SCRUTINY REVIEW PANEL 1 – 2013/2014

GOVERNANCE

DRAFT FINAL REPORT

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CHAIR'S OVERVIEW

Councillor Anthony Young
(Panel Chair)

(The Chair to provide the text for this section)

1.0 <u>INTRODUCTION</u>

1.1 The main *purpose* of Scrutiny Review Panel 1 – 2013/2014: Governance was to review the existing governance arrangements with a view to making recommendations for the future governance arrangements for Ealing Council.

1.2 Since the introduction of the Local Government Act 2000, Ealing Council has been operating a Cabinet and Leader model of governance. Under this system, the majority of decisions are taken by the single-party Executive (or Cabinet) either in the Cabinet meeting or by individual Cabinet Members. The Executive is held to account for their policies and decisions by the cross-party Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Scrutiny Panels.

1.3 New legislation (the Localism Act 2011) now allows local authorities to choose which governance system they operate from the following options:

   (a) Executive Arrangements (such as an elected Mayor and Cabinet or a Leader and Cabinet);
   (b) A Committee System; or
   (c) Alternative Arrangements (as prescribed by the Secretary of State).

2.0 <u>METHODOLOGY</u>

2.1 The Panel received reports and presentations from internal services, external agencies, expert witnesses and residents at their meetings. There were five scheduled meetings in the year that were held in Ealing Town Hall. The Panel also conducted site visits within and outside the Borough.

2.2 In addition, the Chair and Vice Chair sought the views of a cross-section of Councillors, ex-Councillors and key officers in one-to-one meetings with them.

2.2 The Panel decided against co-opting any additional representatives as it would have been difficult to have a balanced representation from the numerous establishments falling within this remit.

Visits

2.3 The following visits were undertaken:

   <u>Within the Borough</u>
   • Neighbourhood Ward Forums

   <u>Outside the Borough</u>
   • Isleworth and Brentford Area Forum, London Borough of Hounslow
   • Brent Connects Area Forums (Brent Connects Willesden and Brent Connects Kingsbury & Kenton), London Borough of Brent
   • Joint Local Government Association and Centre for Public Scrutiny Good Governance Workshop

2.4 The Panel's work was publicised in the Council's free magazine, Around Ealing, local websites such as Ealing Council and Ealing Community Network, etc. and direct emails.

3.0 PANEL FOCUS

3.1 The Panel's main focus was to consider the following key areas and make recommendations for the future structure of Ealing Council that will ensure a more efficient and effective decision making:

- The implications of the Localism Act 2011; and
- The Council's Current Governance Arrangements incorporating:
  - Quasi-judicial Bodies
  - Scrutiny Function
  - Public Engagement (including petitions, community calls for action, consultations, etc.)
  - Health and Wellbeing Board
  - Neighbourhood Governance
  - Cabinet and Council

3.2 The Panel endeavoured to ensure that the views of all the major stakeholders were incorporated in the review (e.g. experts, key service officers, Committee Chairs – past and present, charitable and existing groups; public, voluntary and private sectors; etc.)

4.0 DETAILED CONSIDERATIONS
Current Governance Arrangements at Ealing Council
Background

4.1   The Local Government Act 2000 (the 2000 Act) radically changed the decision making structures of local government. Central to these reforms was the clear separation between the decision-making and scrutiny roles of local authorities. The 2000 Act required councils to adopt a new governance structure, moving away from decisions being taken by cross party committees and introducing an executive with a wide-ranging leadership role – with a scrutiny function required to be in place to ensure transparency.

4.2   At the time, Ealing Council adopted the Leader and Cabinet model of governance and the structures that are still largely in place. The current constitution was also adopted at that time and has been regularly reviewed and updated since then. The largest and most fundamental Ealing governance review since 2000 relates to officer delegated powers, which were fully codified and updated in about 2004.

4.3   Part 3 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 introduced amendments to the Local Government Act 2000 relating to local authorities' executive arrangements. This implemented the Government's proposals set out in the Department for Communities and Local Government White Paper "*Strong and Prosperous Communities*" published in 2006 and favoured vesting all executive powers in the leader or an elected mayor in order to achieve the aim of securing 'stronger leadership' which it considered to be the most significant driver for change and improvement for local authorities.

4.4   In particular, the Act provided for the adoption of either
       - A Leader and Cabinet executive or
       - A directly elected Mayor and Cabinet executive model.

4.5   A third option, Mayor and Council Manager, originally outlined in the White Paper and which provided for a directly elected executive was dropped during the passage of the Bill through Parliament after it was rejected in the House of Lords.

4.6   Prior to adoption of the 2007 Act arrangements the Council was required to 'take reasonable steps to consult electors and other interested persons'. This consultation was undertaken between 20 July and 30 September 2009. 52 responses were received, with 73% in favour of the Leader and Cabinet model and 27% in favour of the elected Mayor and Cabinet model. On 25 December 2009, Full Council adopted the Leader and Cabinet model. The changes from the previous Ealing model were so subtle that few Members or officers would have been aware of them.

4.7   Section 63 of the 2007 Act amended the 2000 Act to provide for arrangements for the discharge of executive functions under the new model to be those currently in place under the Mayor and Executive arrangements. In practice this means that the Council's executive functions are now vested

in the Leader and the Leader is responsible for determining how those powers should be discharged not the Cabinet as at present. The Leader appoints Cabinet Portfolio Holder members and these appointments are reported to Full Council. Under the previous arrangement it was Full Council that made these appointments.

4.8   The Localism Act 2011 introduced further levels of choice to local government governance via changes to the Local Government Act 2000. In particular, the 2011 Act allows for the possibility of Councils returning to Committee-style governance arrangements (i.e. similar to the pre-2000 arrangements). A Council can return to Committee-Style governance if so wished, pending the passing of a resolution at Full Council which following requisite legal and public notices, would take effect from the following May. If the Council then wishes to change governance arrangements again within 5 years of the decision the Council would have to hold a public referendum on the decision.

Constitution

4.9   The responsibilities of Ealing's Cabinet Portfolio Holders are set out in Part 3 of the Council's Constitution. These listed responsibilities do not necessarily conform to the different officer teams. Where a particular area of Executive responsibility is not specified, it will fall within the portfolio of the Leader.

4.10   Ealing's governance arrangements are set out in full within the constitution. The Director of Legal and Democratic Services is responsible for keeping the constitution up to date. A non-constituted cross-party group of Councillors (the Constitution Review Group) meets privately, with officer support, three times a year and makes recommendations to Full Council for changes to the constitution. As required by legislation, any changes proposed are advertised on the Council's website before being put to Full Council for approval.

Cabinet

4.11   Article 7.03 of the Council's constitution confirms that the Leader is elected by the annual meeting of the Council. Cabinet members are appointed by the Leader and notified to Full Council (see Article 7.06). Portfolios are established by Full Council and it is the responsibility of the Leader to assign these portfolios to Cabinet members.

4.12   The Cabinet consists of the Leader (appointed by the Council every four years) and a Cabinet comprising 7 additional members (although the legislation allows for up to 9) appointed by the Leader.

Shadow Cabinet

4.13   The Shadow Cabinet is appointed by the Leader of the Opposition and notified to Annual Council. The Shadow Cabinet is a constituted public meeting and has powers to call-in key Executive decisions. There is no legislative requirement for a Shadow Cabinet and many Councils either do not have a Shadow Cabinet at all, do not support it as an official Council meeting, or ascribe no call-in powers to it.

Council-side Committees

4.14   Non-executive functions are required to be dealt with by Full Council or (where legislation permits it) by a specified council-side committee. In Ealing, the principal council-side committee is the Regulatory Committee, and that Committee is responsible for any council-side functions not formally delegated to a different committee. Full details of the council-side committees at Ealing and their powers and responsibilities are set out in Part 3 of the Council's Constitution. The manner in which many decisions are to be taken is often tightly prescribed by legislation. For example, the size of Licensing Committee and the timing of hearings by some its Panels, are specified by the Licensing Act and related regulations.

Scrutiny

4.15   Ealing has a very active Scrutiny function, which is required to consider a relatively high number of call-ins of key Executive decisions. The Council also continues to maintain a number of Specialist Scrutiny Panels, although the only one the Council is statutorily required to have is the Panel which scrutinises health functions.

Officer Decisions

4.16   In order to ensure that decisions are taken in an efficient and timely way and public meeting time is used effectively, most decisions of the Council (i.e. both Executive and Council side) are delegated to officers. The scheme of officer delegations is fully codified and up to date and set out in Part 8 of the Council's Constitution. In the main, decisions are delegated (i.e. responsibility is given) to Director level. It is then for each Director to determine whether or not to authorise officers in their team to exercise those delegated powers on the Director's behalf. If such authorisation does happen then the Director will still retain responsibility for the decisions taken.
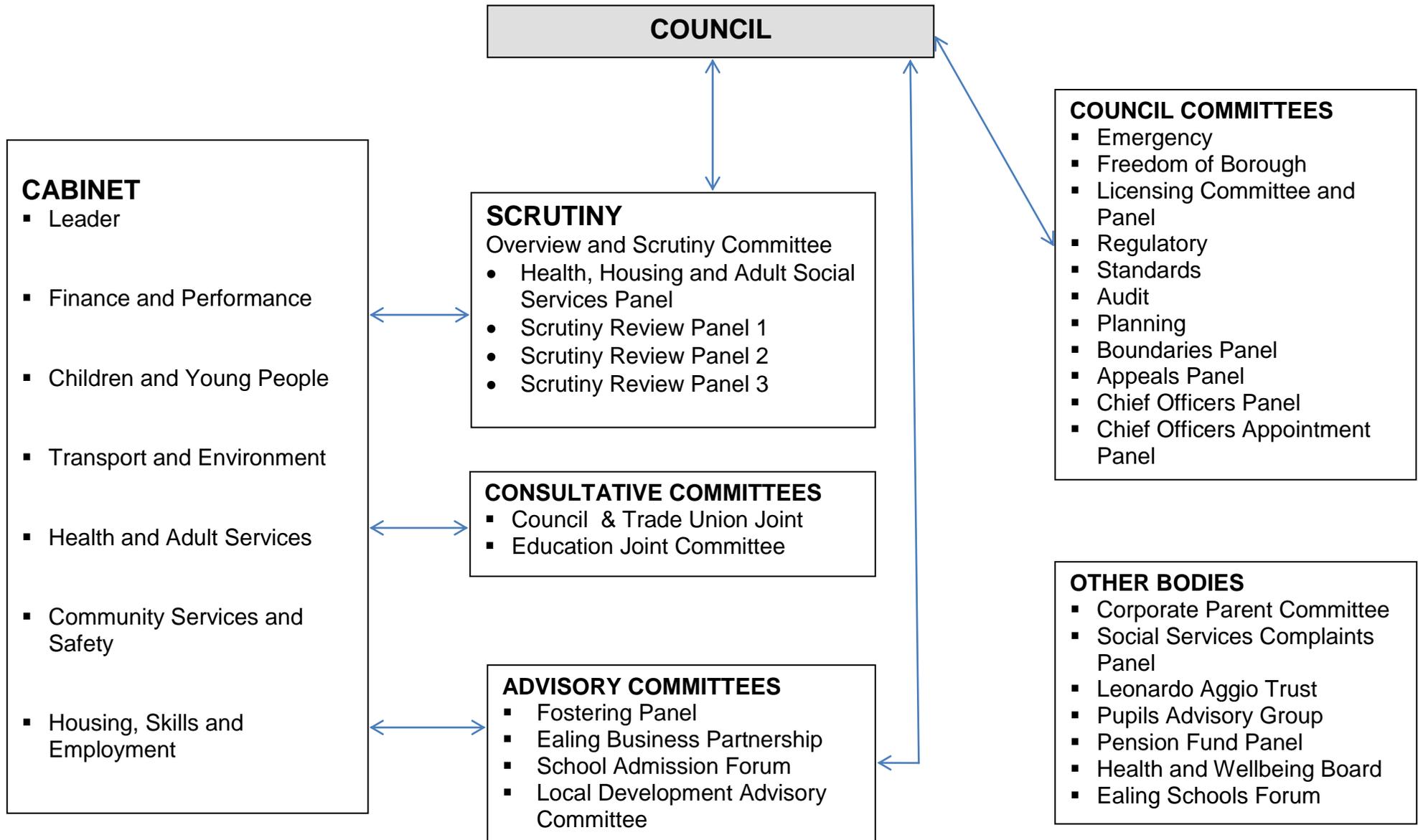
Ward Forums

