

CONSTITUTION WORKING GROUP REVIEW OF CABINET

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Localism Act allows Councils to revert to a Cabinet system. It also requires councils to hold a referendum on the matter if 5% of electors sign a petition. Overall I suggest we need to ask if whether the Cabinet or the Committee system makes for better and more inclusive decision making.

Area of investigation	Purpose/Reason
1. To understand how the governance works in Uttlesford	It is not evident that all members know how the executive functions and where the checks and balances sit.
2. To use the outcome of the 2012 Scrutiny Review as a baseline	This is the most up to date piece of work we have on the subject and a good place to start. Overall the outcome of the survey was inconclusive.
3. To compare the results of the Scrutiny review with the pros and cons of cabinet working identified prior to the adoption of the cabinet system	To see if expectations have been realised and if fears have materialised
4. To compare the overall number of meetings and workload generally for members and officers before and after the introduction of the cabinet	There are at times more meetings for Members than when we had the committee system, so why do some Members not feel engaged?
5. To identify and evaluate alternatives	The options haven't changed since the 2010 reports but it is now possible to revert to committee whereas previously it was not possible to change from a cabinet.
6. To look at experience elsewhere	It is estimated that since the Localism Act some 18 Councils have resolved to go back to a committee system.
7. To look at costs	Some councils have argued that a committee system is cheaper than cabinet in member allowances.
8. To evaluate the need for further work if necessary, e.g. canvassing the views of members, parishes and others – bearing in mind that our internal governance mechanism is of minimal interest to the public	At this point we need to decide whether transparent, accountable, inclusive governance is about the attitudes, behaviours and values of councillors and officers rather than the structures within which they operate.
9. To make a recommendation to Council	