

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

**FROM: CONSTITUTION REVIEW TASK
GROUP**

REPORT NUMBER K86

TO: COUNCIL

DATE OF MEETING: 31 August 2010

MOVE TO EXECUTIVE MODEL OF GOVERNANCE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To determine whether to proceed to change governance arrangements to a Leader and Cabinet Executive as recommended by the Constitution Review Task Group.

2. RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

- 2.1. That having considered the responses to the public consultation exercise (including consultation with key stakeholders) and for the reasons identified by the Constitution Review Task Group, to proceed to draw up proposals for a change in the Council's constitutional arrangements to a Leader and Cabinet Executive.
- 2.2. That the Solicitor to the Council be instructed to draw up the Proposals document setting out the main features of the Executive and make a further report to Council via the Constitution Review Task Group for approval of the document.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The cost of the public consultation exercise has been £3,375 (£2940 plus 25p per card response).
- 3.2 If the Council were to proceed with a change to executive arrangements then its proposal would need to be advertised in at least one local newspaper at a cost of £250 approximately. This sum would be met from the LGR/Shared Services budget.
- 3.3 Whether the operation of a Leader and Cabinet Executive would give rise to additional costs in the form of allowances would very much depend upon the level and extent of Special Responsibility Allowances ("SRA") set by Council, having had regard to the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel. For example, there could be between 3 and 10 members of the Executive who could be paid an allowance from which number an additional allowance could be paid to the Leader and Deputy Leader. Portfolio holders may also be paid an allowance. However, this is a matter for Full Council.
- 3.4 The Local Government Association collated details of allowances paid by Councils for the year 2008. For the Eastern region the average SRA paid to Cabinet members of district/borough councils was £6,700, but in Suffolk the average was £4,416 per member. Unfortunately, the figures are distorted by some Councils providing data for members with portfolio and others without. However, it is still apparent that the average SRA for an Executive member without portfolio is around £4,000 and most pay the same amount as the basic allowance (being £3,649 for

Babergh). The portfolio holders allowance in Suffolk appears to differ quite significantly dependant upon the size and type of Council, but as an indication at Mid Suffolk District Council the SRA for an Executive member holding portfolio is £3,684.

- 3.5 The average SRA paid to the Leader was £10,800 and £7,000 for the Deputy Leader. Again, in Suffolk the average was lower and came in at £7,800 average for the Leader and £5,800 for the Deputy Leader. The average size of the Cabinet in district councils was 7 members.
- 3.6 Babergh's current SRA, as set out in Part 6 of the Council's Constitution is £7,296 for the Chairman of Strategy Committee, £1,824 for the Vice-Chairman and £364 per Member Champion. Therefore, if the average trend were applied, there would be an increased cost in changing arrangements of varying amount dependent upon the size of the Executive. For comparison purposes, it may be helpful to look at the SRA for Mid Suffolk District Council, which includes SRA for its members holding Executive and portfolio holder responsibility. The Mid Suffolk SRA budget is currently £79,680 compared with £53,915 at Babergh.
- 3.7 Any additional costs on SRA should be evaluated in the context of efficiency savings that may potentially be achieved through the operation of a quicker and more efficient form of governance

4. **RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 4.1 This report is linked with the Council's Significant Business Risk No. 4 (Governance). Key risks are set out below:

Risk Description	Likelihood	Seriousness or Impact	Mitigation Measures
Opportunity to change to an executive model is missed and does not arise again for another 4 years.	Significant	Marginal	Opportunity is taken now or acceptance that the opportunity may not present again until 2014.
Changing to a different form of governance to our preferred partner, MSDC, prejudices the opportunity to 'merge' the two authorities.	Not known	Critical	Ensure that both councils' constitutions align as far as possible under the separate arrangements.
The legislation is amended to remove the current restrictions	Significant	Negligible	Awareness that an option for executives to revert to a committee structure may be introduced.

5. **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPACT**

A change in governance arrangements has not identified any foreseeable equality or diversity impacts.

6. **CONSIDERATION BY TASK GROUP**

6.1 The Task Group considered the information contained within this report at its meeting on 17 August 2010. Having deliberated the responses and other considerations at length, a majority of those in attendance voted to recommend to Full Council to proceed to alter the Council's governance arrangements to a Leader and Cabinet Executive. The reasons identified for this recommendation are set out in 6.2 below.

6.2 The result of the public consultation represented the views of 2.6% of the electorate (and 4.7% of households) with 54% of respondents preferring the Council to retain its existing arrangements, 38% preferring a change to an executive model and 8% having no preference. The result is not heavily weighted in favour of any one of the options and with the vast majority not having expressed a preference the outcome of the consultation is not particularly conclusive. Having considered the other responses, the comments from St Edmundsbury Borough Council were pertinent, being an Authority with experience of a Leader and Cabinet. It was concluded that nothing has fundamentally changed from the time that the Council resolved to proceed with the consultation. On balance, the advantages of a Leader and Cabinet model identified at the outset continue to outweigh the disadvantages. Whilst it is acknowledged that a Leader and Cabinet would be more expensive in light of the special responsibility allowances payable to members of the Executive (albeit that allowances would be a matter for Full Council to determine), there is nonetheless a value for money argument in terms of the benefits of stronger leadership, faster decision-making and accountability.

7. **KEY INFORMATION**

Background

7.1 Following the decision of Full Council on 29 April 2010 to continue with the review of the Council's Constitution, a consultation with the electorate and key stakeholders was carried out over an 8 week period. The consultation commenced on 7 June 2010 with a leaflet and accompanying article in the Babergh Matters! publication which is distributed to all households (38,610) within the district. The leaflet described the two forms of executive, being a Leader and Cabinet Executive and a directly elected Mayor with Cabinet. It also described the committee system which is currently operated by the Council. By ticking the relevant box on a pre-paid response card, members of the public were invited to select a preference for one of the three models of governance or to state if they had no preference. The selection was made by ticking the relevant box on a pre-paid card. Additional copies of the leaflet could be requested to enable other members of the same household to respond. A copy of the leaflet and article are shown at Appendix 1.