4.17   In November 2007, Cabinet approved a new model of Neighbourhood Governance, to replace the borough's then existing arrangements of seven Area Committees which had existed since the modernisation of local government in 2000. Ealing Council no longer has Area Committees although many Councils do. Instead, Ealing has set up a Ward Forum for each of its 23 Wards. Each Ward has been allocated a budget. Governance of these Forums can legitimately be "light", by reason that the Forums do not actually take any decisions; rather, they make recommendations to the relevant Cabinet Portfolio Holder – which the Portfolio Holder may go along with or not. This arrangement allows each Ward Forum maximum flexibility in the way it organises its business.

Structure

4.18   The structure of Ealing Council Member level bodies is summarised in the table below.

EALING COUNCIL – MEMBER LEVEL DECISION MAKING STRUCTURE 2013/2014

COUNCIL

CABINET
- Leader
- Finance and Performance
- Children and Young People
- Transport and Environment
- Health and Adult Services
- Community Services and Safety
- Housing, Skills and Employment

SCRUTINY
Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Health, Housing and Adult Social Services Panel
- Scrutiny Review Panel 1
- Scrutiny Review Panel 2
- Scrutiny Review Panel 3

CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES
- Council & Trade Union Joint
- Education Joint Committee

ADVISORY COMMITTEES
- Fostering Panel
- Ealing Business Partnership
- School Admission Forum
- Local Development Advisory Committee

COUNCIL COMMITTEES
- Emergency
- Freedom of Borough
- Licensing Committee and Panel
- Regulatory
- Standards
- Audit
- Planning
- Boundaries Panel
- Appeals Panel
- Chief Officers Panel
- Chief Officers Appointment Panel

OTHER BODIES
- Corporate Parent Committee
- Social Services Complaints Panel
- Leonardo Aggio Trust
- Pupils Advisory Group
- Pension Fund Panel
- Health and Wellbeing Board
- Ealing Schools Forum

Key Issues

- The large sizes of Committees and number of Councillors at the Council should be reviewed for more effectiveness.
- There are legal options to consider reductions in the numbers of Councillors should the Council wish to take that route.
- The Council needs to make its actions more transparent to allow for fuller public understanding of the decision making process.
- The role and usefulness of the Scrutiny function within the governance arrangements.
- The issue of officers being 'cagey' with the release of their reports that has been highlighted through many of the Council's Committees e.g. Planning and Cabinet.
- Consider the feasibility of the Forward Plan to contain more information. The amount of background and contextual information provided on forthcoming Forward Plan items does not always allow for Councillors to understand the full implications of forthcoming items.
- The need for a longer run-in period than the current 28 days, possibly a period of 3 months, should be suggested for the Forward Plan and this should be applied consistently for all items.

Interviews on Ealing Council's Current Governance Arrangements

4.19   The Chair (Cllr Anthony Young) and Vice Chair (Cllr Yoel Gordon) interviewed key officers and Councillors/Ex-Councillor in one-to-one meetings to seek their views on Ealing Council's current governance arrangements. The responses are summarised below.

4.20   *General*

<u>What Works Well</u>
- Greatest strength is Members and Officers working hard and well together with respect for each other.
- Ealing Council's strength is its robust political structure, challenge and debate (have been seeing this at Scrutiny and Council).
- Ealing has effective arrangements in place e.g. priorities, performance, etc. and this is a strength.
- Small 'p politics.
- Good induction process.
- Have better discussions at some Committees e.g. Audit, Standards and Pensions.
- The number of Councillors should remain 3 per Ward.
- In a Committee System decisions would take longer.
- Cabinet and Scrutiny Model is the best.

<u>What Does Not Work Well</u>
- Don't make best use of backbenchers as they have a lot of enthusiasm and energy.
- There are presently two arms of decision-making – Cabinet and Council.
- Knowledge not always shared.
- Not everyone gets involved or is engaged.
- Some Members may just have been put there to make up the numbers.
- Training is essential especially on Committees such as Audit, Pensions, Licensing, Planning, etc.

- Greater emphasis needs to be placed on the Ealing Borough as a whole rather than just running Council services e.g. the Council's role regarding academies, etc.
- Not everyone participates actively in the discussions.
- We haven't got decisions around staffing matters right.
- Appeals for dismissals should not be going to Members especially as some end up in the Employment Tribunals.
- Jargon/language can be a problem.
- A Mayor can be an issue.
- The vertical division of local authority work in the old Committee System was the opposite of the present joined-up working.
- As a Leader, my biggest issue was officers – being able to understand and work with them effectively.
- Presently, there are lot of Councillors who are not engaged.
- There needs to be a proper and increased governance of partnership working. Need to ensure that Scrutiny is looking at these on a borough-wide and sub-regional level.
- Members could behave better.
- More debate, dialogue is achieved at meetings in the Committee System.
- The old Council System could be boring.
- Old structure – more boring but more worthy.
- We could have 48 Councillors either 3 Councillors per Ward in fewer Wards or 2 Councillors per existing Wards.

4.21   ***Cabinet***
What Works Well
- Came into being in 2000 and has simplified decision making.
- This is an efficient way of making decisions.
- This move gave a more joined up working (as a team rather than an individual).
- A cohesive corporate body responsible for all the Council.
- Cabinet system works well.
- Cabinet does work when you are in control.
- The present Leader allows people to speak at the meetings.
- Good Officer/Member relationship.
- Shadow Cabinet can ask questions.
- It provides an opportunity to have a grumble but only rarely do things actually get changed.
- Members of the public are able to attend but not a successful means of engaging the public as no debate takes place.
- Call-in Option is applicable.
- Cabinet gives the Members clarity and policy direction.
- Forward Plan gives Cabinet a flavour of what is coming up and the issues for the Portfolio areas.
- Cabinet system is faster in making decisions than the old Committee System.
- Having Opposition at Cabinet is a good thing in challenging Cabinet decisions.
- Cabinet does not feel like rubber stamping as there is a process that happens beforehand.
- Big decisions need to be made at Cabinet.

- Report writing is reasonable under the present system.
- Has broken down the barriers and for Departments to work together rather than separate entities e.g. the previous Education Committee, etc.
- Rigorous process in place to shape the reports.
- Need to have a decisive body which can make decisions and is accountable.

What Does Not Work Well
- Cabinet is not a Committee so we do not get the same discussion as a Committee.
- Shadow Cabinet should be given the opportunity to discuss and debate matters.
- Councillors represent the public but unable to speak effectively on their behalf.
- Speaking at Cabinet meetings should be formalised as for Council meetings.
- Should make it into a Joint Committee by joining it up with the Shadow Cabinet. However, this could only happen if we move to a Committee System.
- Propose a Cabinet with a Committee to scrutinise the Portfolio Holder – e.g. an Advisory Committee of external experts and key officer e.g. that of the Local Development Framework.
- Could do away with Cabinet and go back to the old Committee system.
- This is very much a ratification process.
- Is a rubber-stamp job.
- Need to be accessible, more human and engaging.
- Once Cabinet has made a decision then it is harder for others to change the decision especially when there is such a big Majority Party.
- Limited scope to debate.
- Deputies – need to develop and refine this role which should be written in the constitution.
- In this Council, we often feel that if earlier pre-scrutiny has not been undertaken then people who attend Cabinet want to make a point.
- More pre-Scrutiny would also reduce the number of Call-ins.
- Could do a pre-scrutiny prior to the meeting to identify the key issues.
- Not enough time to debate as too may Cabinet papers.
- Delayed reports get put back and then go to another meeting making the agendas for subsequent meetings very long.
- The quality of the decision is important.
- A complete waste of time from the Opposition's point of view.
- We tend to use Call-in as the Opposition as does the public.
- Would bring all parties on Cabinet to improve it.
- If a big issue, the present Leader allows people to speak which is a good thing but need to formalise this process in the same way as for petitions in Council.
- Mentors for Portfolio Holders would be helpful.

4.22 *Council*
What Works Well
- A good democratic tool.

- System based on a national template – putting Cabinet Members on the spot.
- A good opportunity to raise topical issues.
- Tends to attract media attention.
- Should retain its debating role.
- A good forum for political debate.
- Better debates – more topical.

What Does Not Work Well
- Meetings are not particularly efficient as works at a pantomime level but then this is quite common in most local authorities.
- Can sometimes be a circus with parties bashing each other.
- Need to have shorter more relevant agendas but lengthen the duration for debate.
- Could reduce the number of motions.
- I would reduce the number of Council Questions to 4. Answers are prepared by officers and some Councillors go off the script but in the main keep to it.
- Not all reports are debated – there should be some discussion on each.
- Reports should be looked at before motions.
- The subject of the debate could be more focussed.
- Pointless having a debate on a decision that has already been taken.
- Is a waste of time these days!
- Greater control of agenda is needed.
- The old Council system could be boring.
- Too many Written Questions, 50-70.
- It is a farce.
- It is more of a Punch and Judy show – entertainment.
- Should allow more public engagement as this is a good thing.
- Most tribal, the two Groups come together and have a fight.
- The public goes when this happens as they don't like tribal politics.
- Need to stop Councillors being tribal.
- Bad place to make decisions.
- Questions are not there to glean information but to trip people up.
- Motions should be more relevant and focus on residents and policy.
- If Call-in, OSC could refer matters to Council instead of Cabinet. This would give far more purpose to Council.
- Need to get rid of the Mayor (including car, staff, etc.) as the main purpose is raising money for charity.
- If Minority Administration/Coalition Administration then proportionality should be applied.

4.23 **Scrutiny**
What Works Well
- Scrutiny is a statutory requirement since 2000 and works well.
- Over the years, quite an effective Scrutiny function has evolved at Ealing.
- Comprehensive set of processes.
- Enables 'blue sky' thinking.
- Scrutiny does have a value.
- Backbenchers engaged in the Scrutiny process.
- Hold the Executive to account.

