and must relate to matters which the Council has a responsibility or which affect the Borough

136. Members or Council in accordance with Standing Orders 15 (Inclusion on the Summons) and 16 (Motions and Amendments which may be moved without Notice)
137. 2 types of Motions - without notice and with notice (latter required in writing, signed by at least 1 member and received no later than 10 days before the meeting)
138. There is a time limit for notice of motions. 9 days before the council meeting. No restrictions on who can propose.
139. Time limit for submission
140. Any Councillor can raise a Notice of Motion, but it has to be received by 5pm on the Monday prior to the agenda being distributed on the Tuesday (5 days before the meeting)
141. Copy of Council Procedure Rules attached
142. Written notice of every motion must be delivered to the Chief Executive not later than 10 clear working days before the date of the meeting
143. Written motions must be submitted by midday on the day before agenda publication
144. Motions that require notice must be delivered to the Chief Executive by not later than 5pm at least 7 clear days before the date of the meeting. These will then be included in the agenda. There are 20 motions that can be moved without notice which are included in the constitution.

# Council Meeting Survey

Results to Q7a – (Which of the choices below best describes the style of minute taking used for your full council meetings at present?) Other: please specify.

1. General Summary, any motions moved, recorded vote if required, decisions
2. Verbatim on questions and statements, outline discussion on other items
3. Debates are summarised; for most other items the decision is recorded; questions and answers are reproduced verbatim.
4. Formal questions and answers are included verbatim. Committee debates are minuted very formally - recommendation moved, amendment moved - result of the vote at the end of the debate.
5. Primarily decisions only.
6. Not exactly verbatim, but as much detail as possible including all questions and any supplementary questions and answers.
7. Formal record of decision and issues discussed/raised. Does not include summary of debate/responses.
8. Very limited content
9. For question time, record the supplementary questions and responses. Rest of the meeting, record procedure and decisions only.
10. Please visit following website address to view example of minutes: [http://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/main/Minutes\\_Agendas/Full\\_Council.asp](http://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/main/Minutes_Agendas/Full_Council.asp)
11. Full sound recording published on website and very concise minutes produced recording decisions.
12. Just decisions and any recorded votes
13. Very basic, decisions only
14. Moved, seconder and decision with exceptions in respect of motions and questions submitted by Councillors
15. Motion, Amendment (if any) and Decision
16. Recommendations/summary from report and decision agreed.
17. The item topic/heading and the decision - plus any named votes/ amendments made to resolution.
18. Decisions but no record of questions
19. There are formal minutes of Council in the very traditional style which do nothing more than to list that which was put, the formal decisions and details of votes where requisitioned. In addition there is a verbatim report of the meeting.
20. Simple record of the issue before council and the decision.
21. While the minutes note questions, answers and decisions of the Full Council, they also note any areas of concern as expressed by Members, and any other information that may be relevant to both the discussion and the decision.
22. Mayor's announcements quoted at length; no debate recorded, just decisions

23. Brief summary of the item, any amendments moved and outcome, and decision.
24. Précis of agenda item plus resolution
25. Short intro & then council decision. No appendices.
26. Some items minutes in detail, others not!
27. Minutes contain an overview of the submitted report, general notes on debate and resolution
28. Shorter - some highlighting of debate topics - mainly decisions



# Council Meeting Survey

Results to Q11 – Are there any innovative features you have introduced that you feel improved your council meetings? If so, please give details below.

1. We are looking at webcasting, we project the agenda and reports at the meeting to encourage greater use of technology and Members laptops
2. The introduction of a 15 Minutes Public Speaking period has proved most successful. Members of the Public receive written replies to any questions they pose, as each Members of the Public who registers to speak can speak for three minutes only.
3. Cabinet and outside body reports to Council have been introduced and work well.
4. Holding a Council meeting in a large venue to debate major proposals for Gravesend Town Centre
5. Several that have been tried but none as yet which have been embedded - see <http://www.hants.gov.uk/decisions/decisions-index/index-mtg-271.html>
6. Opposition debate - alternate meetings the opposition can choose a topic for debate - as the members have got used to this it has developed into a useful forum for debate about topics that the opposition feel are a priority for the Council
7. Hot topic for debate has been introduced at each Council meeting.
8. PowerPoint slides showing written questions and motions
9. No
10. Sound recordings of Council meetings are available on the web site. A digital projector is used for presentations at Council meetings.
11. We hope to introduce webcasting in due course. The move is towards debating more major issues, policies etc rather than concentrating on decisions made by committees. Members if the public are able to attend to speak on issues for up to three minutes. They can also speak on petitions that are presented to the Council.
12. More staff from Democratic and Member Services in attendance. Ask for amendments to motions to be written down. Ask for apologies and declarations in advance of the meeting. Planning meetings in advance of Council. Training the Mayor in chairing Council meetings - can be a volatile.
13. No
14. The introduction of web casting in the autumn of 2008 has helped.
15. Use of microphones at meetings and computers for Members to use at meetings
16. Still trying to think of some!
17. Although I have said on a previous question that we hold green paper policy discussions, in actual fact this is an annual policy council meeting held in November to debate and decide the Council's corporate plan priorities for the forthcoming year. This then feeds into the budget process. This is relatively new but has