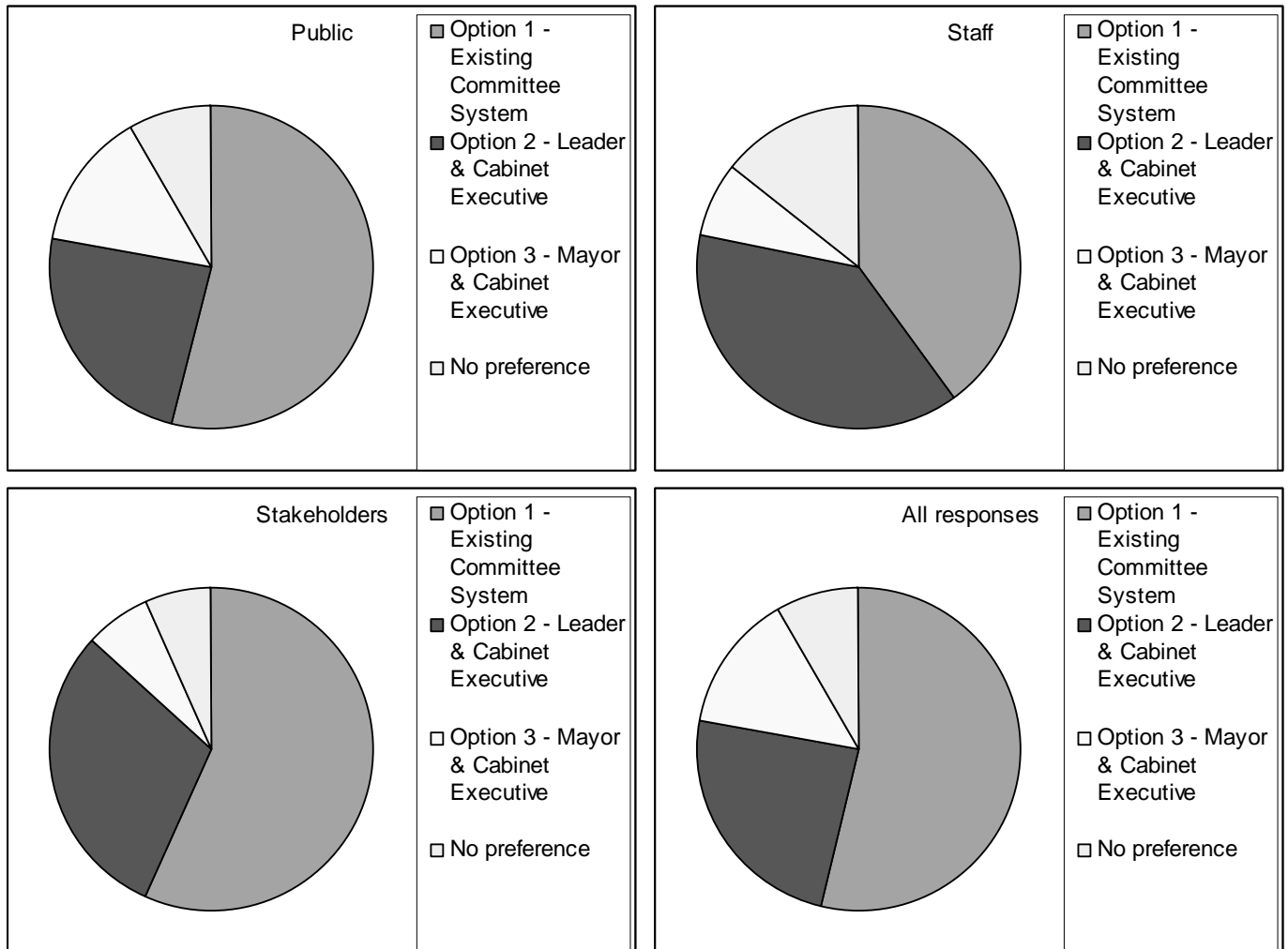
7.2 The same information was also provided on the Council's website with a facility for the form to be completed and returned electronically.

7.3 At the same time the leaflet and a form inviting comments (see Appendix 1) were distributed to 118 of the Council's key stakeholders, as listed at Appendix 2.

	Public Responses	Staff responses	Stakeholder responses	TOTALS	%
Base	1815	55	30	1900	100%
OPTION 1 Existing Committee system	978 (53.9%)	22 (40%)	17 (56.7%)	1017	54%
OPTION 2 Leader & Cabinet Executive	432 (23.8%)	21 (38.2%)	9 (30%)	462	24%
OPTION 3 Mayor & Cabinet Executive	256 (14.1%)	4 (7.3%)	2 (6.7%)	262	14%
NO PREFERENCE	149 (8.2%)	8 (14.5%)	2 (6.7%)	159	8%

Consultation Responses

7.4 The outcome of the preferences selected in the consultation is as follows:-



7.5 In addition, a number of comments have been received via the Council’s website which are listed within Appendix 3.

7.6 As a matter of law, it is important that all responses are conscientiously taken into account before arriving at a decision on how to proceed. That does not mean that the outcome of the consultation dictates how the Council must proceed. The figures as set out in the Table at 6.4 do tell us that 54% of all of those who responded do not want the Council to change its form of governance. However, if having considered those responses the Council believes that there is reason to proceed then it is open for it to do so but it should identify and make available its reasons for doing so.

Analysis of responses

7.7 A total of 1900 responses were received. An analysis of the figures informs us that whilst the majority of respondents state a preference for the status quo, there is a significant percentage (38%) who would prefer some form of executive with a further (8%) having no preference either way. The consultation made it clear that if the “no preference” box was selected then the individual was happy for the Council to decide which of the three options to adopt. It could therefore be said that the results for and against a move to an executive are relatively evenly balanced because a total of 46% would prefer, or would be happy with, an executive model. Alternatively, of course the conclusion could be drawn that if the 8% with no preference are added to the numbers in favour of the existing structure there is a weighting of 62% of respondents for the status quo.