- Look in detail at policy areas, what is happening elsewhere, best practice, etc.
- At Ealing, this is much focused compare to some Local Authorities.
- Ealing has an open and transparent Scrutiny function to ensure good governance (e.g. Hammersmith has tighter criteria so less challenging).
- It is a much improved and innovative structure
- Provides continuing challenge.
- It is one step removed from decision making.
- The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is one of the few bodies that half serves its functions.
- The public having the opportunity to speak at these meetings is a good thing.
- The public is often quite impressed with the detailed discussions that take place in scrutiny meetings.
- Scrutiny does have an impact.
- External participation is good.
- The key stakeholders are consulted on issues.
- Has more capacity for careful deliberation.
- Call-in – it is quite effective as enables a good debate.
- If a topic is chosen correctly then can work very well. Topics need to be meaty rather than lots of different smaller ones.
- More conducive to partnership working.
- The call-in process is very valuable so need to continue to work on improving this for the future.
- A distinct job in holding the Executive and others to account.
- Member visits – Scrutiny does this in a more focused way which is effective.
- Generally well informed.
- Recommendations normally sensible and coherent.
- The Health/Social Services Scrutiny works well although this is quite unusual.
- Works best at 'blue sky thinking' and at holding other bodies to account.
- Scrutiny is more strident than the old Committee System.
- Productive work is done in the Scrutiny Committees.
- The Ealing Riots Panel was a short constructive one and the Members were engaged.
- A good testing ground in assessing whether the Chair can control a meeting, etc.
- Do like the call-in process – at one time we even had a separate Scrutiny Panel dealing with this.
- Strength – even the Administration accepts to look at things again.
- I prefer the Specialist Panels but need to have the right Members on a Panel.
- Over the years, some very good stuff has come out of the Scrutiny Panels.
- The Scrutiny Conference was excellent and I was engaged in the process of scoping the new Panels.
- Good to have a debate on something.
- Call-ins have gone well.
- Like research and working with a good officer to identify gaps, etc.
- Scrutiny brings out the best in Members.

- Got more out of the officers.
- Got some things done.
- Liked to work on some Panels.
- Call-ins – give the public an opportunity to put forward their points to Non-executive Members to shine light on the dark corners.
- It works as have had some long tough evenings at Scrutiny meetings being held accountable.
- No point in having Scrutiny if items are not regularly Called-in.
- These Panels are less hostile.
- Gives the Opposition a forum to have a proper debate including contractors, etc.
- OSC is the final challenge for the Cabinet.

What Does Not Work Well
- More pre-scrutiny of Cabinet reports is required.
- We don't seem to make best use of scrutiny.
- The Scrutiny Committees are too big because there are too many backbench Councillors on them.
- Each Cabinet Member should have a Scrutiny Committee looking at each Portfolio (scrutinise each Cabinet Member).
- Better to do fewer things well than more things not as effectively.
- The weakness of the Scrutiny Committees is that these are dominated by the majority party.
- Finance/Budget process – key proposals should go to the Scrutiny Panel to select the priorities.
- Detailed backing papers are not put in the public domain but Scrutiny could undertake in-depth scrutiny of the budget papers e.g. contracts, structure charts, etc.
- Sometimes some recommendations are not easily implemented due to resource/funding issues.
- Call-in – not sure what value this adds.
- Call-in – need to ensure this process is not over-used or abused.
- Personalities can play a crucial role. The Chair is often selected on a political basis and not necessarily on ability.
- There is presently a tendency to do more post-Scrutiny but see no reason why more pre-Cabinet scrutiny cannot be undertaken.
- Scrutiny Committees should be smaller in size.

4.24 *Planning*
What Works Well
- It is guided by policy and depends on how good the Committee is.
- Members have to abide by the legal requirements so are not subject to whipping.
- These Committees have a large interface with the public in licensing and granting permissions for their homes/business, etc.
- Allowing the public to speak at these meetings is a good thing.
- The Chairs have been flexible in allowing people from both sides of the argument to speak.
- As a Councillor can 'grand stand' for one's residents.

What Does Not Work Well
- Unlike at Scrutiny Panels then cannot ask questions of applicants, objectors or Councillors so have to ask officers;
- Get officer recommendations in reports;
- Better training required.
- Criticisms are levelled at the planning reports which can be very poor.
- The Planning Service does not serve the public well.
- Could manage large applications better.
- Few Councillors are able to attend daytime Panel meetings.
- Some decisions can be controversial/very controversial.
- As of now Planning is in trouble. The reputation is not good.
- The broad perception is that Members rubberstamp the officer recommendations.
- The change in membership currently is not the best.
- There is a personality problem and a number of people who do not know planning law can make decisions on a whim.
- More time spent on some items than others. Should consider all items equally and not just rubberstamp the non-controversial ones;
- If overturn an officer's decision/recommendation then some Members are unable to give a proper explanation but should give a clean reason to move the officer decision.
- Public sometimes have concern over the restriction to 3-minute speaking slot (the applicant and objector each get this whilst the Ward Councillors get 5 minutes.
- Too much politics in the planning process.
- Internal training sessions are not sufficient.
- Need to bring in external trainers to train Members.
- Concern for Councillor safety limits the use of other larger rooms in the Ealing Town Hall.
- Could have these webcamed so that people in other rooms can also view the proceedings.

4.25 **_Licensing_**
What Works Well
- Daytime meetings as existing licensees are mainly working in the evenings;
- Has training sessions that are useful;
- Has a pool of 15 Councillors to sit on the Sub Committees;
- There are few appeals and not many appealed successfully therefore process deemed to be successful.
- Trying to put more value to it.

What Does Not Work Well
- Meetings can run from 1½-5 hours;
- Planning and licensing applications are not well advertised.
- Whether we can explain the constraints better to the public.
- Daytime meetings – Councillor attendance is more difficult to arrange but is better for applicants, Police, etc.
- The need to find more money for allowances for Councillor Attendance at daytime meetings.
- Has been mainly officer-led in the past.

4.26   **Regulatory Committee**
        What Works Well
        - Diverse agenda but deals with this quite well.
        - Mostly items dealt within one meeting.

        What Does Not Work Well
        - Limited public involvement.
        - Need to get people more interested.

4.27   **Ward Forums**
        What Works Well
        - Better than the Area Committees.
        - These are a success story.
        - Useful and work well for both Councillors and officers.
        - An improvement from what they were.
        - On balance, these work well and are a good way to resolve small local issues.
        - It does test the Councillor's knowledge of their areas.
        - Light governance as are not decision making bodies.
        - Flexibility in that there are 23 different ways to run these.
        - Good for local involvement and consultation.
        - If a Councillor has a vision, good personality and is engaging then these can be very productive.
        - There is a lot of public interaction at these meetings and higher turnout when there is a controversial issue e.g. a CPZ discussed.

        What Does Not Work Well
        - It is down to the Councillors to drive up attendance at these meetings.
        - Would like to see the Section 106 monies considered at this level so that the community gets to decide where and how it should be spent.
        - Some Ward Forums in the borough are poorly attended.
        - Would be useful to look at more strategic things that span several Wards.
        - Would like more young people to go to these as they don't go to institutional structures.
        - Area Committees were a disaster.
        - More devolvement of money on road issues e.g. more money should be spent on the footway rather than on the carriageway.
        - More money should be devolved from capital to revenue budgets.
        - Money should just be seen as 'money' and have flexibility on the Ward's priorities e.g. youth projects, etc.
        - Can be slow in implementing some of the small projects and the public often don't understand the necessary timescales especially of traffic related projects.

4.28   **Shadow Cabinet**
        What Works Well
        - This is a great strength in Ealing.
        - Right that it is recognised as a body.
        - Used to be in private previously but good now that it is a public meeting.
        - Have real power in Call-ins.

- Get to read Cabinet papers and receive officer briefings.
- Minority Group meetings are a good thing.

What Does Not Work Well
- Has limited influence.

4.29 **Neighbourhood Planning**
What Works Well
- Good for identifying and promoting projects.
- Neighbourhood Plan – a democratic process and other processes e.g. planning, etc. will help inform this.
- Can get people, other than objectors, involved.
- A referendum helps to bring in the wider views of what the local people want and helps balance conflicting views.

What Does Not Work Well
- Some people have an agenda.

4.30 **Finance/Budget Process**
What Works Well
- Most effective way of doing this as officers/Cabinet work together on this.
- Easy for the Administration to get to grips with this as well informed.

What Does Not Work Well
- Savings Reports get about two lines at the Cabinet meetings.
- Information to other outside the Cabinet process is rather limited as a summarised schedule is put out in the public domain as otherwise there would be too many papers.
- Does not allow pre-Scrutiny due to the timetable constraints.
- Need to think of what processes should be in place for an emergency budget.

4.31 **Health**
What Works Well
- Health Scrutiny product is good as looks at public health and primary care.

What Does Not Work Well
- How do we engage with them?
- Conflicting objectives for Councils and Health.
- Partnership (a merger of services) but who pulls the strings?
- The Health Service presently works so disjointly.
- The Health Panel is a terrible example to an outside body as doctors are not impressed as papers have not been read by some Panel Members.
- I think the Council is the best place to take the decisions.
- There should be questions about quality, resources and priorities.
- Need to get to grips on how to improve the way this works best for the local community in a more joined up way.

4.32   ***Public Engagement***

What Works Well
- Given opportunity to speak at Scrutiny meetings.
- Involved at local level in Ward Forums.
- The public is happy when it goes their way.
- I am a great believer in letting people have a say.
- There are Annual Surveys.

What Does Not Work Well
- Public may not understand Cabinet, etc.
- Have conflicting views as most of the public are not engaged because they are not interested (working, etc.).
- People have got 'lives' so don't get involved unless they need to.
- We need to renew the relationship and be more open and visible in showing the public how we work.
- There needs to be more cleverer/sophisticated engagement with residents – what is this Council there for?
- Disappointingly low attendance at public meetings.
- Need to proactively engage more with the public and businesses.
- The need to manage expectations.
- Some people have an agenda.
- The problem is empathy.
- It is the perception of people that the decision making process is remote from them.
- Need to go into schools e.g. primary schools, languages, speak to parents, etc. to identify issues.

4.33   ***Other***

What Works Well
- Legal – we have some very good brains in this section and staff get involved in matters as are 'a watch dog' for the organisation to ensure people stay within the rules and work stacks up for the decision;
- Groups – internal politics of the Groups are discussed here.
- Forward Plan – policy-led model is an interesting one and useful tool for – pre-scrutiny items.
- Councillors – there is a lot one can get done as a Councillor which one can't as a non-Councillor.
- An Audit Committee should remain totally independent as the Chair would have an independent role e.g. in fraud cases.
- Finance – Finance staff involved at an earlier stage.

What Does Not Work Well
- Local Strategic Partnership – is this just a talking shop?
- Audit Committee – not sure what additional value the Treasury Management reports add to the work of the Committee.
- Audit Committee – how effective is this in giving assurance that the financial management is working effectively?
- Pension Fund Panel – things happening elsewhere would impact on the work of the Panel.

4.34   *Key Issues:*
- There should be a clear protocol for public engagement.
- Council meetings could be live-streamed.
- Too many items on the Cabinet Agenda – some items could be dealt with as Individual Member Decisions by the relevant Portfolio Holders.
- Call-in – Could a call-in be referred to Council when there is a Minority or Coalition Cabinet?
- Whether Opposition parties should be given the opportunity to debate at Cabinet.
- Employment Appeals Committees should be officer only but this would require a change to officer terms and conditions of employment.

GOVERNANCE AND SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS IN LOCAL AUTHORITIES – AN EXTERNAL PERSPECTIVE

4.35   At the Panel's request, the Local Government Association nominated Ed Hammond, Research and Information Manager at the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) to provide an external perspective on governance and scrutiny arrangements in other local authorities around the country. His briefing was as follows:

Governance Arrangements

Different Governance Models

4.36   The different governance models and some common perceived advantages and disadvantages of each model:

The Committee System

4.37   Under the Committee System decisions are taken by Committees comprising members from all political groups (where there are at least two Councillors in that group). The Council appoints the Committees and sets their Terms of Reference.