- worked well this year and certainly gives all members a better understanding and more involvement in strategic decision-making rather than this just being the remit of Executive Members.
18. We have been using the opportunity of having all of our Councillors together to give short presentations on key issues - these have included an up-date on 'systems thinking' and 'serving all our customers'. These last for about 20 minutes and are programmed at the end of the meeting. No formal decisions are made as a result of these presentations, which are for information only.
  19. Not innovative, but we are currently looking to allocate time for public speaking.
  20. Morning briefings on service developments/topics. Have also invited external bodies/partners to address the Council (either before or during meetings)
  21. We moved to Leader and Cabinet under the 2007 Act
  22. N/a
  23. Minutes of Cabinet, Committees etc are moved meeting by meeting with questions permitted only when the relevant minutes have been moved and seconded. This has been an improvement on a previous procedure of moving all minutes en bloc, and a further procedure of moving minutes individually. The introduction of Annual Portfolio Holder reports has been successful and informative. Questions on minutes of the Police and Fire Authorities are submitted in writing for response at meetings of Council. Public question time has had mixed levels of success; lack of community engagement with Council meetings remains a concern.
  24. The more regular introduction of either a themed debate or presentation from a Partner organisation to stimulate questions, answers and debate.
  25. Recently simplified debating protocols (less formal) and also abolished wearing of councillors' robes.
  26. State of the District debates are planned but have not yet been held.
  27. See above - Question Time and Themed Meetings
  28. No
  29. The Leader reports on the work of the cabinet over the previous period (which is when there is an opportunity to question the Leader/Portfolio Holders).
  30. Taking Council meetings "on the road" to encourage wider public participation
  31. We are looking at webcasting, we project the agenda and reports onto fixed screens in the Council Chamber to encourage more use of technology and more use by Members of their laptops
  32. In your earlier questions, you make reference to leader question time and Portfolio holders - we don't have a specific item on either as such. We do have a standard item 'Cabinet Business' which states - The Leader and/or Cabinet members to update council on any specific activities within their respective portfolios including: reporting on progress since the last county council meeting and

highlighting any particular significant forthcoming issues. We attach the latest version of the CFWP which for us covers all member bodies not just Cabinet which is attached for information and acts as a lever for cabinet members to refer to more significant past or more importantly forthcoming items. This also acts as a kind of announcement from the Leader and cabinet members. It's not intended for questions from the floor. These come under members' questions where formal notice is required or questions from minutes.

33. Introduction of Question/Answer session which has enabled Members to raise community issues. Also the ability for Members to make Ward presentations.
34. Council can meet in 'Committee' mode which allows more freedom for debate, officers to give advice etc
35. Questions by public and members of the Council proposed to be expanded to Cabinet meetings
36. No
37. Managing the agenda business to fit into four meetings a year is challenging. The O&S review in 2006 introduced a number of changes to operating procedures. They included streamlining the constitutional requirement for the number of plans and strategies which the Full Council as distinct from the Cabinet is required to consider. Questions and answers from councillors and the public are written and circulated at the meeting and there are no supplementaries permitted. Public statements and petitions are dealt with early in the meeting or immediately before the item they relate to and there is a 3-minute limit for each speaker. Petitions presented by councillors and any general statements from them about matters not on the agenda are dealt with at the end of the meeting.
38. Ward issues raised by councillors, councillor and public question times and petitions have proved to be popular slots on the agenda.
39. Topical presentations by the Council's partners and other organisations
40. Presentation of petitions by the public
41. Meetings of the full Council are combined with seminars on topical subjects
42. Full sound recording published on website. Area Committees always take place in the relevant community and venues are rotated throughout the year. Evening meetings are avoided for remote rural areas during winter months. Area Committee chairs tend to be very relaxed re public questions, inviting them even though notice has not been given.
43. Public can ask questions on any item on agenda without notice, or address the council on any other issue with notice. Electronic voting.
44. Presentations from Partner organisations.
45. Paperless, electronic meetings. Agenda and recommendations displayed on 3 large screens in Council Chamber during meeting.

46. Introduced Leaders Report and Leaders Question Time at each meeting together with Cabinet Member reports and question time. Each Cabinet Member is allocated 15 Minutes to present and answer any questions and brief comments on the report.
47. Evening Meetings have assisted members of the public and public questions
48. We are awaiting the installation of webcasting equipment in the next couple of months, following this all meetings will be webcast
49. No
50. Public Questions introduced 18 months ago has enabled more participation
51. None
52. Electronic voting and traffic lights for speaking web casting due
53. NB: q10 does not allow for our answer, which is that we record/film our meetings but do not broadcast them live
54. Debating petitions
55. No
56. The Youth Council are able to report into the Council Meeting on issues from their Council Meetings. The State of the District Debate involves the Local Strategic Partnership members
57. Following an extensive review some 2/3 years ago the only change of note was the introduction of more restrictive timing rules to secure earlier end of meeting times.
58. Nothing particularly springs to mind!
59. Ability to show agenda on two big screens in chamber.
60. We have recently introduced debates on major pieces of work undertaken by Select Committees
61. Nothing that comes to mind.
62. No
63. None
64. Presentation of Petitions (without debate) inviting Petitioners to speak on item for up to 5 minutes
65. Electronic voting including new speaker system.
66. PS We used to webcast Council meetings up until May 2008. Scrutiny reviews are undertaken by Review Commissions, reported to The Scrutiny Management Board and then straight to Council rather than Cabinet
67. Annual scrutiny committee reports
68. Not to the meeting itself, but we do carry out a training programme for Members relating to the rules of debate - this incorporates a role-play session. New Members in particular have found this useful - it helps to build confidence so Members feel able to contribute to the debate.
69. Leader's Question Time includes an update report of all business since last meeting
70. Annual Portfolio Holder Reports - Each Portfolio Holder produces a report around May - normally 2/3 pages setting out key achievements/issues to be addressed in the coming year - Members of the Council can then question the Portfolio Holders - this has worked well and introduced a further level of scrutiny.