- 7.8 Overall, the responses do not provide any strong indication of preference by the public for any of the three options. These results do also need to be seen in the context of representing the views of only 2.6% of the 70,111 Babergh electorate (or 4.7 % of households) with the vast majority not having expressed a preference. The figures are therefore representative of a small percentage of the electorate. In view of the proportionately low response it could be concluded that the vast majority of residents are not concerned over the Council's model of governance arrangements.
- 7.9 A response was received from 30 of the 118 stakeholders consulted. These responses are listed at Appendix 3. Of the 76 parishes/ town councils consulted, 20 replied with 13 voting for the existing system, 6 for a Leader and Cabinet, 0 for an elected Mayor and 1 with no preference. The majority of the responding parishes therefore prefer no change although the level of response is quite low. This may be because their meetings have not fallen within the consultation period. Nonetheless, it is quite difficult to know whether this response would be reflective of all the towns and parishes and so we do not have a particularly full picture.
- 7.10 The comments which have been listed verbatim within Appendix 3 do not appear overall to provide us with any clear steer or messages. There is a recurrent theme concerning cost which highlights that the public are interested and concerned over the financial implications of a change. Clearly the Council must evaluate the estimated costs as part of its overall consideration and be satisfied that the costs are justifiable if it is minded to pursue the Leader and Cabinet model.

Other considerations

- 7.11 In considering the consultation responses and deciding whether or not the existing committees system should be retained, it is perhaps worth revisiting the reasons why the Council decided to review its arrangements. Members will recall that at the start of the process a very detailed evaluation was conducted by the Task Group on the advantages and disadvantages of both the committees system and the Leader and Cabinet Executive. For ease of reference a copy of the summary produced at that time is reproduced at Appendix 4. Based upon that analysis Members were satisfied that there was sufficient reason to proceed with the review. Those same advantages identified at the outset will still apply.
- 7.12 An important consideration is that under current legislation a resolution to change from a committees system to an executive form of governance must be made by 31.12.10 or wait a further 4 years, just before the district council elections. What we do not know at this stage, is whether the Decentralisation and Democracy Bill which was announced in the Queen's Speech on 25 May and is due to be introduced in October/November of this year, will remove the restriction of only enabling fourth option authorities to move to an executive at 4 yearly windows. It is within this Bill that the Government proposes to "allow councils to return to the committees system, should they wish to".
- 7.13 The Minister for Housing and Local Government announced in July 2010 that it is the intention of the Coalition Government to repeal the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 by fresh primary legislation and warns that "any governance model you adopt in May 2011 may be further changed within a year or so". This may simply be a reference to possible abolition of the specific changes brought in by the 2007 Act which provide (amongst others) for a Leader to be appointed for a 4 year term and to decide the size of the Cabinet (up to a total of 10) to whom portfolios are allocated. However, we cannot be sure what changes there will be, if any at all, and the forecast is that the Bill will, in whatever form that eventually emerges, not become law until the latter part of 2011 once it has gone through the various Parliamentary stages. So, the only certainty that we have is the law as it stands at present.
- 7.14 Of course another important factor for consideration is the Council's future plans for possible integration and 'merger' with Mid Suffolk District Council which has already decided not to progress a constitutional review. If the two Councils are to advance towards a full constitutional merger (which in reality would be the dissolution of both Councils and creation of a wholly new authority) there would be benefits in the Councils operating similar governance arrangements. This would ease the transformation to a new authority and the operation of the Constitution would not need to differ radically from the system with which Members and officers are familiar.
- 7.15 Similarity in Constitutions between Mid Suffolk and ourselves could be achieved irrespective of Babergh operating executive arrangements, particularly as Mid Suffolk's Constitution is currently styled in the form of an executive (including portfolio holders) even though it operates a committees system. The more pertinent issue could be whether the two Councils may favour different forms of governance for a new council should a committees system become an option. In this regard, it is important to bear in mind that as things stand, any new council would have to adopt executive arrangements and if this were to change then the decision would not be premeditated by the 'old' Council's arrangements.

Conclusion

- 7.16 The level of consultation responses from members of the public is higher than might have been expected going on the responses of other councils that have undergone this process. The response rate nonetheless represents the views of a small percentage of the Babergh electorate. Unsurprisingly, this reinforces that the governance arrangements of the Council are not a matter of high public interest. The comments indicate though that people are concerned about whether there would be financial implications.
- 7.17 There is no overwhelming support for any of the options to strongly influence the Council's decision except that there is low public and stakeholder support for a Mayor and Cabinet Executive.
- 7.18 Based upon the consultation responses results there could be justification for no change or potentially the Leader and Cabinet Executive. Whatever conclusion is reached should be done having considered all of the data and relevant issues that have been raised very carefully and then identifying the reasons why a particular approach is favoured.

7. APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 – Consultation documentation
- Appendix 2 - List of key stakeholders consulted
- Appendix 3 - Comments received on consultation
- Appendix 4 - List of Advantages and Disadvantages

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS REFERRED TO:

None.

CONTACT: Kathryn Seward
Solicitor to the Council

EMAIL: kathryn.seward@babergh.gov.uk

Have your say about the future of your Council

Response from Stakeholders

Our preferred option is:

(tick one box only)

OPTION 1 Existing committee system

OPTION 2 Leader and Cabinet Executive

OPTION 3 Mayor and Cabinet Executive

We do not have a preference

Any other comments? *(Please continue on the reverse or on a separate page if required)*

Name: _____

Organisation: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Please return this response by 2 August 2010 in the pre-paid envelope provided.



Response from Stakeholders

Any other comments continued?



Have your say

about the future of your Council



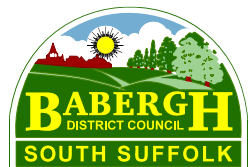
What's the issue?

We are considering changing the way Babergh District Council makes decisions on your behalf, but before we choose the best way forward we would like to hear your views.

At present, Babergh Councillors make decisions through a Committee system (option 1). The majority of other Councils make decisions under arrangements with a Leader and Cabinet Executive (option 2). A third option available to the Council is a Mayor and Cabinet Executive (option 3). All of these options are explained in more detail overleaf.

We are currently only permitted to change from a Committee system to one of the other available models at four yearly intervals, just before District Council elections. If we are to change the way we operate, a decision must be made by the end of 2010 for the new arrangements to take effect after the next District Council elections in May 2011.

Important note: *These options would not affect the operation of the Committees which deal with planning and licensing applications and standards complaints.*



— Have your say about the future of your Council —

WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS?

OPTION 1

Committee system (*the present arrangement for Babergh District Council*)

Strategy Committee – Comprises 10 Councillors appointed by Full Council who are responsible for making decisions within the agreed policies and budget set by Full Council.