4.38   Committees receive briefings and commission reviews to develop Council policy. They are concerned with matters that must be dealt with at Member level and not with the day to day administration of the Council, which is the responsibility of the officers. They can be permanent 'Standing Committees' with a number of 'Sub-Committees'.

Advantages	*Disadvantages*
• Can allow more Councillors to be directly involved in making and influencing decisions.	• There is a risk of decisions being made in silos as cross-cutting issues can be difficult to identify and address. • Widely considered to be inefficient, slow in decision making and overly focused on operational matters rather than policy and results. • This system can require a greater amount of Council officer time to provide briefings and support than has generally been experienced under most Executive Systems.

<u>Cabinet or Executive System</u>
<u>Leader and Cabinet (or Executive)</u>

4.39   A Leader is elected by the Council.

<u>Elected Mayor and Cabinet (or Executive)</u>

4.40   A Mayor is elected by local residents.

4.41   The Cabinet or Executive makes decisions on key strategic issues and is responsible for implementing the agreed policies of the Council.

4.42   The Councillors in the Cabinet are appointed by the Leader of the Council. At least two and up to nine Councillors can be appointed to the Cabinet. Each Councillor has a portfolio or responsibility for a particular Council function, such as Health and Wellbeing or Economic Development and Regeneration.

4.43   In order to ensure that the Cabinet can be held to account for the decisions it makes, local authorities appoint Overview and Scrutiny Committees. These are made up mainly of Councillors who are not members of the Cabinet (i.e. backbenchers) and sometimes include local representatives such as people from the business sector or other public sector organisations. Their role is to assist the Cabinet with policy development and to scrutinise the decisions that the Cabinet is about to or has already taken. The Overview and Scrutiny Committees often cover those functions which mirror the portfolios assigned to Cabinet Members.

Advantages	*Disadvantages*
• Strategic decisions can be taken in a swifter and more coordinated way. • Easier for partnership organisations to work with a Cabinet rather than a number of committees. • Portfolio Holders offer a clear point of contact within local authorities. This is a mechanism through which partners can access and navigate the organisation and its information.	• The political balance on Scrutiny Committees can favour the majority party. • Councillors not on the Cabinet can feel disengaged with the decision making process. • Great deal of responsibility in the hands of a few.

4.44   <u>Difference between a Leader and Elected Mayor</u>

Leader and Cabinet	*Elected Mayor and Cabinet*
The Leader is an elected Councillor chosen by the other elected Councillors	The Elected Mayor is elected by local residents.
The Leader is elected by the Council for a period of up to four years and can only be removed if there is a vote to do this which is	The Elected Mayor holds office for four years and cannot be removed by the Council.

Leader and Cabinet	Elected Mayor and Cabinet
supported by the majority of other Councillors	
There is no additional cost associated with the election of a Leader which would take place at a meeting of the Council.	The Elected Mayor is chosen every four years by local residents in a formal election. This would be in addition to the local elections that would continue to take place.
Each year, the Leader and Cabinet present a budget and major policies to the Council. These can be approved by a simple majority. Any changes proposed by the Council also require a simple majority of the Council.	Each year, the Elected Mayor presents a budget and major policies to the Council. These can be approved by a simple majority but any changes proposed by the Council must have the support of at least two thirds of the Council.
The Leader is one of the elected Councillors.	The Mayor is in addition to the elected councillors.
	The role of a Mayor and Chief Executive Officer of the Council can be merged. This means that a Mayor would have much more administrative power than a Council Leader.

An Alternative Arrangement

4.45   The new legislation presents an opportunity for local authorities to develop a model of governance that sits outside the Cabinet or Committee system. This is called a 'hybrid model'.

4.46   An alternative arrangement could mean that Area Based Committees or the current Neighbourhood Ward Forums are given additional responsibilities in order to better meet the needs of their communities, and deliver services more efficiently and effectively.

4.47   An alternative arrangement could also look at how the Council's decision making structures can empower local Members to take decisions and shape the delivery of services in their areas and how local people can actively engage in the decision making process.

Key Issues
- There are no arbitrary pros and cons to any particular governance structure.
- No one structure can be considered as 'better' than any other.
- The correct structure for a Council is established around the culture, relationships, attitudes and values.
- All involved should have shared realistic expectations.
- Cultural issues can be addressed without a change of structure.
- The Councils that have made the change to a Committee system had found it to be a cost neutral exercise – some London boroughs have chosen to return to the Committee system even though it is considered to be a more natural fit for a rural district council.

- Where Councils have chosen to return to a Committee system, they needed to find a way to build Full Council into a proper decision making system.

Scrutiny in Other Local Authorities

4.48 The Centre for Public Scrutiny has undertaken ten national annual surveys so far. The latest annual survey shows that resourcing and support for Scrutiny is on a downward trend whilst the impact and effectiveness of the function is managing to bear up. However, there are indications that many authorities are unaware of the overall effectiveness of the function.

4.49 Scrutiny works best when the party political element is kept limited. Partnerships are now an increasing part of mainstream Scrutiny work.

4.50 In light of the funding issues that are affecting Councils throughout the country, the amount of FTE officers in scrutiny roles had seen a year on year decrease for the past four years. The average per authority now is 2.09 FTE officers. There is also an increasing trend to integrate officers within the Democratic Services function rather than having Scrutiny as a specialist standalone section.

4.51 Fewer than 50% of Councils responding had any system in place to monitor and track the acceptance and implementation of scrutiny recommendations. Councils without monitoring systems were not appreciably worse resourced than those with such a system. Councils which have a monitoring system in place are 28.4% more likely than those that do not, to perceive the work they do as having a positive impact on local people. Fewer scrutiny recommendations were being accepted and implemented as a proportion of the total (83.36% accepted/62% implemented).

4.52 The average committee size makes no difference to Scrutiny's effectiveness, though it was found that Councils with fewer committees did tend to be more effective. There is no statistically significant impact on effectiveness from proportionate committee chairing. Also, there is no impact on effectiveness from large/small majorities or hung Council or which political party is in power.

4.53 It has also become apparent that Councils were increasingly opting for a streamlined Committee structure. The timescales for task and finish groups were becoming shorter, most were now much shorter than a year, with some even taking place within a series of clustered meetings in a few weeks with a quick turnaround of reports to Cabinet.

4.54 The recommendations highlighted included:
- Thinking about the 'big trends' locally and nationally, and acting on them. These included welfare reform, commissioning, partnership working and resource constraints.
- Tightening up internal systems and prioritising work more effectively.
- Working on developing a culture of openness and honesty, internally and with partners.
- Focusing on outcomes and impact.

4.55   There has been a varying level of success in Scrutiny. Scrutiny Committees at some Councils have influenced significant changes to decisions on key areas e.g. Council Tax levels.

4.56   Even without the Scrutiny Committees' recommendations being implemented, it would always be a forum for constructive debate, rather than the more politically minded arguments that can mar debate at Full Council level.

4.57   Some Councils have call-ins as a regular part of the process whilst in others the constitution makes it difficult for a call-in to ever take place within an authority.

4.58   A call-in process very rarely proves a successful route for implementing changes. Better communication with all Councillors earlier in the reporting process, including the Scrutiny function, leads to fewer Councillors feeling they need to resort to making a call-in.

Key Issues
- Should think about the big local and national trends and act on them.
- Need to tighten up internal systems and prioritise work more effectively.
- Need to work on developing a culture of openness and honesty both internally and with partners.
- The Scrutiny focus should be more on outcomes and impact.

Joint Local Government Association/Centre for Public Scrutiny Workshop

4.59   In October 2013, the Chair attended a joint Local Government Association and Centre for Public Scrutiny Workshop on Good Governance. His brief feedback is as follows:

- An attendance of about 25 Councillors and officers.
- The introduction was short and the most interesting contribution was from Nottinghamshire who had changed from a Cabinet model to a Committee system.
- The Workshop was a good opportunity to discuss governance with others with different priorities – some wanting to change the other way, others where change was a manifesto commitment.
- One or two common themes:
  - Committee System – 'silo' effect;
  - May be too many Councillors;
  - Quality/quantity of decisions;
  - Partnership working is more difficult in Committee System;
  - Report writing deteriorates in a Cabinet System.

SCRUTINY IN EALING
History

4.60   Scrutiny was formed as part of the modern political structures arising from the Local Government Act 2000.

4.61   With a Cabinet owning portfolios cutting across directorates, the Scrutiny function was designed to slice across Council activities in a different dimension. This led to four large bodies named respectively, Borough, Community, Council and Individual. There were also a number of Task and Finish Groups. The Ealing constitution was written so that it was relatively easy for items to be called-in and these were handled by the appropriate Committee. Each Committee met eight times a year.

4.62   The other key decision taken at the time, and which remains today, was the adoption of a middle way in the involvement of the Opposition in Scrutiny. In many Councils scrutiny bodies are chaired by members of the Majority Party whilst in others the opposition performs this role.

4.63   The Ealing approach was to attempt to develop a cross-party structure so that each Committee was chaired by a member of the Opposition Party and Vice Chairs were always of a different party to the Chair.

4.64   Chairs of the Committees received the same Special Responsibility Allowance (extra money to Councillors holding positions of particular responsibility) as members of the Cabinet to demonstrate the "Parity of Esteem".

4.65   The key strategic decision taken on officer support was to have a small dedicated team supporting Scrutiny rather than the hybrid models developed in many places.

4.66   After a few years the structure was revised. This was partly to manage the effort expended, not always usefully, in Task and Finish Groups and also to raise the status of Scrutiny. This could be achieved by making better use of the backbenchers' desire and ability to undertake detailed work through engaging experts, the public and others in properly constituted public meetings.

4.67   The random way in which call-ins could pop up at any Committee made managing both individual work programmes difficult and problematic in implementing decisions if the meetings programme was not favourable. Also, from the new powers and duties relating to Health Scrutiny it was clear that this required a dedicated body.

4.68   Therefore, from the 2004-2005 municipal year a number of changes were made. An Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) was set up to oversee the Panels, the budget and look strategically at areas not covered by other bodies. The Chair of OSC received an enhanced SRA higher than that of Cabinet members and only lower than that of the Leader. Four Standing Panels were created that could make recommendations directly to Cabinet and other decision makers. Additionally, four or five "Ad Hoc" Panels were

also created to formalise the task and finish activity in a manageable way to review a specific topic in detail over the year. The Ad Hoc Panel reports had to be endorsed by OSC before going to a decision maker. One of the Standing Panels was created entirely to handle Call-ins and another to consider Health matters.

4.69   After the elections in 2006 there was a change of administration but the incoming Councillors broadly retained the same Scrutiny structure. The Standing Panels were refreshed to become Education, Leisure and Children's Social Services; Council, Business and Community Partnerships; Health, Housing and Adult Social Services; and Transport & Environment. These largely covered all aspects of the Council's business and beyond. The Ad Hoc Panels were renamed as "Specialist Panels".

4.70   The SRA arrangements were reviewed as part of the cost cutting measures and as a result the Chairs of OSC and the Standing Panels were awarded a lower Cabinet level SRA.