71. Electronic timer for speeches
72. If mover/seconded agrees to accept amendments these can become part of a substantive motion without debate
73. None
74. Web cast of scrutiny meetings
75. The Executive question time. Each Cabinet Member submits a report on the progress of their portfolio since the last meeting. At the meeting every Councillor has the opportunity to ask a question or make a statement on any area of their portfolio. The Cabinet member then answers the questions, but when this is not possible a written response is circulated to Members
76. Questions are impromptu - they are not notified in advance
77. Council Assembly Meetings - see procedure rules
78. Minutes are taken via a laptop

# Council Meeting Survey

Results to Q13 – If you have done or are doing a review in any of these areas, please give details below.

1. Constitution recently updated, remit and make-up of Scrutiny Panels changed and Area-based working currently under investigation.
2. New Constitution introduced March 2008 to coincide with move from alternate arrangements to Executive and introduction of Area Forums.
3. Trying to "refresh" scrutiny and make full council meetings more meaningful/worthwhile.
4. No and terms of reference of Scrutiny Committees under review. Local Area Forums recently introduced.
5. New interactive Constitution referred to earlier, revised scrutiny arrangements following peer review led by IDeA, Community Partnerships developing all the while following introduction a year ago.
6. The Constitution is reviewed annually by Cabinet, with recommendations about changes being submitted to full Council for debate. In reality however, any amendments are discussed by political group leaders prior to discussion at both Cabinet and Council, and a general acceptance of changes sought prior to formal debate. As far as scrutiny and overview is concerned, we will be undertaking a workshop for all Members in March on developing meaningful work programmes for Scrutiny Committees.
7. Constitution always under review. The Council's Solicitor is currently examining more innovative ways of utilising Council Meetings e.g. inviting public speakers. He hopes to make the meetings more informative in general, and less Committee structured. We currently have Area Advisory Groups which meet the Parishes regularly, but we do not have area based working. These informal meetings are most beneficial and have been commended during our very successful CAA. We are only one of a very few Councils to be regarded from weak to good.
8. Currently reviewing constitution in the light of new executive arrangements.
9. We review the Constitution every year.
10. We have recently abolished formal area committees and established ward based neighbourhood forums with freedom for ward members to decide how frequently they wish to meet and what they want to discuss. They each have been given a small budget that they control. We annually review our constitution through a member working party this is how area committees got abolished.
11. Recently undertake a review of the Council's decision-making processes, mostly relating to Cabinet/Scrutiny relationship, procedure for handling petitions, debate at Cabinet, etc.

12. We carried out a major review of the Constitution in 2006 and a review of scrutiny in October 2008.
13. Review of Scrutiny taking place; also annual review of Constitution.
14. Removing the reporting up of Cabinet and Committee Minutes and many references to from the Council agenda has freed time for more meaningful debate.
15. I do an annual review of the Constitution. This deals with a) changes resulting from experience during the year b) legislative change such as the 2007 Act c) review of authorisation levels for contracts etc. A review of Scrutiny was done two years ago, member led.
16. We review and update the Constitution annually and conducted a review of Area Governance two years ago.
17. We are currently undergoing a Decision-Making review, which will be reported back to Council in March.
18. Continual review of Constitution content and the effectiveness of Overview and Scrutiny.
19. We undertake an annual review of the Constitution. In addition we have undertaken specific reviews of scrutiny and area committees.
20. We have introduced 3 Neighbourhood Area Forums on a pilot basis for 1year in partnership with Kent County Council. We have also set up two Working Groups (Member led) to look at the Overview Scrutiny function and the future format of Council meetings.
21. All done at least annually.
22. Constitution/area committees - part of annual review of the constitution.
23. Have a continuous scrutiny improvement initiative in operation. Council decided to scrap Area committees in 2003 following a review.
24. The County Council is always looking to improve its scrutiny and area based working arrangements and is implementing its review of scrutiny whilst its review of area working is still a work in progress. Share D'all leads on area working and Denise Holden leads on scrutiny if you wish to make direct contact.
25. O&S committee has a review of how it is working and what it is doing plus any training needs at least annually. Constitution needs revision to reflect changes in approach to our meetings (we still use a minute book to report to the Council and are working to change this!) We reviewed the way Council works a couple of years ago starting with an event facilitated by a SOLACE consultant - a scrutiny team then worked on suggestions for change - this is where the opposition debate came from.
26. Annual review of Constitution.
27. Under constant review.
28. All elements of the Council's democratic arrangements are reviewed every 4 years. Separate reviews of individual aspects (e.g. scrutiny) are also undertaken as required.
29. The Constitution is reviewed annually. The role of Full Council has been reviewed to include a "hot topic" at each meeting. Scrutiny arrangements have been reviewed to include Task and Finish

Groups for specific items and also Response Groups to consider consultation documents (this has been classed as good practice by the Centre for Public Scrutiny). A review is being undertaken on neighbourhood management.

