Summary of consultation responses - Members – January 2009

What has gone well?	Housing Management and Planning Committees working well
	More open and transparent
	Quicker decision making
	Closer liason with Officers
	More informed
	The transition to the new Constitution went smoothly
	The openness of Cabinet Member Meetings
	Audit and Licensing and some other Regulatory Committees, including Standards, operating well and inclusively
	Decisions made more quickly
	Introduction of political assistants
	Introduction of webcasting (but technical problems remain)
	The principle of the Forward Plan (but not been able to get the reports)
Cabinet Meetings and Cabinet Member Meetings	Would like more debate at Cabinet and Cabinet Member Meetings
	Difficult for Members to raise issues/speak at these meetings.
	Physical layout not welcoming or inclusive – a more inclusive approach would be welcomed
	Redesign the seating arrangements in meetings which are perceived to be hostile and unwelcoming
	Access to information and opportunity for debate greatly reduced
	Would like to be able to speak at these meetings as of right
	Grant speaking rights at all public and private Cabinet Member meetings

	A disproportionate amount of responsibility allotted to the principal opposition group
	Should allow cross party involvement at these meetings – ie a seat at the table for Greens and Lib Dems
	Opposition Parties need access to Officer briefing on Cabinet papers
	Involve main spokespeople of all parties in Chair's briefings
	Cabinet meetings too confrontational
Decisions /agendas at Cabinet and Cabinet Member meetings	Not enough business on some CMM agendas
	Agendas for some meetings very thin
	Difficult to justify resources spent on CMMs.
	Decisions should either be taken at Cabinet or by the Member and reported to Cabinet
	Lack of seat at the table at these meetings means do not attend
	Decisions driven further from (non Cabinet) Members and the public gaze
	Revisit the officers' delegated powers to see how they have been affected by the introduction of the Cabinet system
Community Affairs and Inclusion	Lack of CMM for this portfolio means there is no place for a dialogue on these issues
Special Cabinet Meetings	Need clarity on when these can be called and how
Council – Notices of Motion	Clarify what NOMs can cover
	Too many hoops to get through – Members should be able to ask the Administration to consider action
Council	Council is the only forum for genuine debate

	Council is being used instead of Cabinet/CMM to debate issues
	There should be more Full Council meetings
	Report substantive decisions to Council for review
	NOMS/questions and supplementaries escalating
	Opportunities to debate major issues are limited to five general council meetings a year – should increase number to 11 per year
	Urgency Committee of Council should be politically proportionate
Scrutiny	Clarify limits on number of panels to ensure not overloaded
	Look at other models eg Birmingham to improve understanding and best use of scrutiny
	The Scrutiny Commission needs to operate more as a filter for the work of Panels and ensure that work is not duplicated with work already underway
	The OSC has not undertaken work requested of them
	Clarify the role of OSC
	Reduce the number of reports for noting where no action from scrutiny requested.
	Policy development role is not embedded.
	Too many reports to note.
	Forward Plan timing not effective to assist with work programme.
	Need training for Officers and Members and look at other models that are working well
	A disproportionate allocation to the principal opposition group re Chairs/Deputy Chairs
	Not on top of how scrutiny works
	Pre decision policy development role not working

	Comments made by Scrutiny Panels not taken to Cabinet In practice scrutiny has very little direct power or influence Ensure urgent decisions cannot be made exempt from call-in Separate Scrutiny Committees for ASC and Housing Separate Scrutiny Committees for Environment & Community Safety
Regulatory Committees	Change the size of Regulatory Committees to odd numbers