4.71   This structure remained in place for the whole of the 2006-2010 Administration.

Current Arrangements
4.72   In 2010, there was another change of Administration but Scrutiny remained unaltered though with different Members.

4.73   However, in 2011/2012 Scrutiny had to bear its share of the savings required of the whole Council. This entailed a reduction in scrutiny support whilst maintaining the principle of dedicated officers. Thus, the support was reduced from 4 fulltime to 2.3 staff.

4.74   Attempting to maintain quality rather than quantity, a strategic decision was taken not to attempt covering all the activities of the Council and its partners but focusing on key areas of interest. Consequently, the only Standing Panel that now remains is the Health and Adult Social Services Scrutiny Panel.

4.75   There are currently three themed Scrutiny Review Panels which, depending on Members' wishes, either operate by focusing exclusively on a specific topic for a year or take a number of reports around a theme making recommendations as appropriate.

4.76   OSC continues to handle Call-ins and picks up key items not dealt with elsewhere.

Principal Characteristics
4.77   Although structures have changed over the years there are a number of positive elements that are embedded and help to contribute constructively to the Council's work for residents.

4.78   Limited party politics is often noticeable particularly if it is an appropriate topic with tasks for the Members. A good discussion does not enable a

member of the public to distinguish Party allegiance. The three political groups are represented on all Scrutiny bodies. The principle of a member of the opposition chairing a Panel and Vice Chairs being of an opposite party has been maintained. The Members are involved in all aspects of the work.

4.79   In many ways this reflects the mature political culture in Ealing where the role of the Opposition is welcomed. For example, Ealing is one of a few authorities which have a fully constituted Shadow Cabinet that can call-in key decisions. This power is also enjoyed by the second minority group and any five Councillors.

4.80   Executive co-operation, though invariably mixed, is helped by a Leader who was a former OSC Chair. The Corporate Board takes a keen interest, receives regular reports and is prepared to encourage officer participation in many instances. A typical example of Scrutiny's place in Ealing is that the examination of the riots in the summer of 2011 was undertaken through Scrutiny. Scrutiny's good work on the Riots Review was shortlisted in the Raising the Profile category for the Centre for Public Scrutiny's Good Scrutiny Awards 2012.

4.81   Process avoidance is achieved through not having structures that automatically handle Executive or other reports to enable Members to focus on areas of interest but this can sometimes limit relevant pre-scrutiny.

External Involvement

4.82   Over the years, public and partner involvement in Scrutiny has been quite successful with a plethora of significant figures appearing before Scrutiny bodies, a large number of relevant co-optees and many useful contributions from the public.

4.83   Successful Scrutiny is highly dependent on Members' interests, skills and the desire to drive improvement. Over the years, the majority of Ealing's Scrutiny Panel recommendations have been accepted and implemented by the Executive. The implementation of the Scrutiny recommendations is regularly monitored by the OSC.

Key Issues
- The general consensus at Ealing is that there are too many call-ins and that if reports were better initially with more room given to discussion then the Council would see a considerable drop in the number of call-ins.
- A lot of recent call-ins had just been information seeking exercises that could have been resolved at an earlier stage or even by email exchange. Officers need to recognise at which stage full engagement is advisable.
- Cabinet Members have a responsibility to ensure that any reports going out under their portfolio are sufficiently clear in their prose and detailed enough to allow for Councillors to understand the reasoning behind the decisions being taken.
- Some senior officers view the Scrutiny process as a hindrance rather than making use of its constructive function as a 'critical friend'. This can create a challenging environment and a full understanding of the Scrutiny

function from senior management level downwards is needed to help counteract such issues.

- The issue of officers being 'cagey' with the release of their reports also applies to some of the Council's other Committees e.g. Planning and Cabinet.
- Scrutiny Panels can prove to be very useful but there is a need to make them interesting to allow Councillors to feel fully engaged in the topic being considered.
- Site visits and public engagement are important elements of this process.
- In Health Scrutiny, Ealing Hospital and the 'Shaping a Healthier Future' programme had dominated the agenda for the past several years. Now that the Ealing Clinical Commissioning Group (ECCG) is established, Officers are looking to build a strong relationship with them, in which Ealing Health Scrutiny will form an integral part of their decision making processes. A strong relationship with the ECCG is imperative and Officers need to ensure that Scrutiny has a say as early in the process as it can.
- Encouraging the public to engage more with the scrutiny process can help foster positive perceptions towards its importance within the Council's decision making processes.
- Co-option onto Panels is not appropriate to all Panels but co-optees in many cases have made an insightful and knowledgeable addition to the process.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

4.84   The Council provides many avenues for residents and others to engage with the Council other than through their directly elected representatives. Some of these are through complying with the statutory framework and others are local practice.

4.85   Council Meetings
There is no statutory obligation other than holding meetings open to the public and publishing agendas at least five clear working days in advance. However, Ealing engages with the public in a number of ways:

(a)   Although the obligation to hold a debate at Council if a petition reached a certain threshold (1,500 in Ealing) was removed under the Localism Act, Ealing has kept this provision. It has occasionally been exercised.

(b)   Up to five petitions may be presented by the public to a Council meeting. The petitioner gets a response from the relevant Portfolio Holder and is then dealt with as a piece of correspondence. It is acknowledged by Democratic Services and the respective Department responds in due course.

(c)   Questions from the Public have been part of the engagement mechanism for a while and have recently become more popular. The questioner gets an immediate response from the Portfolio Holder and can then ask a supplementary question. No more than five questions can be asked at a meeting.

4.86   The Council also has a statutory facility for the public to create an online petition on the Council website. The Council provides a response to the petition after it has closed. Guidance to potential petitioners and questioners is available on the Council's website.

Cabinet Meetings

4.87   There is no facility for the public to engage directly with the Cabinet at these meetings although the Chair does sometimes exercise his discretion on some issues in allowing representatives of organisations and members of the public to speak.

4.88   Across the country many Councils take a different approach to engagement at Cabinet. The most common approach seems to be a public question time for between 15-30 minutes at the start of the meeting, usually with elements of submitting them in advance and subsequently publishing answers on the website.

4.89   Some allow the public to make statements about agenda items in this time. Less common, but not unusual, is a mechanism for members of the public to make statements or ask questions on specific agenda items – the time allowed for an intervention typically varies from 2-5 minutes.

4.90   All these mechanisms are strictly controlled for advance notification. Written submission deadlines are similar to those that Ealing operates for Council meetings.

4.91   Less common is the unstructured engagement typified by Swindon's Open Forum as follows:

Cabinet Open Forum
A Cabinet Open Forum is held at 6.00pm prior to the start of each scheduled Cabinet Meeting, and is normally held in the Council Chamber. The Open Forum is similar to the 'public question time' that happens at most Council meetings but without the need for questions. It provides the chance to meet with Cabinet Members as well as Group Directors and Directors to discuss matters relevant to the Cabinet and its responsibilities. It provides an opportunity to raise issues and give views. The Forum will normally close at 6.30 pm and the Cabinet will then reconvene for the start of the formal Cabinet meeting. If the Open Forum completes its business earlier than anticipated then the Cabinet Meeting will commence at 6.15pm or at the Forum's conclusion.

Other Bodies

4.92   Engagement protocols differ amongst bodies partly reflecting the subject matter. Thus, Planning with the great interest shown in some issues has very strict protocols. Other bodies generate limited public interest so these have not developed specific protocols. The Local Development Plan Advisory Committee which has intense interest from some groups has developed a strict and detailed protocol for engagement.

<u>Scrutiny</u>

4.93   In order to receive evidence from different sources Scrutiny needs public engagement and proactively seeks out engagement. At formal meetings this is sometimes done through co-option and at other times it is through contacting relevant groups to see if they wish to present to, or participate in, a meeting.

4.94   Scrutiny does not currently operate formal speaking protocols leaving this to the judgment of the Chair though these protocols are quite common in other authorities.

4.95   Scrutiny Members also go out on site visits, hold focus groups or attend activities relevant to a particular topic or review.

4.96   Scrutiny also encourages written submissions on certain topics which are all presented to the relevant Panels. Furthermore, from time to time conferences for the public or the voluntary sector are held to both publicise scrutiny and solicit suggestions for topics.

4.97   It is also regular practice to solicit suggestions from the public before the work programme for the year is agreed.

<u>Ward Forums</u>

4.98   These play a crucial role in Ward Councillors engaging with their communities.

<u>Community/Councillor Call for Action (CCfA)</u>

4.99   Community Call for Action is provided for in the Police and Justice Act 2006 (crime and disorder matters) and Councillor Call for Action is a power in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (other matters affecting the Borough). The Calls for Action enable Ward Councillors to refer to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, or any of its Panels, issues of local concern that affect all or part of the electoral area for which the Member is elected or any person who lives or works in that area, for discussion and action where other methods of resolution have been exhausted.

4.100   CCfAs came into force in April 2009 and there are processes in place. These have not really taken off nationally and there has never been one in Ealing.

4.101   There is also the right to raise a petition to hold an officer to account and to appear before OSC. The text below appears on the Council's website though it has never been used and no one has ever attempted to do so.

Petitions Holding an Officer to Account
Your petition may ask for a senior officer of the Council to give evidence at a public meeting about which he/she is responsible as part of his/her job. If your petition contains at least 3,000 signatures, the relevant senior officer will give evidence at a public meeting of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Committee may consider that it would be more

appropriate for another officer to give evidence. The Committee members will ask questions at this meeting but you will be able to suggest questions to the Chair of the Committee by contacting the Head of Scrutiny up to two working days before the meeting. You will also have three minutes to present your petition to the Committee.

Other Methods

4.102 Councils have different ways of encouraging public engagement. In addition to the methods outlined above, some Councils operate a mechanism whereby questions to the Leader can be submitted at any time and the answers published on the Council website.

Consultations

4.103 Ealing Council is committed to listening to the views of local people when making policies or decisions that impact them.

4.104 According to the Best Value Statutory Guidance, "authorities must consult representatives of council tax payers, those who use or are likely to use services provided by the authority, and those appearing to the authority to have an interest in any area within which the authority carries out functions. Authorities should include local voluntary and community organisations and small businesses in such consultation."

4.105 Thus the duty to consult, similar to the earlier 'duty to involve', is a statutory obligation applying to specified public bodies, requiring them to consult and involve individuals, groups, businesses or organisations likely to be affected by their actions. The duty to involve was introduced in the 2007 Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act.

4.106 The Council and the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) partners have also incorporated "Engaging and Enabling" as one of the three overarching values in the Community Strategy. This value calls upon the Council and partners to ensure that "everyone feels involved in their community and is empowered to help develop solutions to issues they face, and has the opportunity to be involved in decisions about the services they receive wherever possible".

4.107 As part of this, the Council and partners will:
- Agree, as partners, how and when we will consult our communities about the decisions we make and ensure that we follow these principles.
- Have a clear and consistent approach to consultation and engagement and ensure we use each other's knowledge, networks and opportunities for involvement wherever possible.
- Ensure that success at involving local people, and services users' and residents' perceptions of services and organisations, are key measures of success in our work as partners.
- Work with residents to understand and set out the relationship between the citizen and the state, through exploring with residents what public services can and will deliver, and what residents can and are expected to contribute themselves, and by supporting local innovation and community organisers.

- Agree a partnership approach to key elements of the Localism Bill, including the Community Right to Buy, Right to Challenge and Neighbourhood Planning.