30. Reviewing Area arrangements to improve community engagement and appointing Head of Scrutiny and reviewing scrutiny to shift focus from service review to scrutiny of Executive and policy.
31. We undertake an annual review of the constitution via a member working party.
32. The constitution is reviewed annually in February. Area Committees were reviewed under 2 years ago. Four area committees were changed into 6 local committees and representatives from local community groups invited to take an active part in the meetings.
33. We have undertaken a review of Standing Orders to remove some of the restrictions on debate. We have also undertaken a review of Scrutiny Committees to improve their operation and provide more opportunity for consideration of policy issues.
34. A review of the business which is presented to Council meetings has been made and, in future, only the minutes of Executive meetings will be submitted. Committee minutes, other than recommendations, will not be submitted. A question time for portfolio holders is also to be introduced. A new structure for overview and scrutiny committees has been introduced together with a procedure for undertaking scrutiny projects.
35. A major review of the Constitution was carried out 18 months ago. Will be undertaking a lighter touch review over the forthcoming months. Did a short review of what other Authorities did re Council but concluded that no further action was needed.
36. The new constitution was reviewed following its first year of operation and since then updates are reported to Council in May and November. Members have asked that a review of the operation of Full Council is carried out in order to reduce the number of meetings (currently 8 which includes 2 in May) and the items put to it some of which are felt to have turned out to be a bit pointless.
37. We revised our constitution to enable the adoption of the Leader & Cabinet model from May 2008, and will be undertaking a 6 and 12-month review.
38. Introduced a number of changes in dealing with Portfolio reviews to make it more effective. No major changes to the Constitution but still considering recommendations on change to call-in arrangements and criteria for the election of the Mayor.
39. Copies of new Constitution and report on Scrutiny can be made available if required.
40. Constitution - most authorities' constitutions are based on the model - we would like to review the Council procedure rules, in particular which are difficult to follow. Scrutiny - an improvement plan was formulated some time ago; whilst achieved, it is regularly monitored - I will send you the latest version.



41. In the last year we have reviewed the scrutiny function to a very simple one - an overarching O & S Committee and task groups set up to undertake reviews as and when (we usually have at least 3 on the go at any one time). Council meetings have changed format and been streamlined in that there is less reporting of decisions of other Committees - more of a summary of the work of the Executive and O & S - also the introduction of a Policy Council as mentioned above. The constitution has undergone a number of changes over the last 2 years - but isn't complete as yet. We have reviewed Council procedure rules to account for changes, had a review of Committees to reduce the number of meetings and updated/reviewed financial/contract procedures rules and Executive delegations. We still need to look at officer delegations. We are moving to neighbourhood working and in doing so have got rid of our Community Forums. This is as a result of a scrutiny review and recommendations adopted by the Executive.
42. We up-date the constitution each year and the amendments are referred to the annual meeting. We have been looking to improve the scrutiny function and are considering various means of doing this - pre meetings, question preparation, the possibility of a dedicated scrutiny officer, agenda control to make sure that it has meaty issues and time to discuss.
43. Currently carrying out a full review of the constitution with the assistance of Inlogov. It is proposed that a new constitution is put before full council at the annual meeting in May.
44. See also submission to Boundary Committee.
45. All considered during the consultation on moving to Leader with Cabinet.
46. General update undertaken.
47. Constitution is subject to annual review, together with Standing Orders governing Council meetings.
48. Council - in addition to steps mentioned above are about to move Council meeting from first floor Council Chamber to fully accessible meeting venue on ground floor. Scrutiny - seek suggestions from the wider public for issues for scrutiny review (mainly via website).
49. Constitution evolves and is under constant review.
50. Democratic Commission has been set up to examine the democratic process as a whole as Redcar & Cleveland. A series of six workshops comprising multiple sessions will cover: Effective & Ethical Governance, Forthcoming Legislation, Neighbourhood Working, Member Development, Models of Localism and a Final report.
51. We reviewed the scrutiny functions of the Council with a view to improving Member involvement/activity and to address perceived gaps in the previous Committee structure. This resulted in the Council moving away from three O&S Committees to a single O&S Committee.
52. We have a Constitution and Members Services Scrutiny Panel which reviews parts of the Constitution on a regular basis. The review of Council meetings led to proposals for state of the District