Chairman of Strategy Committee – A Councillor chosen by Full Council for a one year term. The Chairman ensures through the Committee that decisions comply with the policy and budgets set by Full Council. The Chairman acts as principal spokesperson for the Council.

OPTION 2

Leader and Cabinet Executive

Executive Leader – A Councillor chosen by Full Council as the Council Leader for a four year term of office and who acts as principal spokesperson for the Council. He/she is responsible for how executive decisions are taken. The Executive Leader ensures that his/her decisions and those of the Cabinet and its members fulfill the agreed policies and budget set by Full Council.

It is possible for Full Council to remove the Executive Leader from office before expiry of the four year term.

Cabinet - Comprises between two and nine Councillors appointed by the Executive Leader who are responsible for making decisions within the agreed policies and budget set by Full Council. Individual members of the Cabinet may be given responsibility by the Executive Leader to develop and promote a specified Council function.

— Have your say about the future of your Council —

OPTION 3

Mayor and Cabinet Executive

Directly Elected Mayor – Someone directly elected by the people of the area for a four year term of office and who acts as principal spokesperson for the Council. He/she takes major executive decisions. The Mayor ensures that his/her decisions and those of the Cabinet and its members fulfill the agreed policies and budget set by Full Council.

Full Council cannot remove the elected Mayor.

Cabinet - Comprises between two and nine Councillors appointed by the Mayor who are responsible for making decisions within the agreed policies and budget set by Full Council. Individual members of the Cabinet may be given responsibility by the Mayor to develop and promote a specified Council function.

In all of the options:

- we would continue to have a Chairman of the Council which is largely a ceremonial role.
- the Full Council (comprising all Councillors) would agree the Council's policies, the Annual Budget and Council Tax levels.
- all Councillors would continue to represent their ward and the whole district.
- there would be one or more Scrutiny Committees appointed by Full Council made up of Councillors who are not part of the Strategy Committee or Cabinet. These Committees review and scrutinise decisions taken by Strategy Committee, the Leader and Cabinet or the Mayor and Cabinet and hold them to account. They make reports and recommendations to the Strategy Committee, Cabinet or Full Council.

What if I have no preference?

If you have no preference for the option that the Council operates, we would still like to hear from you. The Council will assess all responses. If you do not express a preference the Council will take it that you are happy for the Council to decide which of the three options to adopt from May 2011.

— Have your say about the future of your Council —

TIMETABLE FOR CHANGE

Babergh Councillors will decide the best way forward later this year and any new arrangements implemented in May 2011.

We want to hear your views on which option will be best for the people of the Babergh district. **Your views will be taken into account.** Simply complete and return the pre-paid reply card attached by 2 August 2010.

HAVE YOUR SAY

Send back the reply card before 2 August 2010. Alternatively, you can complete a response on-line at www.babergh.gov.uk.

For further information about the three options available, please contact Steve Ellwood in Committee Services.

If you would like further leaflets to allow other members of your family to have their say please contact Steve Ellwood as below.

Committee Services Corporate Services Division

Babergh District Council
Corks Lane,
Hadleigh
Ipswich IP7 6SJ
(01473) 825876
Email: committee.services@babergh.gov.uk
www.babergh.gov.uk

If you need help to understand this information in another language or would like it in another format (audio version or large print) please call 01473 826622



WHAT COULD HAPPEN NEXT?

Despite everything we have already done to make savings in 2010/11, there is no doubt that next year's financial challenges will be severe again.

With no certainty as to whether, when or how LGR might proceed, the options for Babergh and Mid Suffolk to make the necessary savings are very limited. If LGR does not proceed at all, a clear opportunity to achieve real savings and efficiencies across Suffolk through local government reform will be lost.

If the LGR review is resumed to take effect from April 2012 at the earliest, Babergh still faces the challenge of finding savings in the order of £1.2 - 1.5m for 2011/12 before those unitary changes take place.

POSSIBLE INTEGRATION/MERGER WITH MID SUFFOLK DC

It is for these reasons that we have been in discussions with Mid Suffolk District Council to see what the opportunities might be for much stronger partnership working.

As a minimum, we are committed to working as "preferred partners" on specific service areas wherever the opportunities exist. This would build on our existing partnership arrangements e.g. our joint waste collection contract.

At Officer level, our partnership plans could go as far as full integration into a single staffing structure to support both Councils.

At Councillor level, this could involve proposals to replace the two Councils with a single new District Council serving the Babergh and Mid Suffolk areas. In this (non-unitary) arrangement, the County Council would continue to exist to serve the whole of Suffolk, including the Babergh and Mid Suffolk areas.

Both Babergh and Mid Suffolk Councils have given their commitment to fully investigating these options.

We have set ourselves the target of assessing whether the financial case stacks up for full integration into a single staffing structure by April

2011. We would expect this model to show significant savings over a number of years in management costs, overheads and back office costs, as well as efficiency savings in the delivery of front line services. The position on potential merger of Babergh and Mid Suffolk into a single Council is more complicated, depending as it will on a review by the Boundary Commission before a decision is made by the Secretary of State. We are also mindful of the fact that the "unfinished business" of LGR might be a delaying factor, if not a total obstacle, to political integration of our two Councils, at least in the short term.

For these reasons, any merger to create a single Council is unlikely to take place before May 2012 at the very earliest.

Nonetheless, it is felt that considerable savings (e.g. through an overall reduction in the number of Councillors), could be achieved by creating a single District Council for Babergh and Mid Suffolk, and that this should also be investigated alongside looking at savings in staff costs.

This work is still at a very early stage, and much will need to be done over the coming weeks and months to fully assess the benefits and risks of this option. This will include communication and consultation as appropriate with all our Town and Parish Councils, as well as a wide range of other stakeholders and individual residents.

In particular, we want to look carefully at how local democratic arrangements would work in any new political structure, and to work with our Town and Parish Councils to develop how these arrangements might operate in practice.

REVIEW OF BABERGH'S DECISION-MAKING ARRANGEMENTS

Background

For the last 10 years or so, all local authorities have had to adopt one of a small number of decision-making arrangements that are then set out in each Council's constitution to describe

how decisions are made by elected Councillors on behalf of the residents in their area.