Current Process

4.108 The Council currently has a robust consultation and engagement process as part of its duty to consult local people in Council policies and decisions.
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(a) Residents are given an opportunity to have a voice in Council decisions through a dedicated 'Have Your Say' section on the Council website, which contains details of different ways in which residents can express their views (e.g. consultations, ward forums, petitions, and the online Residents' Panel).

(b) The Council regularly consults local people and residents on all of its new (or changes to existing) policies and strategies as well as any instances where a current service is altered in any way. While there is a statutory obligation to consult on changes to certain services (e.g. schools), the Council attempts to consult on all its decisions where possible.

Consultations use a variety of methods, although easy and widespread access to the internet means that online consultations play a predominant role. Online consultations are adequately supplemented with distribution of a paper version where needed. If paper copies are not provided in advance then residents can contact the Council for one.

In cases where face-to-face consultation is needed then this is also organised e.g. with residents in sheltered housing.

(c) The Council also has a group of residents organised as the Online Residents' Panel. The Panel currently has about 750 members who have signed up to be part of any engagement or consultation activity the Council may wish to consult. The Panel's profile is broadly representative of the borough's population for age, gender, ethnicity and employment structure.

The Panel is regularly emailed consultations that are of a borough-wide scope and importance. Recent examples include the consultation on Ealing's Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Council Tax Empty Property Discount consultation, and the Discretionary Housing Payments Scheme consultation.

Results from consultations with the Panel have shown that this method is able to elicit better response from local residents as compared to the general online consultations on the website.

(d) Consultations are carried out as per established best practice and guidance from regional and national bodies on stakeholders, methods, questions and timescales.

(e)   In order to improve customer services an ongoing 'Customer Services Satisfaction Survey' has also been instituted on the website whereby all residents coming into contact with the Council (online, face-to-face or telephone) are requested to feedback on their experience. Results from this survey are used to constantly improve Council services. The survey has partly contributed to the recent refresh of the Council website where online forms have been made easier to find and complete.

(f)   The Council also carries out a Staff Survey and a Residents' Survey every two years to hear, respectively, staff views about working at the Council and residents' views on their experiences of living and working in the borough.

(g)   One way (though not direct) of measuring the success of engagement may be through the biennial Residents' Survey, which asks two questions related to this aspect. Results from the last five surveys are as follows:

The Council…	2007	2008	2009	2010	2012
Involves residents when making	57%	60%	61%	46%	49%
Listens to concerns of local residents	53%	55%	58%	50%	54%

Challenges

4.109   In the past all consultations were logged, carried out or managed by the corporate Research and Consultation team, ensuring consistent quality and standards across the organisation. However, the current team size is now only two full-time staff so there is no overall central control over consultations.

4.110   The present team operates according to a devolved model whereby only advice and guidance on consultations is provided to any officer wanting to carry out a consultation. All operational aspects of the consultation are dealt with by the respective Department carrying out the consultation. To enable this, the corporate team provides regular training on SurveyMonkey, a new user-friendly online survey design tool, to other officers across the organisation to carry out their own online consultations. The team plays a more central role in consultations that are wider in scope and consist of important decisions impacting the Council e.g. the Council Tax Support Scheme, Discretionary Housing Payments, etc.

4.111   In addition, a comprehensive Consultation Toolkit has been made available on the Intranet (the Council's internal website) for reference of any Council

officer wishing to carry out a consultation. The toolkit draws best practice on consultation from national and specialist sources.

4.112   Due to the federated working model, a central database of all Council consultations and details is not maintained centrally. However, the team's records show that it is in the Highways and Transport department where the largest volume of consultations (approximately 3 consultations per month) are carried out on CPZs, road changes, scheme and improvements, etc. Other departments' consultations are less frequent in comparison, averaging about 1-2 consultations every quarter. The Planning and Building Control services also undertake large volumes of consultations but these are conducted directly by the service areas.

4.113   Responses to 'online-only' consultations are usually low. This depends on the subject of the consultation e.g. about 4,000 online responses were received for the libraries consultation. Other consultations that are less salient in the public domain, elicit responses ranging from 200-1,000. This again depends on the subject. CPZ and Highways consultations usually elicit a higher number of responses compared to other consultations on broader policies such as licensing and gambling, etc. For example, the Hanwell and West Ealing road improvements and Castlebar and Pitshanger CPZ consultations received more than 500 responses compared to only five online responses to the Gambling Policy Consultation in 2012.

4.114   However, a disproportionate level of importance should not be placed on simply the number of responses received as it is more important to ensure that all relevant stakeholders and interested parties have been given sufficient opportunity to have their say.

4.115   A further challenge is publicising the consultation widely, largely due to resource constraints. It is not always possible to publicise every online consultation amongst all resident groups. This may partly contribute to low response rates.

Future Improvements
4.116   In the near future it is planned to further improve local involvement through featuring key Council consultations on the Ealing Involved (an LSP initiative) website and working more closely with the Ealing Community and Voluntary Services to promote consultations amongst local residents.

4.117   The Online Residents Panel is continuously promoted through the website and will also feature on the Ealing Involved website – this is expected to lead to many more residents joining the Panel. The Panel should play a key role in resident engagement and involvement.

4.118   Subject to resource availability, the corporate team is also looking to explore the use of social media to promote consultations.

Council's Website – Consultations Section
4.119   The Panel members tested the Consultations Section of the Council's website and their main findings were:

- Reasonably easy to locate although no reference to consultations on LBE home page – by using a-z of services, consultations listed under 'C' and then offers options of looking at past or current consultations.
- Individual consultations have introduction and then survey to complete. Surveys are clear and easy to complete.
- Content of surveys not brilliant in all cases. This is also an issue for paper based surveys – Councillors have contributed considerable ideas to for example, CPZ and LIP paper consultations in the past to refine officers' initial suggestions. Not always clear what stage in the process the consultation relates to and what, if any, impact any responses will have in formulating policy or influencing decision making. For example, current LIP consultation (which follows earlier detailed local consultations) just asks for general (free text) feedback. How would this be analysed or used? Listed buildings register survey is very brief and again non-specific.
- I have just used the link. The content is as exciting as paint drying. When I clicked the pages previous consultations did not come up and the residents' survey took a long time. It was all taking a long time to come up.
- I doubt most people will bother. I am certainly not going to look for a questionnaire taking so long with the introduction.

Questions:
- Why does LBE consult and does our expectation of the process match that of residents?
- What is the best medium for successful engagement?
- Is a conventional webpage enough or should other media such as Facebook be used?
- How do residents get to know about consultations and when they are 'active'?
- What response rate does the Council get to online consultations?

Key Issues
- Members of the public are impressed with the procedure for presenting petitions and asking questions at meetings of the Council.
- Questions and petitions by the public at Council should be given more time over motions.
- The motions raised are not always directly relevant to the workings of the Council.
- The 5 questions by the public currently allowed has proved sufficient as there has not been a meeting of the Council where the threshold has yet been reached.
- No petitions have been received by Council from the public recently and the most recent ones that had been received were initiated by Councillors.
- The option to petition the Council under this scheme was maybe not advertised clearly enough to the public as a way of engaging with the democratic process.
- The Council website could promote petitions more and a link straight to petitions from the Council homepage would help.

- The current level of 1,500 signatories on a petition for debate at Council should remain.
- It is clear from past experience that 30 minutes have often proven too short to allow for a full debate of the item and recommend that more flexibility is needed.
- Cabinet, as the Council's primary decision making body, needs to remain a 'meeting held in public' rather than a 'public meeting'. There are reservations that the Cabinet could instead turn into a 'mini-Council'.
- When allowing individuals to speak, both sides of the argument should be heard so there should be a proper protocol for speaking at Cabinet meetings.
- Acknowledged that by the time the reports are at the stage of being agreed by Cabinet these are too far in the process to be properly subject to further public scrutiny.
- Portfolio Holders should always be encouraged to involve relevant Ward Councillors and visit affected Ward Forums at earlier stages of the report creation process.
- The Overview and Scrutiny Committee always looks at the Forward Plan for upcoming reports that it felt required further scrutiny and will continue to do so.
- It will not be possible to write the need for Portfolio Holders to attend Ward Forums into the rules for governance but recommend that they attend them where possible, particularly when controversial issues are being considered.
- The current protocols for public participation for both the Licensing and Planning Committees work well and should remain as at present.
- Felt that holding an officer to public account is unreasonable. Where an officer is at fault that should be dealt with as an internal disciplinary matter. As the 'public faces' of the Council it should be the relevant Portfolio Holders who are held to account. The Portfolio Holder should be the person to 'put one's head above the parapet'.
- The current threshold of 3,000 signatures is considered to be too high and to encourage public involvement a lower threshold of 300 should be recommended to act as a stimulus to engagement.
- Public consultations on the Council's website seem dry, dull, jargonistic and 'clunky to use'.
- Councillors should be used as a 'focus group' for important draft consultations to ensure that these are relevant and user-friendly.
- Different departments consulting the public sometimes results in third sector organisations suffering 'consultation fatigue' due to the profusion that are received.
- The quality of consultations can be improved and duplication reduced if a centralised cohort of officers working under the Chief Executive's office lead consultations that affect all Wards within the borough.
- Consultations affecting specific Wards (such as some highways consultations) can still be dealt with at a departmental level.
- An exigency process should be built in for consultations that need to be sent out rapidly.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

4.120   The Council was required, under the Health & Social Care Act, to set up a formally constituted Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB). This replaced the partnership bodies that had been previously in existence though Ealing, like many other authorities, had been operating the HWB in a shadow form during the last municipal year. In April 2013, Full Council formally constituted the Board and its membership. The Board also has an agreed Terms of Reference.

4.121   The HWB has held several meetings since and continues to develop its operating practices.

Health Scrutiny

4.122   The Health & Social Care Act also gave Councils greater flexibility in the way they operated Health Scrutiny with the key power of referral to the Secretary of State. This power was given to Full Council meetings. However, Ealing as with many other authorities promptly delegated this power to the Health and Adult Social Services Scrutiny Panel (HASS).

4.123   This has left the Council with two bodies looking at related issues so it is important that they play their respective roles without duplication or omission. However, both the bodies will consider the Clinical Commissioning Group Intentions for 2013-2014. The two bodies apply some key principles:

-   Reports should not automatically go to both bodies – neither HASS automatically pre-scrutinising HWB reports nor HASS receiving HWB reports.
-   However, this does not preclude either body involving the other should it be an appropriate issue.
-   Both bodies publishing Forward Plans will enable Members to identify items of interest.
-   HASS will scrutinise the work of HWB annually via an update report.

Key Issues
● Although the Health and Adult Social Services Scrutiny Panel could make recommendations to the Health and Wellbeing Board it was felt that this should be made explicit within the terms of reference.
● The Health and Adult Social Services Scrutiny Panel should be made more aware of the work being conducted by the Health and Wellbeing Board by including their Forward Plan as a standing agenda item as this would reduce potential duplication, ensuring they both had individual roles whilst providing the Scrutiny Panel with a wider picture of current issues being considered.

NEIGHBOURHOOD GOVERNANCE

4.124   A new model for neighbourhood governance had initially been approved by the Cabinet in November 2007. It was agreed that each of Ealing's 23 Wards would have a separate Ward Forum with at least three meetings a year. Each Forum was provided with a £40,000 annual budget which was subsequently reduced to £37,500 in 2012. This comprises £30,000 capital

and £7,500 revenue funding. The revenue element is funded from the Ealing Civic Improvement Fund. The Ward budget can be spent on small scale local projects following the recommendations of the Ward Councillors and their residents.