- debates. Our Area Committees only consider planning applications and the review has considered the extent of areas, the membership of the committees and the frequency of meetings.
53. We have a Constitution Commission whose role is to review the Constitution and particularly the Council Meeting. We also have an Overview & Scrutiny Review Group which is looking at best practice elsewhere.
  54. Scrutiny - due to finish in March, Constitution and Council Meetings - review planned to take into account LGPIH Act changes coming into place in June 09.
  55. Constitution and Scrutiny being reviewed in the light of the new requirements under the LGIPH Act.
  56. Annual Report on Scrutiny activity to full Council. Area Committees considered March 2006 - decided not to proceed because of costs
  57. Revised Constitution issued in November 2008.
  58. Area working was looked at in 2007 and ruled out.
  59. Contents of constitution tends to be reviewed each year at the beginning of each administration.
  60. Constitutional review underway - taking in members and officers requirements. There are also proposals to reorganise Area Committees later in the year to create better local liaison and make it "two way".
  61. Review the Constitution on an annual basis.
  62. Constitution and Council meetings reviewed during previous municipal year in context of moving to new political structure (cabinet working). Area committees introduced as part of new structure (and subject to scrutiny). Scrutiny reviewed over an earlier municipal year.
  63. See earlier comment about our Constitution, we have undergone a Peer Review of our Scrutiny Process led by the IDeA and we are continually developing our Community Partnerships.
  64. We have reviewed the way in which our Overview and Scrutiny Committees operate in an attempt to make them more effective. We are also developing a scrutiny protocol.
  65. Annual report on constitution submitted to Council picking up any changes/revisions needed which includes changes to the Council meeting. Review of scrutiny undertaken and report approving changes agreed 19th March 2008. Report on locality governance to be submitted to Cabinet in Feb 2009.
  66. Constitution - going unitary as previously mentioned - undertaking a review of the Constitution in order to reflect the added responsibilities 'inherited' from the soon to be former district councils and to reflect the new decision making structure. Council meetings - am starting to think about how we can improve council meetings and introduce any changes from the new council. Would therefore be interested in the results of your survey. Scrutiny - consultant engaged in this work and cross council scrutiny involvement in this work which once agreed by the IE would be incorporated into the new constitution. Area Committees/Area Based working - Will have area based committees for new council

for development control and possibly licensing. Will have Area Boards (community boards) which are being developed and piloted at the moment.

67. Please ignore answers to Q12. Attempts to change the answers were unsuccessful. The Council is in the process of reorganisation of Bedfordshire local government from two tier to unitary.
68. Constitution being reviewed in the context of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. The Scrutiny structure is being reviewed having regard to Local Area Agreement and changes to the Council's management structure. Area Forums were introduced from May 2008 and will be reviewed in April this year.
69. Adopted new constitution 29 May 2008 - plan to review in 2009.
70. Main points of constitution i.e. Committee terms of reference, Officer Delegation Scheme and Financial Regulations revised at the last Annual Council Meeting.
71. Constitution revised in May 08 but will be updated in May 09, Scrutiny review of Council meetings in 2007, Scrutiny review in March 08 and further review prior to May 09 & Area. Committees/Area working currently being reviewed.
72. Insufficient space for this.
73. The Constitution is reviewed annually a draft is with members prior to being submitted to Council for adoption. The structure of overview and scrutiny and the involvement of partners is currently being reviewed, also in relation to the scrutiny of the LAA. A pilot of area working arrangements is currently underway.
74. Review of Constitution and Procedure Rules relating to Council and Scrutiny meetings currently in progress - depending upon resources it is hoped that the review will be completed in the next six months.
75. We are just introducing Area Committees (Neighbourhood Boards). Constitutions reviewed at least every six months. Scrutiny undertakes an Annual Review at the start of each Municipal Year.
76. Scrutiny was reviewed in May 2007 and as a consequence we moved from having 2 full O&S Committees to having 1 but allowed them to constitute small Task Groups to help them in their review work.
77. Constitution redrafted to bring decision making into one place, refresh delegations and standardise committee procedure rules.
78. Annual review of the Constitution.
79. An overview and scrutiny review of the Full Council meeting was done in 2006 as a result of which a number of changes were introduced to the operation of the meeting. These were modified following changes to the democratic structure following the May 2007 election. A review of the scrutiny function is proposed for later this year in the context of the promised Government Regulations and other changes affecting health scrutiny and partnership working.
80. South Beds District Council will cease to exist on 31 March 2009 and the Constitution for Central Bedfordshire is being written and

will be agreed by the Central Beds Shadow Council on 26 February.