For most Councils, their original choice had to be made from three possible "executive" models - Leader and Cabinet; Directly Elected Mayor and Cabinet or Leader and Council Manager. Following consultation, most Councils adopted the Leader and Cabinet form of executive arrangements.

For smaller Councils, whose population did not exceed 85,000 at June 1999, there was an additional choice, or fourth option, of adopting a streamlined form of the traditional committee arrangements. Babergh was included in this group. By 2000, Babergh had already streamlined its committee arrangements and, following public consultation, decided to stick with these arrangements rather than move to any form of executive arrangement.

What's the Position Now?

Only two forms of executive arrangements are now available - a Leader and Cabinet Executive or a Directly Elected Mayor and Cabinet model.

It is possible for Councils to consider changing from committee arrangements to either of the available executive arrangements.

However, this can only be reviewed every four years, prior to district elections, and only following public consultation.

So, if Babergh wanted to change its arrangements, the Council would have to make the necessary decision by December of this year, with a view to introducing new executive arrangements immediately after the May 2011 Babergh District elections. Without any further changes in the law, the next opportunity for Babergh to make changes to its own constitution would not arise until just before the May 2015 district elections.

So, what are Babergh's Plans?

Alongside reviewing what our opportunities for partnership working, including a possible merger with Mid Suffolk, might be to meet the tough challenges facing us, Babergh has also been looking at our own internal arrangements for



from May 2011 to bring Babergh into line with most other Councils. In any case, if Babergh and Mid Suffolk were to become a single Council at a later stage, that new larger Council would not be allowed to adopt committee arrangements and would have to adopt either Leader and Cabinet Executive or Directly Elected Mayor and Cabinet arrangements. Therefore, there may well also be advantages in Babergh Councillors gaining experience in that type of arrangement to prepare them for serving in a new, larger Council for Babergh and Mid Suffolk. In planning and preparing for the future, and to make sure that Councillors are as well equipped as possible to undertake their roles on behalf of Babergh residents in changing circumstances, the Council has decided that it is timely to use this once-in-four-year opportunity to consider a possible change to its own decision-making arrangements.



We are therefore consulting our residents to seek your views before making a decision on whether to adopt new arrangements from May 2011. The enclosed leaflet describes the key elements of each of the available options and seeks your views on these. We will also be writing separately to other key stakeholders in the district, including all our Town and Parish Councils, to seek their views before making a decision. We would encourage all residents to let us know what you think by completing and returning the questionnaire in this leaflet. Even if you have no strong views or preferences, it would still be really helpful for you to let us know this.

decision-making. Specifically, the Council has been considering whether these arrangements could be improved for the benefit of our residents and to support our overall partnership working, whether or not merger with Mid Suffolk subsequently takes place. In particular, we have been looking

at the advantages and disadvantages of our current committee arrangements in comparison with the Leader and Cabinet arrangements that are in place in most local authorities in England, including the majority of Councils in Suffolk. There could be benefits in changing to Leader and Cabinet arrangements

LIST OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS – APPENDIX 2

NAME	ADDRESS
SAVO	Dickson House 43a Woodbridge Road East Ipswich IP4 5QN
Suffolk PCT	Rushbrook House, Paper Mill Lane Bramford, Ipswich IP8 4DE
Western Suffolk LSP	Cathy Manning West Suffolk House, Western Way Bury St Edmunds, IP33 3YU
Faith Reps	Chris Yule 1 Thorney Road, Capel St Mary Ipswich, IP9 2HL
Babergh East LSP	Tim Mutum Babergh District Council, Corks Lane, Hadleigh, Ipswich, IP7 6SJ
Hadleigh High School – Dual Use Sports Centre	Hadleigh Sports Centre Highlands Road, Hadleigh Ipswich, IP7 5HU
East Bergholt High School – Dual Use Sports Centre	East Bergholt Sports Centre Heath Road, East Bergholt Colchester, CO7 6RJ
Great Cornard Upper School – Dual Use Sports Centre	Great Cornard Sports Centre Head Lane, Great Cornard Sudbury, CO10 0JU
Sudbury Upper School – Dual Use Sports Centre	Sudbury Upper Sports Centre Tudor Road, Sudbury CO10 1NW
Holbrook High School	Peninsula Sports Centre Ipswich Road, Holbrook Ipswich, IP9 2QX
Hastoe Housing Association	Rectory Farm Barns Little Chesterford, Saffron Walden Essex CB10 1UD
Orbit Housing Association	14 St Mathews Road Norwich NR1 1SP
Broadland Housing Association	NCFC, Jarrold Stand Carrow Road, Norwich NR1 1HU
Orwell Housing Association	Crane Hill Lodge 325 London Road, Ipswich IP2 0BE
Flagship/Suffolk Heritage Housing	1 st Floor The Chapel, Keswick Hall Norwich NR4 6TJ
Iceni Homes/Suffolk Housing Society	Unit 13 Forbes Business Centre Kempson Way Bury St Edmunds IP32 7AR
Babergh Tenants Forum	Liz Perryman 38 Stutton Close, Stutton Ipswich IP9 2SG

LIST OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS

NAME	ADDRESS
Suffolk Acre	Brightspace, 160 Hadleigh Road Ipswich IP2 0HH
Suffolk Assoc of Local Councils	Unit 11a, Hill View Business Park Old Ipswich Road, Claydon Ipswich IP6 0AJ
Suffolk Preservation Society	Little Hall, Market Place Lavenham, Sudbury CO10 9QZ
East of England LGA	Flempton House, Flempton Bury St Edmunds IP28 6EG
East of England Development Agency	Victory House, Vision Park Chivers Way, Histon Cambridge CB24 9ZR
Age Concern	Hill View Business Park 14 Old Ipswich Road, Claydon Ipswich IP6 0AG
Federation of Small Businesses	FSB Suffolk, PO Box 144 Thetford IP24 1YA
Haven Gateway Partnership	Suite 3&5 The Centre The Crescent, Colchester CO4 9QQ
NFU	1 st Floor, Norman Way Lavenham, Sudbury CO10 9PY
Sudbury Chamber of Commerce	13 South Suffolk Business Centre Alexandra Road, Sudbury CO10 2ZX
Hadleigh Chamber of Commerce	98 High Street, Hadleigh Ipswich IP7 5EL
Sudbury Citizens Advice Bureau	Belle Vue, Newton Road Sudbury CO10 2RG
Ipswich Citizens Advice Bureau	19 Tower Street Ipswich IP1 3BE
ISCRE	46A St Matthews Street Ipswich IP1 3EP
South Suffolk Leisure	Kingfisher Leisure Centre Station Road, Sudbury CO10 2SU
Suffolk New College	Rope Walk, Ipswich IP4 1LT
Suffolk Constabulary	Police HQ, Martlesham Heath Ipswich IP5 3QS
Tim Yeo MP	House of Commons, Westminster London SW1A 0AA
Suffolk County, District & Borough Councils	
Parish/Town Councils	
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HAVE YOUR SAY LITERAL RESPONSES TO 5 AUGUST 2010

COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC RELATING TO OPTION 1

- Keep to present system to avoid unnecessary costs, whilst working rapidly towards integration with Mid Suffolk which will incur costs in short term but major savings longer term. (Assuming unitary reorganisation is now dead - if it is live, still keep present arrangements until replacement).
- This works, why change it! A very good Council now.
- Option 1 - Unless this is not the cheapest option, keeping costs down is paramount.
- Babergh Council do a very good job! Carry on! and Best Wishes!
- "if it ain't broke don't fix it!"
- Unless a good reason, don't change. What is the cost of each?
- Option 1, in my opinion, is more likely to protect the integrity of the Council decision making and subsequent implementation processes.
- It is excellent as it is - No change required.
- I say no to change for changes sake!
- If it works don't fix it?

COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC RELATING TO OPTION 2

- Option 2 seems to give one person a more autonomous role and run for a possible 4 year term rather than 1 year as the Chairman of the current system. Therefore I believe the current system seems fairer and perhaps more democratic.
- I agree that this is the preferred option, with Councillors getting practice with this system prior to any merger of Councils taking place.
- Option 2 on the basis that this decision to be the model adopted by most other Councils. Fortunately in current climate, whatever system we use it should be streamlined, represent good reform and should not be over bureaucratic.
- Option 2 appears the most streamlined and efficient method but officially the bureau does not have a preference and would welcome the opportunity to continue working with Babergh District Council, whatever its governance structure, in the future.
- It gives a strong streamlined leadership to oversee the closer integration between Babergh District Council and Mid Suffolk District Council.
- This seems to me the simplest and most streamlined system.

- It would seem that organisational changes of one form or another lie ahead for Babergh District Council, that would mean having to change from the current committee system for decision-making. Therefore it would make sense to me that Councillors and Officers get experience of a new process as soon as possible, and I would prefer Option 2.

COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC RELATING TO OPTION 3

- AVOID OPTION 3 AT ALL COSTS, AS THEN IF THE WRONG MAYOR IS ELECTED, THE COUNCIL IS STUCK WITH HER/HIM FOR 4 YEARS.
- Mayor and Cabinet Executive definitely not.
- NOT Mayor.
- I would like us to have a Mayor to match Ipswich.
- Provided Mayor elected by people.
- They have helped me twice. Option 3 Too expensive.

COMMENTS RELATING TO NO PREFERENCE

- Thank you for the offer. I am not fully aware of all option details above therefore I do not have a preference.

OTHER COMMENTS OR WHERE THEY RELATE TO MORE THAN ONE OPTION

- I do not feel any of these options give the residents of Babergh a voice, we would have to talk to the Councillors who would then go to these meetings, there is no route for us to directly talk to you. Ipswich have Forums, public meetings 20 times a year, any one can attend, Councillors, Officers, police and other partners attend and let the people of Ipswich talk directly to them, they are very well attended with fifty plus people attending each time and they have a say in how Ipswich is developed, many consultations happen at these including asking how you would like your Council tax spent and the local Development Framework. All of these issues, ideas and feedback are then fed back into the Council and in to some of the meetings, the issues are also responded to and fed back at the following meeting, so the residents get a response, even if its not what they want to hear, this gives the voice to the people of Ipswich, Why cant you do something like this?
- As the general public elect the members of the Council, we therefore think they should elect the general spokesperson for the Council.
- MY PREFERENCE IS THE ONE THAT SAVES THE MOST MONEY IN SALARIES AND GIVES THE RESIDENTS OF BABERGH AREA THE MOST SAY IN THE RUNNING OF COUNCIL AND THE LEAST INTRUSIVE IN DAY TO DAY LIVING!

- More efficient and streamlined approach.
- I do not have a preference until I have an idea of the cost, and cost benefits of each method. To make a decision based on the information given without some idea of the possible ramifications is not the best way to get the right decision for the Council and people of Hadleigh.
- Babergh DC should be abolished.
- May I suggest that you save money by not printing and mailing out the ridiculous Babergh Matters! It is not necessary - creates extra waste - uses precious trees.
- We have a Mayor already!
- We do not need the expense of a directly elected Mayor for such a small town, large cities I can understand but not somewhere like Sudbury.
- Admin costs of change does not seem appropriate in present state of economy.
- I used to work for the Council Braintree and this system worked well.
- I prefer 1, but 2 is fine if you recommend this. BUT DEFINITELY NOT OPTION 3 please!
- Without coming and studying how the decision making process works in practice I can not see how I can have a preferred option. It is up to you to work in the way you think will benefit us the most (and to date have made an excellent job of it!). It is up to us to tell you if you do not come up to scratch through the ballot box.
- In effect, you are suggesting renaming the Strategy Committee and giving the Chairman of it a 4 year mandate? There is a lack of clarity is this "2 to 9 members" - currently, Councillor Ridley has 10. I can understand not wanting to be tied to 10, but would NOT like the Executive Leader to recruit just 2 and run the thing like that.
- I recognise this as potentially not being the most efficient process approach but I still consider it to be the scheme which is and can be proved to be least open to minimum biased influence and therefore the overall fairest.
- No information is provided on the cost impacts of the 3 options. I find it difficult to believe that each option costs the same. Therefore by leaving the same system in place will be neutral in terms of BDC costs.
- I feel it is important that as much decision making is devolved and therefore gives the electorate a decision making empowerment.
- Sudbury not carefully considered.
- Do more for the very elderly?
- Unitary Authority!
- and a much smaller Council.