4.125   The project began with a one year pilot in 2008 which was considered to be a significant success. Following a review of the pilot by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee in September 2009 it was recommended, and subsequently approved by Cabinet, that Ward Forums be made permanent.

4.126   The Ward Forums are supported by a team of four Neighbourhood Co-ordinators and four Apprentices, each supporting at least five Wards.

4.127   Ward Forums are open to all Ealing residents and meet at least three times a year in informal and accessible local venues in the area. Since the inauguration of the pilots in 2008, over 12,500 people had attended 361 different Forums, averaging out at approximately 35 people per meeting.

4.128   There are approximately 3,700 addresses on the current mailing list for information about forthcoming meetings and consultations. In some Wards, particularly in the Southall area, residents are contacted by postal mailings. Each Ward is allocated an annual administration budget (approximately £1,000) for publicity and the hire of meeting venues. Cross-Ward meetings can be arranged upon guidance from relevant Councillors as there are precedent examples where this has been arranged in the past.

4.129   The cost of venues for Ward Forum meetings can vary from no charge in some Wards to a charge of up to £350 per meeting for other Wards that are more constrained on the choice of venues.

4.130   Separate note takers are present at some meetings e.g. the yearly budget meetings as it is the responsibility of the Neighbourhood Co-ordinators to take notes at the meetings. However, there is flexibility to make other arrangements when necessary. The Team aim to publish the notes of the meeting within 15 working days of the meeting but this is not always achieved.

4.131   Councillor attendance at Ward Forum meetings over the years has generally been good ranging from 67% (absences mainly due to ill health, roles as Mayor/Deputy Mayor, etc.) to 100%.

4.132   Presently, there is no protocol for Council officers to attend the Ward Forum meetings but one-off meetings about particular key issues are attended by senior officers. However, there is an understanding that officers do not attend as a matter of routine. In many cases, the Neighbourhood Governance Co-ordinators have sufficient seniority to discuss issues with relevant officers before feeding back and providing advice to the Forums. The Neighbourhood Governance team is considering inviting Envirocrime Officers to attend each Forum once a year.

4.133   The main areas covered at the meetings include community safety, traffic and transport schemes, parks and street improvements. Planning and licensing applications are not discussed at Ward Forum meetings due to the associated legal issues and tight timescales involved including the risks for Ward Councillors who are also on the Planning Committee. Information on Council services, forthcoming consultations and events that affect each Ward is also provided.

4.134   Over 1,000 Ward funded projects have been undertaken, supported by Ward funding totalling £3.7 million. These projects range from small £500 grants to £50,000 to install a signalised pedestrian crossing.

4.135   Ward projects come about through suggestions from residents and Ward Councillors. These are then worked up into relevant recommendations by Council Officers. The projects are often linked by a number of common themes and are often projects that have previously been considered to be too small, too difficult or involving too many agencies.

4.136   There is no 'bidding' system involved in identifying the Ward projects but a strict vetting system is in place to gather all the relevant information. A comprehensive information pack is provided for the project initiators to complete and return to the Neighbourhood Governance Team. The Team forwards the information to the Audit and Legal teams for further vetting before the Leader reviews the project to consider whether it would contribute to the needs of the organisation.

4.137   All money paid out to an organisation as a contribution to their project is first considered by the respective Ward Councillors. The Neighbourhood Governance Team follows this up with the organisation by inviting them to attend a Ward Forum meeting at which a report on the activity is provided by the organiser. In some instances officers, Councillors and partners attend the activity. The organisation is then invited to a meeting with the Neighbourhood Governance Co-ordinator to provide feedback on the project.

4.138   Ward Forums are also about listening to and acting upon the views and wishes of the local residents. These have developed into conversations with a continuing and developing dialogue between local people and their elected Councillors. This has proven to be an especially valuable element in a time of declining monetary resources, where often difficult decisions taken by the Council need to be relayed in a cohesive discourse with local residents.

4.139   As Ward Forums are increasingly seen as a form of contact with the Council there is now a growing trend for members of the public to complain about Councillors and officers at Ward Forums. They often then feel that their views are not being taken into account or are not getting the outcome they wish.

4.140 The Panel sought residents' views on the Ward Forums. Some residents provided written submissions whilst others attended the Panel meeting. The key comments received are:

- whilst Ward Forums have some issues they are still better than not having anything in place;
- concerned that the Forums are not given enough opportunity to put relevant Officers under scrutiny e.g. the Corridor 1C plan that was a Transport for London led initiative in which they had been working in conjunction with Ealing Council to make changes to the West Ealing and Hanwell corridor of the Uxbridge Road. It was felt that Officers had made decisions on the plan without taking into account money saving recommendations made at the Forum and without further feedback being provided to the Forum attendees, resulting in an impression that the consultation on the plan was purely a 'box ticking exercise'. Therefore, communication was felt to be compromised;
- three meetings a year are not enough so there should be scope to hold meetings more regularly;
- it would be beneficial to see residents become more involved in the agenda setting process;
- the remit of the Forums is not made entirely clear. It is felt that this issue could be partly attributed to the nature of the Forums changing depending on which political party is in power at the time. Under Conservative leadership monies are given out without much scrutiny of the projects they are funding whereas under the Labour leadership it is considered that bureaucracy has gone too far in the other direction with all decisions being made by the Leader of the Council. There needs to be a compromise between the two approaches;
- have reservations about the way the Forums are run with Councillors taking too much lead and less 'grass roots' input.
- a more user friendly and less parliamentary style would be welcomed;
- concerned that in some cases issues important to the area are brought to Ward Forums too late for the residents to have any say on the matters involved;
- lack of transparency and accountability in the use of public money;
- some Ward Forum were not advised of what money has been spent and where. This leaves funding open to abuse. The public has a full right to know where the money is spent with fully transparent budgeting;
- concerned about the structure of the Wards as the shape of some did not lend themselves naturally to dealing appropriately with local issues and caused occasional difficulties;
- although welcomed the attendance and input at each meeting but concerned that attendance at some local Ward Forums is made up of residents all of a similar demographic background – largely white, middle class and in the 50+ age group;
- significant demographics in the Ward do not have their interests represented. More needs to be done to attract people outside of the usual attendees to each meeting;
- if Ward Forums are to be advertised in print media such as the Ealing Gazette then the adverts need to be nearer the front of the paper as

advertisements in the notices section at the back of the paper are often ignored;

- the Forums may draw more people if promotional material is 'spiced up' with an attractive logo and a less dry presentation;
- officers rarely attend meetings in some Ward Forums;
- the problems of publicity run deeper than Ward Forums themselves, as most residents are not even aware of who their Ward Councillors are. Email contact lists are not of much use as these would only be sent to residents who have already attended meetings in the past which is why there are the same faces at each meeting. This in turn leads to meetings being 'taken over' by activist groups;
- parking and planning issues are always likely to attract attention. Officers involving the public from the earliest stages could avert some of the issues that arise;
- there should not be a blanket ban on small groups receiving funding. For example, the 'Kickz' group within the Northolt Mandeville Ward whilst not directly benefitting the entire community is still doing valuable work within the community;
- it is unacceptable that very often the notes of the meetings are not available to the public for a long time after the meeting; and
- whether all monies to Forums are being spent appropriately, or whether Ward Forums are now 'grabbing at straws' due to lack of spending ideas.

Site Visits

4.141 As part of the review of neighbourhood governance, Panel members attended Ward Forum (other than their own) meetings around the borough and in the neighbouring boroughs of Brent and Hounslow. Their main observations are as follows:

- Compared to the other two boroughs, meetings are much better attended in Ealing with more vocal and involved attendees.
- Dormers Wells Ward Forum – Centre Committee was very welcoming; no Police, Environmental Crime Officers or Park Rangers; the outside speaker on the elderly was interesting; confusing discussion on Ward, Southall and national matters.
- Southfield Ward Forum – good attendance; informed debate and good conclusions reached; Residents' Associations tending to monopolise debate.
- Southall Broadway Ward Forum – poor attendance (13 attendees, quite argumentative), poor acoustics; weakly Chaired, meeting dysfunctional and public dissatisfied; meeting ended by public leaving rather than by the Chair.
- Acton Central Ward Forum – Councillors offer a 'mini-surgery' for half/one hour before the meeting to see residents; 28+ local resident attendees, two Councillors, Police, ASB Manager and Health and Safety Officer present; resident contributions from residents who are clearly regular contributors with the majority silent; good engagement by one Councillor taking up particular issues; signing in sheet, envirocrime report, and survey forms for completion by attendees and summary results of previous surveys readily available; comprehensive minutes of previous meeting available; Policing/safer communities agenda item somewhat

confused; hospital update on agenda but did not seem to be of great interest to attendees; Any Other Business – seemed to be the equivalent of the public forum, seven items were put forward at the meeting and not in advance

- Perivale Ward Forum – very good attendance; some members of the public proposing unworkable solutions to problems; more political as split Ward; members of the public more political.
- Hobbayne Ward Forum – there were no signs although other meetings were in progress; an impressive 70+ attendees; 2 Councillors; no Police; people left after the item that had interested them.
- Ealing Broadway Ward Forum – well run for a public meeting; had a clear agenda; meeting dominated by a few voices; Councillors knew the information and understood the local area and were familiar with those who dominated the meeting.
- Brent Connects Willesden Area Forum, London Borough of Brent:
  More like Ealing's old Area Committees but less formal; meeting chaired for the year by a single Councillor; others may attend – in this case 2 did, 3 sent apologies and some never attend; meeting seemed Officer rather than Member led; about 30 attendees – several regular attendees, some vocal and others just listen; each meeting includes a 'soapbox' slot where any resident/representative of a group can have (nominally) 3 minutes to present on any topic they wish; new ideas were introduced such as 'question time' panels and use of post-it notes to capture residents' views.
- Brent Connects Kingsbury and Kenton Area Forum, London Borough of Brent:
  Attendance very low (10) due to venue at Civic Centre; refreshments provided; agenda more generalised than local; late start; 4 Councillors (12 possible) including Chair; planning update; school pupils present – part of local democracy week; microphone passed around; parking charges exorbitant; LIP funding – transport schemes both general and local.
- Isleworth and Brentford Area Forum, London Borough of Hounslow (2 meetings attended)
  Meeting 1:
  The Forum covers 4 Wards, meeting every 2 months – similar to Ealing's old Area Committees; approximately 50 people attended largely because of the one controversial item; good chairing; the small grants (limited to £500 each) are clearly used for local activities and projects not normally included in Council expenditure – by contrast, Ealing Ward Fora are sometimes asked to provide funding for traditional Council services.
  Meeting 2:
  Greater number of Councillors (9 of 12 Councillors present) than members of public; format/venue allowed appropriate technical resources – PA and OHP; no Police attendance although there were written reports for each Ward; dealt with both local and borough-wide issues; very long time spent on budget issues so not an appropriate topic for area forum; CPZ consultation reports surprisingly attracted no resident attention;

Key Issues
- Ward Forums being defined by their ward boundaries rather than 'natural neighbourhoods' often prove problematic.