81. Amendments are regularly made to the Constitution as required and to ensure that it is kept up to date. A review of the Ward Issues slot was undertaken at the end of 2008.
82. The Constitution is reviewed annually. Scrutiny at SDDC went through a major review in 2007, following a change in political control. This is comprised of a focus session, a baseline assessment and it is planned to have an external assessment in the coming months.
83. Fundamental review currently being undertaken.
84. Constitution reviewed and updated May 2008.
85. On-going review of the Constitution.
86. Elements of our Constitution are constantly reviewed and updated i.e. when an issue/problem arises, updated monthly. Council meetings are currently the subject of an equality impact assessment. Area Committees have not been operating for many years, and so I would consider that they are 'done' for the time being, but will be reviewed at some future point.
87. The Scrutiny Function was reviewed and an improvement plan implemented the Council is currently reviewing the operation of the Area Committees.
88. Area Committees disbanded in favour of a Community Forum approach in liaison with District Councils. Constantly monitor Constitution and update, e.g. Leader administration.
89. Review of constitution done every 1-2 years. First phase of recent review of community engagement concentrated on area committees after eight years of operation.
90. Review of the constitution undertaken to take account of the move to executive arrangements and following internal reorganisation of the Council. Neighbour meetings currently under view to increase public attendance and involvement. Pilot of new arrangements to be undertaken at the end of February.
91. Currently doing review of scrutiny of performance management.
92. A review of the decision making process has been undertaken which resulted in changes to the scrutiny committee structure and constitution. The constitution is also being currently reviewed and updated.
93. We are in the middle of a Constitutional review having just completed Council Procedural Rules and Financial and Contracts Procedural Rules. Remainder due to be done. As part of this we have reviewed our Council meetings. A Scrutiny review was completed last summer and arrangements are also currently under review.
94. On-going review, rolling programme.
95. Full review of the constitution including financial standing orders currently being undertaken.
96. Constitution, held workshops for members, debated Area Committees, voted to retain.

97. Constitution - complete full review underway, Council meetings - underway, about to approach members, scrutiny - completed, except call which is due in Feb.
98. All the above are under review at present so don't have final proposals available at this stage. The reviews are interlinked.
99. Constitution reviewed and updated after each Council meeting. Area meeting arrangements are being reviewed with the intention that any changes proposed be implemented following the Annual Council meeting.
100. Recently updated the Constitution to take account of changes to the Scheme of Delegation and reviewed how the two Overview and Scrutiny Committees operate. Will be reviewing the Council meeting in respect of public question time and petitions.
101. Community partnerships review is currently taking place via a Scrutiny Task and Finish Group; Constitution review was carried out via a working party of the Standards Committee which then made recommendations to Council.
102. Constitution - currently doing. Council Meetings - done, Scrutiny – Annually.
103. As a 4th option authority we have had mini reviews of all of the above in the last 6 years.
104. In preparation for the new Unitary Authority that will be created for Wiltshire we are currently undertaking a Pilot Phase of Area Board meetings. These include partnership working and closer working with Parish and Town Councils and Community Partnerships.
105. Not finalised as yet.
106. Scrutiny recently changed its committee structure.
107. Plan to review Council Meetings as you are doing and regularly review Constitution but plan to undertake a more comprehensive review.
108. Minor amends to the Constitution only.
109. Merely updating of elements of the constitution, including standing orders, financial regulations, terms of reference etc. Proposing to look at format of Council meetings and review style of minutes.
110. Constitution rewritten in plain English. Council meeting procedures tightened up in an attempt to reduce the time taken. Scrutiny Committees reduced from 5 to 2. Area based working being reviewed in terms of planning applications dealing and localism (Sustainable Communities Act etc).
111. We have an ongoing review of the Constitution. The Area Committees are administered by the County Council and their terms of reference have been reviewed in the past year to allow for more delegated decision-making.
112. The Constitution is reviewed annually in advance of the Annual Council in May. All of the elements of Q12 are embodied in the Constitution and can therefore be subject to review as part of the constitutional review. For review of Council meetings also see response to Q11. Also Scrutiny is currently the subject of an external Audit review by KPMG.

113. Scrutiny has been reviewed quite extensively in recent years until a good working model has been achieved. The Constitution is reviewed periodically, but this tends to be in a piecemeal fashion and a more comprehensive review might be a worthwhile exercise for the future.
114. Review of layout of Constitution plus objective to remove unnecessary sections to reduce overall size.
115. Over the last eight years we have reviewed each of these areas at least once and are currently undertaking a second review of scrutiny prior to our elections in June 2009.
116. The Constitution is under ongoing review by the Constitution Working Party. Recent reviews have resulted in minor amendments to the Council and Committee Procedure Rules and the Scrutiny Procedure Rules.
117. The Constitution is reviewed annually.
118. Scrutiny has been reviewed quite extensively over the last few years in order to achieve the most effective model for undertaking effective scrutiny. The Constitution is constantly under review, although this tends to focus on smaller discrete areas as opposed to a thoroughgoing review of the entire document.
119. Constitution reviewed annually.
120. We have very recently streamlined our Council meeting process to move away from "doing Committee work in Council" to concentrating on the more strategic, Policy Framework issues. Members have an opportunity [time limited] to put questions to Cabinet Members and Committee Chairmen. We will be looking at involving community groups in Council meetings [tried previously but not much take-up] and also introducing an annual State of the Borough meeting.
121. Scrutiny review done with IDEA. Led to greater interest by members in setting their scrutiny agenda. Area Committees considered some years ago and not adopted for reasons of geographical layout of Borough and cost v benefits.
122. We are constantly refining the scrutiny process, but have not yet looked at full council.
123. Committee Structure.
124. Review of procedures carried out two years after scrutiny set up in 2007.
125. Constitution: this is reviewed to a degree annually in terms of appointments etc but there will be a larger scale review following the CC elections in June 2009. Scrutiny: structure to be reviewed following the CC elections. Area working: currently under review and development with our district council partners.
126. Had an Independent review of Overview and Scrutiny/changing governance model from Mayor and Council Manager to Leader and Cabinet so complete rewrite of the constitution required.
127. October 2006 reviewed Council meetings - please email me if you would like to receive a copy of the report.
128. Committee procedures were totally reviewed in September 2001 and reviewed as and when necessary.

