

## Members Attitude Survey 2012 – Results Summary

The member's attitude survey was sent to all members for completion, 28 members responded. Not all questions were answered by all respondents and this is reflected in the absolute and percentage totals.

### Cabinet

**1. Are you part of the administration group?**

Yes	12 (48%)
No	13 (52%)

**2. Were you a Councillor prior to May 2011?**

Yes	17 (68%)
No	8 (32%)

**3. How has the change in governance affected your involvement in policy shaping and/or decision making?**

Not affected	8 (32%)
Less involved	12 (48%)
More involved	5 (20%)

**4. The Cabinet system has been in place for one year. How do you think the system is working? (Please tick the relevant box(es))**

▪ The speed of decision making is faster	20 (74%)
▪ The speed of decision making is slower	4 (15%)
▪ The speed of decision making has not changed	3 (11%)
▪ The quality of decision making has improved	7 (28%)
▪ The quality of decision making has declined	9 (36%)
▪ The quality of decision making has not changed	9 (36%)

**5. Please list the improvements that you have seen?**

- Things are much quicker than before.
- Invitation declined

**6. What would your suggestions be to accelerate and/or to improve the governance process?**

- I don't necessarily believe that anything major needs to be considered by way of changing the process. It is up to members to make themselves aware of the issues if they feel left out.
- Reports published earlier. Simple and v clear. Use more bullet points
- to involve others
- There are aspects of the Cabinet that I find worrying and some members of the Cabinet seem to think they are all powerful
- Committee systems are more democratic as it will allow all elected councillors to play their part in decision-making at committee meetings

**7. Are you able to take a role on the committees/working groups you would like?**

Yes	22 (92%)
No	2 ( 8%)

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### 8. What could be done to ensure you are included?

not in working hours

### 9. Do you feel that there are too many committees/working groups?

Yes 6 (25%)  
No 18 (75%)

### 10. How many cabinet members do you feel there should be (currently there are 7)?

More than currently 8 (33%)  
Same as currently 11 (46%)  
Less than currently 5 (21%)

### 11. Please specify how many?

13 responses

No. of Cabinet Members	No. of votes
3	1
5	3
6	1
8	1
9	2
10	2
Minimum 10	1
15	1

13<sup>th</sup> answer was actually a statement 'Do not agree with the cabinet system. Localism Act means should be more democratic'

### 12. Do you think the Cabinet-style governance has affected the way Full Council works?

Yes 21 (84%)  
No 4 (16%)

### 13. Please state your reasons in the space below:

- Less important than it was previously
- Much less "grand-standing", and the advocacy has become much more focussed
- Full council always seems a rubber stamp job.
- Full council has become formulaic. Party system controls even more.
- decision seem to be made by a select few regardless
- By definition it will make a change but you do not ask if the change is for better or worse
- Members who are not in the Cabinet feel detached
- Invitation declined
- The Council is now more businesslike
- Management of the Council appears to be more efficient and decisive.
- less interaction
- Less democratic - few people making most of the decisions
- Full Council is now nothing more than a formality
- Shorter meetings which inform rather than involve and tend to be more a 'rubber stamping' exercise. Little or no involvement for opposition groups.
- More management success though less democratic
- less cllr input

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### 14. Given the choice, which governance system would you prefer?

Cabinet	11 (44%)
Committee	10 (40%)
No preference	4 (16%)

### 15. If you believe the cabinet system could be improved, please specify how below:

- More shared roles.
- Individual reports to all members by individual cabinet members as to developments and possible future developments within their portfolios.
- Reduce the portfolios to more manageable/member inclusive levels.
- Pre cabinet discussions should be open to all. Cabinet members commission own working groups, strictly time limited and of short sharp duration
- more involvement from Councillors - information is not involvement
- not to ignore others opinion in the decision process
- Fewer members, why suddenly add another? Perhaps it would be nice if cabinet members were selected on ability. What's the point of deputies?
- Issues come to scrutiny >48hrs before cabinet meetings
- Invitation declined
- Member of the Cabinet act in a more considerate way rather than just talk about doing so.
- Individual Cabinet Members could hold separate workshops at which items within their particular portfolios could be raised and discussed.
- Share out the power too few people making most of the decisions
- Working groups should not be private to other Councillors as was the case with LDF from last summer to January this year
- Dispense with current 'collective' approach to decision making by Cabinet members and give portfolio holders greater power to make decisions in their areas of responsibility.

## Scrutiny

### 16. The Scrutiny Committee monitors and scrutinises performance and decisions made by the executive, committees and outside bodies. Are you aware of the role you can play within the Scrutiny process?

Yes	18 (72%)
No	7 (28%)

### 17. Please state what you believe your role is in the space below:

- Putting questions to the scrutiny committee and getting feedback, answers directly from SC to influence, correct or promote ideas on the running of cabinet
- As member of the Scrutiny Committee, my job is to test and look at proposed and actual decisions, make recommendations and, if necessary, send matters back to Cabinet for a re-think.
- To examine anything which might detrimentally affect the district, speedily and effectively.
- Making sure that they are aware of areas that need scrutiny
- To achieve best practice
- If this is working how I think, can I put a different answer in than last time
- To hold the executive to account and monitor performance
- Challenge decisions but a lot are already made or rubber stamped
- Be alert to what's going on and take to Scrutiny what you're not happy with.
- Scrutinise decisions, challenge and test and when required demand change.