- Ceremonial figurehead not needed.
- Don't complicate the issue by introducing more issues. I would support the link up between B.D.C. & M.S.D.C. Keep it simple.
- This is wrong to send personal data and preferences on a card for all to read.
- Why not have a word with the Mayor of Doncaster, who seems to have excellent ideas.
- This system appears to work well and it is not clear from the information what the benefits/drawbacks are to each option.
- I do not want to see another over the top paid Civil Servant! Telling us what to do while being paid more than the Prime Minister - KEEP THEM OUT!!
- They all seem too much red tape and jobs for the boys.
- Who elects the Mayor in Option 3? The other 2 options are appointed. Who appoints the Councillors?
- Both boxes have been ticked for Option 1 and Option 2.
- I would be interested to know if there are any communities home or abroad who have an online democratic voting system for local decision making and if it is successful? If not how ground breaking and cost saving would it be if Babergh were to introduce a way which allowed ordinary local people to actually have a say on individual issues that concern them.
- There is no information to enable a layman to come to a preference. What are the cost implications of the options and if a change were made would that carry costs? What are the respective merits of the options from Council or user points of view and do the Council have a favoured option - if so, why? Whilst appreciating the limited opportunity to make changes, that alone isn't a reason to consider changes - is there any other background to the exercise?
- Any one who repairs the street light in Larchwood Close, not the one on the main road.
- You state that there are advantages and disadvantages of changing system, but you do not say what they are!
- I have a preference for the option that costs the least to run.
- Whatever will save money!
- Which ever option is the least expensive.
- Difficult to make a choice without knowing the advantages and disadvantages of each.
- No information given as to any relative costs involved in these three options.

- We need people who are accountable for their actions, I believe this method would be a step towards that.
- The current structure has failed and nobody of calibre would want to be Mayor of a sub-scale authority.
- What is the point of option one is its not possible to keep the current system the other two put too much power into too few hands - especially the mayoral option.
- This presumes that the status quo is a cost neutral option.
- Why is this being looked at in current economic climate?
- Add (2nd line) add the word "normally" a 4yr.
- Close your pension scheme.
- This is the choice of us both.
- Because it will cost money to change & you in public office must start to understand there is no money left you've all already blown it.
- My very strongly preferred option.
- What ever is lowest cost to taxpayer - stop wasting our money!
- Least Cost Option.
- This is the preferred option, PROVIDED all political parties are represented on the Executive.
- Assuming this is more efficient and you're best placed to select the right person for the job.
- This should not be open to view with address details.
- Chilton Parish Council are concerned with any cost implications that moving to this new format may have upon Babergh District Council finances.
- Say no to Tesco, allotment holders have rights too.
- But stop wasting money on this exercise and save some money by merging with Mid Suffolk Council as soon as possible.
- Chairperson to have a longer term in which to create stability, reviewed after 2 years.
- It is better to have a chairman for one year than four years. Option 1 seems to operate quite well, but if you join Mid Suffolk I would choose Option 3 if Option 1 was not possible.
- Whatever option the Council decide to adopt later this year it should also be cost effective in terms of delivery to the District.

- The Councillors considered the 3 options of the existing committee system, the Leader and Cabinet Executive and the Mayor and Cabinet Executive. The Councillors resolved that as each household in Assington had the opportunity to respond to the survey they did not feel it appropriate for the Council to respond on this occasion.
- Option 1 is preferable, in my view, but Option 2 is possible. I strongly disagree with Option 3, a directly elected Mayor, as I believe it places too much power in the hands of one person. The Council leader should be held to account by the Council, not by the electorate directly, as the latter option causes a division of accountability in my view.
- The case of Miss ***** , Councils staff £1.06 million 2009/10 & now cost of parking machines.
- Requests for personal information should not be on open cards.
- Neither such change acceptable favour of Local Government with abolition Babergh District Council.

STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION (AS AT 5 AUGUST 2010)

THOSE CONSULTED

PARISH/TOWN COUNCILS	76
OTHER SUFFOLK LOCAL AUTHORITIES	7
OTHERS	<u>35</u>
TOTAL	<u>118</u>

BREAKDOWN OF RESPONSES

PARISH/TOWN COUNCILS:

PARISH/TOWN COUNCILS:	20
OPTION 1	13
OPTION 2	6
OPTION 3	0
NO PREFERENCE	<u>1</u>
TOTAL	<u>20</u>

OTHER SUFFOLK LOCAL AUTHORITIES:

ONE RESPONSE RECEIVED (OPTION 2)

OTHER STAKEHOLDERS:

OPTION 1	4
OPTION 2	2
OPTION 3	2
NO PREFERENCE	<u>1</u>
TOTAL	<u>9</u>

COMMENTS FROM PARISH/TOWN COUNCILS

ERWARTON PARISH MEETING (NO PREFERENCE)

I am not in a position to comment on what works best – I hope you reach the best decision for good governance.

BENTLEY PARISH COUNCIL (OPTION 1)

At the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday, 1 July 2010 Councillors, after much discussion, agreed on Option 1 – Existing Committee System.

KERSEY PARISH COUNCIL (OPTION 1)

Kersey Parish Council would like Babergh to continue with the existing Committee system. The Parish Council consider this to be the most democratic option and the only way the Parish Council, through our District Councillor, could be involved in influencing decisions. The Committee system allows full and open debate for the good of the local community without becoming party political.

ELMSETT PARISH COUNCIL (OPTION 1)

The Parish Council wants to keep the same system of representation and accountability.

LAVENHAM PARISH COUNCIL (OPTION 1)

This system works at present. See no reason to change just for the sake of change.

SHELLEY PARISH MEETING (OPTION 2)

In our opinion an experienced leader with a Cabinet Executive is by far the most efficient.

STUTTON PARISH COUNCIL (OPTION 2)

This is the preferred option, PROVIDED all political parties are represented on the Executive.

CHELMONDISTON PARISH COUNCIL (OPTION 2)

Chelmondiston Parish Council, at their meeting on 6 July, proposed to recommend Option 2.

COMMENTS FROM OTHER SUFFOLK AUTHORITIES

ST EDMUNDSBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Should there be a move from the Committee structure to the Executive Arrangement?

In our opinion we can see many advantages in having the executive arrangements in place.

The decision making chain is stronger and there is a clear line of accountability between the decision and the portfolio holder.