129. Area working no longer being pursued due to local government reorganisation etc.
130. All District (and one County) Councils within Shropshire are currently undertaking a Local Government Review, the end result of which is a unitary authority. Local Area Committees were established to assist this process. As a result of the Local Government Review, all committees will be reviewed to establish the preferred procedures for the new Authority.
131. Robert Sheppard has sent you the review of Council meetings. The Constitution is constantly being updated, the latest reprint was issued in November and is on our website.
132. Periodical reviews of parts of the Constitution but not complete Review.
133. Constitution revised in 2007.
134. Constitution reviewed and up-dated annually.
135. Difficult to provide details in limited form allowed.
136. Scrutiny Structure Review - intended to improve O&S working practices to improve outcomes.
137. The operation of Area Forums was reviewed 12 months ago with some minor changes made to improve them in terms of encouraging the public to attend. This review was reported back to our Corporate Services Policy and Performance Board and is available on the Council's website. We are currently commencing our annual review of the Constitution to pick up any in-year changes and consider any new changes required to improve methods of working arising from problems experienced during the year and to pick up any new legislative requirements.
138. Currently working on timetable to review all indicated to complete by September 2009.
139. Annual Review of Constitution / corporate Governance - Review of Council Meeting process reviewed each year - minor tweaks agreed. Major restructure of O&S Committee Structure for 2007/08 - Move to Neighbourhood Working planned for 2009 known as "Connecting People, Connecting Places Programme".
140. Council meetings - merged agenda & minutes into one booklet for members. More streamlined & cut cost of printing.
141. Constitution is reviewed annually.
142. Constitution - annual review. Full Council - revised agenda layout and changes to format. Revised Scrutiny arrangements to improve effectiveness.
143. Recently changed the way in which policy development is carried out and separated it from scrutiny.
144. Constitution recently revised. A review of Scrutiny was done two years ago.
145. Constitution is due to be reviewed once a decision taken on parish councils etc. Scrutiny was reviewed by the new administration after the 2006 elections as was area based working, though the latter may be reviewed again to devolve some decision-making to area committees.

146. Call in process. Use of a Scoring Matrix and PICK principles by all Scrutiny Committees to prioritise topics for consideration and inclusion within the work programme. Responding to Councillors Call for Action (when guidance is issued).
147. Please see Corporate Governance Report at the attached link: [www.darlington.gov.uk/democracy/political+management/Meeting.htm?id=679](http://www.darlington.gov.uk/democracy/political+management/Meeting.htm?id=679)
148. First one has been reflected in Appendix 1, contact our scrutiny officer re 2.
149. The Constitution and scheme of delegation is reviewed annually.
150. Constitution - Annual review. City Council - ongoing. Revised Scrutiny arrangements agreed at October 08 Council - implemented Nov 08. Neighbourhood/Ward Committee structure in place also Strategic Commission Areas.
151. Looking to simplify constitution and in process of setting up LAPs.
152. As a new unitary we are operating in a Shadow year so everything is being 'reviewed'.
153. We review the role of the Council meetings several years ago which led to the change in frequency of meetings from fortnightly to the current system and the introduction of the Executive Reports. We review the Constitution annually and are in the process of updating/ reissuing. We are in the process of reviewing our Area Panels, which were revamped 12 months ago.
154. These areas always under review. From March 2009 Council meetings will focus on future policy issues rather than debating issues on which decisions have already been taken. £2 million pa has been allocated over two years to be spent on ward initiatives promoted by ward members.
155. Constitution Review Working Party - Cross Party - reports direct to Council; maintains constant brief to review effectiveness of constitution. Review of Governance arrangements in 2008.
156. All the above are or will be under review as the six Councils in Shropshire will merge to form a unitary authority on 1 April 2009. Details of the Local Committee Pilot can be found at [http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/committee.nsf/0/0EFF296D847E4612802573F6003D9F9A/\\$file/29%20Feb%20local%20meetings.pdf](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/committee.nsf/0/0EFF296D847E4612802573F6003D9F9A/$file/29%20Feb%20local%20meetings.pdf)
157. Our 'Overview and Scrutiny (Corporate)' and 'Overview and Scrutiny (Services)' Committees were reconfigured into a Scrutiny Committee and Quality Services Committee.



# Council Meeting Survey

Results to Q14 – Your contact details.

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# South Tyneside Council

## Overview Scrutiny Co-ordinating and Call-in Committee

Date: 3 March 2009

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### Scrutiny Commission on Full Council: Key areas for further investigation

Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Coordinating and Call-in Committee

Cabinet Portfolio/Lead Member: Deputy Leader, Cllr Alan Kerr

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#### **Purpose of Report**

1. Following the meeting on 27 February 2009 where Members considered the results of the Full Council survey and the views of Professor Leach, this report is to clarify areas for further investigation for the commission.