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### 18. Would you benefit from Scrutiny training?

Yes	7 (100%)
No	0

### 19. Following a meeting, a decision list is published (normally within two working days of the meeting). If the decision is not called-in, it is implemented five working days after the publication of that decision list.

Members of the Scrutiny Committee can call-in any decision for reconsideration during that five working day period. The Scrutiny Committee Chairman or any three members of the committee can exercise that right to call-in.

### Do you feel that this process is right for UDC?

Yes	19 (79%)
No	5 (21%)

### 20. How would you improve the call-in procedure?

- this should apply to ANY THREE MEMBERS
- Giving the game away-I'm on scrutiny-We do not get enough notice to make a difference. How can we have a scrutiny meeting less than 48hrs before cabinet!

### 21. Please rank in order of importance what you believe your role is as a councillor. (Select in order of importance where 1 is most important and 6 is least important.)

	Total						
		1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Base</b>	142	52 36.6%	32 22.5%	17 12.0%	14 9.9%	12 8.5%	15 10.6%
<b>Q21.a</b> Representing the interest of your ward as a whole.	24	21 87.5%	1 4.2%	1 4.2%	-	-	1 4.2%
<b>Q21.b</b> Representing the interest of individual constituents.	23	8 34.8%	10 43.5%	2 8.7%	2 8.7%	1 4.3%	-
<b>Q21.c</b> Making decisions that affect the whole district.	23	8 34.8%	8 34.8%	6 26.1%	-	1 4.3%	-
<b>Q21.d</b> Ensuring political priorities and policies are enacted at local level.	24	5 20.8%	4 16.7%	3 12.5%	5 20.8%	2 8.3%	5 20.8%
<b>Q21.e</b> Representing UDC with other tiers of government.	24	4 16.7%	5 20.8%	2 8.3%	4 16.7%	4 16.7%	5 20.8%
<b>Q21.f</b> Representing UDC on outside bodies.	24	6 25.0%	4 16.7%	3 12.5%	3 12.5%	4 16.7%	4 16.7%

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Question 21 appears to have been misunderstood. Members were asked to rank the 6 options from 1 (highest) to 6 (lowest) in terms of importance. 23/24 Members completed the questionnaire yet there were 52 scores of 1 and only 12 scores of 5

### 22. Is there anything you would add to this list?

Yes            3 (15%)  
No              17 (85%)

### 23. Please specify in the space below:

- Ensuring that backbenchers are not swept aside
- Local services are about meeting the needs of people where they live and work and not about meeting needs of the council & officers conducting everything in an open transparent manner.
- Better and speedier consultation

### 24. Including all aspects of your role, how much time on average do you spend on Council business per week?

23 responses

Depends on the month/issues.
6 - 12 hours
At least 15 hours a week
15 hours
15-20 hours
20 -28 hours
2 days
Differs some weeks 20 hours and others 5 hours
15+
15+
15 hours minimum
More than I want and less than I'd like
45 hours
15 hours
10 hours
around 10 hours
1-2 days a week
10-15 hours
18/20 hours
10/12 hours
10 hours
12 hours
14 hours

### 25. Do you read the Members Bulletin?

Yes            22 (88%)  
No              3 (12%)

### 26. How do you keep informed with what is happening at the council?

- Minutes etc and visits
- I attend meetings

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### 27. Do you access committee agendas/minutes/reports via the council's website?

Regularly	16 (64%)
Occasionally	8 (32%)
Never	1 ( 4%)

### 28. How do you find out what is happening at committee/working group meetings that you are not a member of?

What is different from reading minutes etc occasionally and never? Only get this text box if never

### 29. How would you prefer to receive your committee/working group papers?

Paper form	6 (24%)
Electronic	5 (20%)
Both paper and electronic	14 (56%)

## Training

### 30. Were you elected to the Council for the first time in 2011?

Yes	9 (36%)
No	16 (64%)

### 31. Looking back at your induction training, did it meet your requirements?

Yes partially	5 (56%)
Yes fully	2 (22%)
No	2 (22%)

### 32. To improve the training, what could be included for new members?

- Updates and regular training opportunities as the role or functions you take on grows
- The curriculum should be designed by members, not officers - All I can say is I've been told what the Officers want me to know.
- Difficult to specify in less than a couple of pages. We were all different and with a variety of requirements. The question is consequently moot.
- I don't think it fully gave you an insight into committees or the day-to-day job

### 33. What (if any) topics would you like training on? Please list below?

- How to react when faced with public demands for answers as to why decisions were made that they don't agree with or what are your feelings about certain issues.
- How each department of the council works and what they do. Also getting familiar with staff and what their roles and responsibilities are.
- Finance Planning
- Decision making process giving satisfaction
- Alternative approaches to Planning Policy
- I T skills
- Engagement with the public
- Overall operation of a District Council - understanding what the Chief Executive sees as important
- Planning law updates