There is also a small group of Members who have the responsibility for the overall direction/policies of the Council. Thus, there can be a much stronger focus on the direction of the Council which would not be diluted by a Committee system which, almost certainly, will take a "departmental" view rather than a corporate view.

The size of Cabinet and the portfolios will need to be considered carefully.

There is no doubt that the decision making cycle is speeded up considerably under the proposed executive arrangements. So, in summary to this particular question, we feel the advantages are ones of (a) clarity (b) corporate "purposefulness" (c) clear lines of accountability and (d) speeded up decision making.

Are there any disadvantages?

Obviously there will be and, possibly, the major one of these is backbench/opposition Member involvement.

If an executive is established, the role of backbenchers is limited and, certainly, considerably less than it would have been via the previous committee systems.

You will, we feel, need to establish arrangements to keep these Members informed. Hence, in St Edmundsbury, we issue a Members' Bulletin (weekly) method but, occasionally, things slip through the net.

Additionally, on the political front, the Group system will be required to check out some of the executive's thinking.

Keeping the Executive in Check:

Effective scrutiny arrangements will need to be established should you make the changes. Our feeling is that this is often the area which (to be fully effective) is the most difficult to achieve. The scrutiny function needs to be adequately resourced and, in St Edmundsbury, we have a dedicated member of staff who is from the democratic services team.

What sort of Executive Arrangements? Leader and Cabinet or Mayor and Cabinet?

This is really up to you to decide since you will know the area etc.

From St Edmundsbury's point of view, the Leader (elected from the majority Group) seem to sit more comfortably with the area and its Mayors for the town of Bury, the town of Haverhill and, indeed, for the whole Borough. I guess this will be repeated in Sudbury and Lavenham etc.

COMMENTS FROM OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

IPSWICH AND DISTRICT CITIZENS ADVICE (NO PREFERENCE)

Option 2 appears the most streamlined and efficient method, but officially the Bureau does not have a preference and would welcome the opportunity to continue working with Babergh District Council, whatever its governance structure, in the future.

SUFFOLK ACRE (OPTION 3)

Given a strong streamlined leadership to oversee the chosen integration between Babergh District Council and Mid Suffolk District Council

SUFFOLK NEW COLLEGE (OPTION 2)

More efficient and streamlined approach.

SUFFOLK CONSTABULARY (OPTION 2)

Option 2 on the basis that this seems to be the model adopted by most other Councils. Fundamentally in current climate, whatever system we use it should be streamlined, represent good reform and should not be over-bureaucratic.

HADLEIGH LEISURE CENTRE (OPTION 1)

This system appears to work well and it is not clear from the information what the benefits/drawbacks are to each option.

<p>ADVANTAGES OF LEADER AND CABINET OPTION</p>	<p>DISADVANTAGES OF LEADER AND CABINET OPTION</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leader and Cabinet assume responsibility for ensuring delivery of Council’s services within remit of the policy framework and accountability is therefore easier to identify. • Decision-making tends to be more focused. • Collective decision-making of Cabinet provides greater support to strategic decisions. • Affords flexibility for responsive and reactive decision-making. • Recognised by Government as means to secure strong and accountable leadership. • Position of Leader commands authority and respect amongst other councils. • 4-year term secures continuity of leadership providing stability and enhancing deliverability of Council objectives. • Faster decision-making. • Facility for specific delegation to portfolio holders. • Officers would get clearer and more effective direction. • The successful co-operation with other councils, and possible future mergers of services etc., make it necessary for Babergh to be aligned to the working method of other councils: and the cabinet method is that method. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-cabinet members may feel disenfranchised and excluded from a decision – making role. • The cost of democracy may increase, particularly through Members allowances. • Some Members might fear that it gives too much ‘power’ to the Leader and cabinet and that other Members will be sidelined. • If the Leader is not keen on change then business of the Council could be stifled. • Greater time demands on the leader / cabinet could preclude even more people, making it more exclusive – older and richer but not representative.

<p>ADVANTAGES OF LEADER AND CABINET OPTION</p>	<p>DISADVANTAGES OF LEADER AND CABINET OPTION</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-controversial decision-making would be more streamlined through delegated powers. • Through delegated powers there may be a reduction in the number and length of meetings. • A Leader and Cabinet made up of Portfolio Holders so the Public know who is responsible for what thereby strengthening the accountability of these particular Members. • With or without a political administration, gives focus to Council decision-making and properly delegated responsibility to cabinet members and the appointed Leader and greater clarity for the Officers. • Assists the Council in its governance arrangements • May answer the challenges as to leadership during the CPA process. • Gives portfolio holders and officers a chance to work closer together. • Opportunity for ungrouped Members to be portfolio holder. 	

<p>ADVANTAGES OF EXISTING ARRANGEMENTS (FOURTH OPTION)</p>	<p>DISADVANTAGES OF EXISTING ARRANGEMENTS (FOURTH OPTION)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suited to small authorities that can operate on consensus. • Operated reasonably effectively in the past and did achieve a Good CPA rating in 2004. • Discussions at PLG and through groups mean decisions don't normally end up as surprise. • Structure considered inclusive of all members who have more input and are more involved in discussion and decision-making. • Perceived as democratic means of decision – making with all political groups represented on Strategy Committee. • Improvements to the existing arrangements could be made which could largely replicate the switch to leader / cabinet with much less effort and cost. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic leadership is less focused, particularly as an authority with no overall political control. • Contentious decisions can be delayed or not taken • Lack of direction impacts upon decision-making giving rise to mixed messages to staff and public. • Reduced influence at local, regional and national level. • Not recognised by Government as the most effective structure for decision-making. • Inappropriate structure if merger of Councils • Implementation of LGPIH Act 2007 will marginalise the committee structure • Committee system decisions take longer to resolve. Responsibility and influence rests with the Officers rather than with Members. • Can make for a pretty punishing schedule for Strategy chairman with little opportunity to delegate. • Officers are able to lead rather than be led.

<p>ADVANTAGES OF EXISTING ARRANGEMENTS (FOURTH OPTION)</p>	<p>DISADVANTAGES OF EXISTING ARRANGEMENTS (FOURTH OPTION)</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When working jointly means that representatives from Babergh have to be appointed by full Council, with no clear line of feedback to the existing PLG and Committee structures. • Development Committee have to rely on the group meetings to be involved in policy.

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