#### **Why Has the Report Come to Scrutiny?**

2. Members need to decide which features of the council meeting they wish to investigate further.

#### **What Are Members Asked To Do?**

3. Members are asked to agree the suggested areas contained within this report.

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Performing Together Reference: M5 1/1

Contact Officer: Paul Baldasera ext.6002

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scrutiny scrutiny scrutiny **scrutiny** scrutiny scrutiny scrutiny



## **Suggested areas for further investigation**

4. Following the discussions at the meeting on 17 February, which considered the council survey results and the views of Professor Steve Leach from De Montfort University, the following areas are suggested for further investigation.

**Leader and Lead Member questions time** – as a means by which the Executive can be held to account.

- How does it work in other places?
- How frequently does it happen?
- How are questions put?
- Should supplementary questions be allowed?

*Possible councils to consult with:*

NE Derbyshire, Manchester, Cambridgeshire, Sutton, Woking, Surrey, Mansfield, North Yorkshire, West Sussex, Worthing, Newcastle, Warwickshire

**Green paper debates** - providing an opportunity for council to influence policy making at an early stage.

- How would policies be chosen?
- Will it impinge of the role of select committees?
- At what point of development would a policy have the debate?
- How would it affect the rest of the council agenda?

*Possible councils to consult with:*

NE Derbyshire, Sutton, Chorley, Blaby, Cumbria, Wansbeck, Christchurch,

**State of the borough address** – celebrating successes and highlighting the priority areas for the forthcoming year.

- Who would present it?
- What would it cover?
- When in the year would it be?
- What would happen as a result?

*Possible councils to consult with:*

Buckinghamshire, East Sussex, Richmondshire, North Herfordshire, Sunderland, West Norfolk, Worthing, Hackney, Colchester, Ashford, Liverpool, Wigan.

**Dealing with public questions** – making sure that the council fully operates its community leadership role in listening to public concerns.

- Are Select Committees better places for public to ask some questions?
- Should we do more to raise the profile of Select committees and the work that they do?
- How do we strike a balance between allowing appropriate questions and eliminating misuse of questions?

*Possible councils to consult with:*

Devon, Bath and NE Somerset, North Warwickshire

**Themed/"hot topic" debates** – opportunity to debate a current or emerging issue.

- How would we choose them?
- How long would they last?
- Who could take part?
- Could it be in "committee mode"?
- What would happen as a result?

*Possible councils to consult with:*

Buckinghamshire, Ossendale, Castlepoint, Oxfordshire, N Somerset, Slough, West Norfolk, Sutton, Devon, South Bucks, Epping forest, Milton Keynes, Mid. Beds, Mansfield, Bournemouth, Ashford, Essex

**Timing of meetings** – to ensure that meetings are held at the best times for both Members and the public.

- Would later meetings be more popular with Members?
- Would they be more popular with the public?
- Should we alternate start times between afternoon and early evening?

*Possible way forward*

Survey/ask Members and ask community groups/people who attend meetings

**Webcasting** – to make the business of council more accessible and transparent

- What are the practicalities/cost of doing this?
- Would webcast be live or recorded or both?
- What are the downsides?

*Possible councils to consult with*

Mole Valley, Blyth Valley East Sussex, Cannock Chase, Hounslow, Hull, Castlepoint, Cherwell, West Sussex, Hertsmere.

**Private Members Bill** – greater flexibility for Members to raise issues

- What criteria would be used?
- Does anyone else do this?

*Possible way forward*

Desk research as to whether anyone else has implemented this and if it has worked.

**Focusing council business** – making sure that agendas are productive and reports are fit for purpose

- Do we need the minutes of scrutiny/scrutiny minutes to go to the council meetings?
- Can reports be written in a more summarised way?
- Are there any other features of the council agenda that could be streamlined?

*Possible way forward*

Examination of council past agendas and debate about whether we can make any changes

## **Legal Implications**

5. We can reach and advise officers on further follow up work. Any changes must be reflected in the council's constitution and be within the national legal framework for the operation of Local Government.

## **Risk Implications**

6. There are no risk implications at present.

## **Equality and Diversity Implications**

7. We must provide enhanced opportunities for all of our residents to be involved in decision-making. To facilitate the community leadership role of the Council we should ensure that, if residents do want to be involved in decision-making, meetings are accessible and do not have a negative impact or discriminate in any way.

## **Environmental and Sustainability Implications**

8. There are no environmental and sustainability implications at present.

## **Financial Implications**

9. None at this stage

## **What Are Members Asked To Do?**

10. Members are asked to consider the list of areas that appear in paragraph 4 and agree on further follow up work.

## Scrutiny Commission on Full Council: Survey Results

Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Coordinating and Call-in Committee

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**The following is a list of the background papers (excluding exempt papers) relied upon in the preparation of the above report:**

<b>Background Paper</b>	<b>File Ref:</b>	<b>File Location</b>
Results from National Survey of Councils	Survey Results	Democratic Services, Town Hall, S Shields