- Larger cross-boundary meetings can sometimes prove beneficial for projects that affect more than one Ward.
- Having a degree of flexibility with the number of meetings held would be helpful.
- Some Forums not receiving feedback on how monies are being spent.
- The importance of encouraging all demographics to attend meetings so that all residents within a Ward feel the benefits of the projects that are funded;
- Surprised at the low number of addresses in the Neighbourhood Governance mailing list as individual Councillors easily have about 700 on their personal mailing lists for the Ward.
- Meetings could still have better attendances in most cases by better promotion of the Forums e.g. posters put up in shopping areas, church noticeboards, trees in popular parks, etc.
- Councillors need to take some responsibility for leafleting to promote forthcoming meetings that may be discussing important local topics.
- Councillors should be able to take more control over the publicity budget should they wish to. The South Acton Ward Councillors already do this and have freed extra monies for more publicity by moving to cheaper venues for their meetings.
- Ward Forums could consider paying officers to attend from their budgets.
- Envirocrime issues cannot be discussed fully without the relevant officers present at the meetings.
- The Police should be encouraged to attend all Forum meetings.
- Most Wards avoid giving monies to organisations unless they have been agreed with the Council. However, some Wards give monies to small interest groups that do not benefit everyone in the local community.
- Ward Forums have proved to be more successful than the previous Area Committees but the Council should still consider, where practical, one-off meetings on an ad hoc basis between Forums who have a shared interest in a project.
- In some Wards a big single issue meeting is preferable to a joint one with other Wards.
- It is the Councillors' responsibility to chair the main body of the meeting and the Co-ordinators expected to take comprehensive notes which are approved by the Councillors before publication.

5.0 **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.1 The Panel determined:

Overall Structure

5.2 The Panel considered the various different options of governance structure by discussion, interviews and a detailed presentation from Ed Hammond, Research and Information Manager at the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS). In interviews, some respondents preferred the Committee system, the principal reason being given that new Councillors learn about the different areas of the Council's responsibilities more easily in a Committee system. No-one expressed preference for an Elected Mayor, reasons given being the difficulties if there is a split between the Mayor and elected Councillors, the lack of effective checks and balances, and potential problems with individuals (as for example, in Toronto).

5.3 Proponents of the Cabinet system quoted efficiency and clear-cut decision making as a principal reason for their preference. They also claimed that a Committee system encouraged what is often called a 'silo' mentality, whereas a Cabinet system encouraged collective responsibility. Interestingly, proponents claimed that more Councillors were involved in decision-making in the Cabinet system.

5.4 Some other Local Authorities have made the change back from a Cabinet to a Committee system. Their claimed experience has been that there has been no additional cost, and that, with careful planning, there is no delay in the decision-making process.

5.5 Although Ealing has a Leader and Cabinet system, it should be remembered that there are still some major Council-side Committees such as Planning and Licensing which fulfil a useful, statutory function and are busy in exercising fully delegated powers. Other Committees such as the Audit and Pension Fund Panel perform duties that cannot be exercised by Cabinet.

5.6 A few interviewees proposed a hybrid system, with advisory panels for each Portfolio Holder. We do currently have a number of Advisory Committees, such as the Fostering Panel and the Schools Admission Forum. Respondents expressed more support for an increased level of pre-scrutiny, a process which was generally much valued.

5.7 One of the concerns expressed was that in a Leader and Cabinet system there is insufficient work for the numbers of Councillors that we have at present. Not everyone held this view, and if the numbers were to be reduced, views varied whether the present three-member system should be retained. If this recommendation is approved in principle, further work should be undertaken on its implementation.

5.8 Electoral reviews can be carried out at the request of a local authority to review, for example, the overall number of Councillors. The Council may request that the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) carries out a review of its Councillor numbers. The LGBCE does

this and publishes its report and recommendations. The LGBCE is responsible for implementing any conclusions from a review by statutory instrument; if change is recommended then this will happen at the next scheduled local elections.

No.	Proposed Recommendation
R1	That the Council retains its present Leader and Cabinet system.
R2	That the number of Councillors be reduced to 48.

Council

5.9   There was a fairly consistent view that Council was 'theatre' or a 'pantomime'. Mr Hammond (CfPS), in his lecture, said that finding a role for Council had proved difficult anywhere in the country. Interviewees, however, generally saw the need for a public stage for debate. There was a general view that fewer but longer debates, with more speakers, were preferable. It was also pointed out that the third party received a disproportionate amount of speaking time.

5.9   The current process of allocating 30 minutes to Opposition Business and of other debates to first-come, first-served was much criticised. An alternative method of allocating debates is proposed.

5.10   Public participation at Council was welcomed, and the ability for questions to be put and for petitions to be presented was considered to enhance the proceedings. No changes are proposed in the present arrangements. It was felt, however, that if a public petition generated a Council debate then it should be a full debate and not restricted to 30 minutes, as at present.

5.11   Officers said that the answering of written questions on the day of Council was burdensome and interfered with the normal running of the Council's business. Oral questions were liked but there were several comments about the length of responses. More than one interviewee suggested that a webcam recording of Council meetings be put on the Council's website. It was felt that this might give some more purpose to the debates.

No.	Proposed Recommendation
R3	Each individual Councillor should only be able to ask one written question.
R4	Two full debates should be permitted at each Council meeting. Opposition business as such, should not continue. If there is a debate on the Budget or on the Corporate Plan then there should be no other debates. A debate generated as a result of a public petition should be a full debate and not restricted to 30 minutes.
R5	The right to propose a motion be allocated to individual Councillors by ballot, by reverse proportionality. Those Councillors allocated a debate may pass on that right to another Councillor, if they so wish.
R6	Seconding of amendments to motions should be formal, with the speaker reserving their right to speak.

No.	Proposed Recommendation
R7	There should be six normal Council meetings a year, plus Annual Council and Budget-making, being eight in total.
R8	There should be a time limit on the response to Council Questions of 3 minutes.
R9	The Council should investigate the use of cameras at Council meetings so that these can be live-streamed from the Council's website.

Cabinet

5.12 There was a clear divergence of views between majority party and minority party members about speaking rights at Cabinet. Leaders and ex-Leaders felt that they had been very lenient in allowing opposition speakers time, however opposition speakers felt constrained by the rules. Several interviewees pointed out that the number of call-ins could be reduced by having more of a debate at Cabinet. Elsewhere in the country, it is considered that the lack of challenge at Cabinet has led to a general reduction in quality of reports for consideration. In other Councils, there are minority representatives on Cabinet with full speaking rights. It is recommended that Ealing adopt this practice.

5.13 To overcome possible time constraints, more decisions should be taken by Portfolio Holders individually. It has also been pointed out that Ward Councillors currently have no speaking rights at Cabinet. This should be rectified.

5.14 On occasions, members of the public have been allowed to speak at Cabinet at the discretion of the Leader. Some members of the public have not been allowed this privilege. In order to avoid claims of bias, it is recommended that members of the public not be allowed to speak at all at Cabinet.

5.15 One of the downsides of a Cabinet system is the lack of natural progression as happened with Chairmen/Vice-chairmen of Committees. At present, the only route of progression is through Scrutiny. Both parties have had mentoring schemes in the past. It is proposed to formalise that process.

5.16 Pre-scrutiny is considered to be a valuable tool which should be used more. One of the present constraints is the lack of detail in the forward plan. This could be overcome by requiring the report's abstract to be included in the forward plan. There should also be a constitutional requirement for all strategic or annual plans and policies, as opposed to specific decisions, to be considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee before being submitted to Cabinet for approval. This would ensure that sufficient time was allowed for pre-scrutiny to happen.

No.	Proposed Recommendation
R10	There should be a number of minority party non-voting members of Cabinet, with full speaking rights.
R11	Other Councillors should be able to speak at Cabinet subject to the discretion of the Cabinet.

No.	Proposed Recommendation
R12	Members of the public should not be able to speak at Cabinet.
R13	Wherever possible, decisions should be taken by Portfolio Holder decision, with the right being given to the Shadow Portfolio Holder to require the matter to be considered by full Cabinet instead.
R14	Backbench aides should be formally appointed, one for each Portfolio Holder. They should not receive any special allowance.
R15	The Cabinet forward plan should contain more detail so as to facilitate pre-scrutiny. Specifically, the abstract that heads each report should be included in the forward plan.
R16	There should be a constitutional requirement for all strategic or annual plans and policies, as opposed to specific decisions, to be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee before being submitted to Cabinet or Council for approval unless the Committee decides otherwise.

Scrutiny

5.17 Although custom and practice allows speakers at Scrutiny to speak for some 3 minutes, there is no formal protocol as there is for Planning, for example. It is recommended that a protocol be drawn up for public consumption.

5.18 Since the Cabinet system was introduced in Ealing, there has always been a clear majority party. In the past, there has been a minority administration, and in other Boroughs, coalitions. There needs to be a mechanism whereby Council can take the final decision on a controversial item for the Cabinet system still to work. If the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had the ability to refer a call-in to full Council, it would both fulfil this need and give full Council a greater role.

5.19 However, the Director of Legal Services has advised that under the present legislation the Council and its Council-side Committees cannot exercise Executive functions and the Cabinet, individual Portfolio Holders and any Cabinet Committees may not exercise Council-side functions. Officers may exercise either Council or Executive functions, provided that the delegation has been made to them.

5.20 Budget Scrutiny has been undertaken in a number of different ways, none of which has proved entirely satisfactory. It is recommended that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee should be able to see Budget background papers, as seen by the Star Chamber, once a Cabinet decision has been made.

5.21 Call-ins are generally welcomed as a useful process, allowing public participation and general debate. Some respondents considered that there were too many call-ins but no-one suggested restricting the right to call-in. It was considered that more debate at Cabinet could help reduce the number of call-ins. One expressed concern has been that the purpose of call-ins is not always clear, and so it is recommended that call-ins should specify whether or not the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is being asked to refer a decision back to Cabinet or on to Full Council.

No.	Proposed Recommendation
R17	There should be a formal protocol for any members of the public speaking at Scrutiny.
R18	The Overview and Scrutiny Committee should be able to see the Budget background papers, as seen by the Star Chamber, once a Cabinet decision has been made so as to allow more effective scrutiny of the Budget.
R19	Call-ins should specify whether or not the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is being asked to refer a decision back to Cabinet or on to Full Council. Otherwise, there should be no change in the current arrangements for call-ins.

Planning/Regulatory

5.22   Little concern was expressed about the Planning and Regulatory side of the Council. Current public engagement was seen as constructive. However, there were some worries about the handling of big applications. It was deemed that the public did not necessarily understand the legal constraints that the Council had when considering Planning and Licensing applications.

5.23   The Licensing Panel is held during the daytime and can be quite lengthy. It can be difficult to find members to serve this. It is recommended that those Councillors who undertake this duty should be appropriately recompensed.

No.	Proposed Recommendation
R20	A paper should be produced, for public consumption, outlining the legal background for the decision-making process for both Planning and Licensing.
R21	There should be a protocol for planning applications where there is a wide public interest. This should include site visits, speaking rights, venue and video transmission.
R22	Consideration should be given to an attendance allowance for Councillors serving on Licensing Panels.

Ward Forums

5.24   There was a large public response to the consultation on Ward Forums. There appears to be a great deal of public support for the current arrangements, as opposed to the previous Area Committee system. Attendance was much greater at Ward Forums than Area Committees, a view reinforced by visits to neighbouring Boroughs.

5.25   Some interviewees raised the problem of capital/revenue spend. Some Wards swapped capital with revenue from other Wards to achieve their expenditure. It is considered that overall, this will even out and that there should be no distinction between capital and revenue spend on Ward Forum expenditure. It has been suggested that there be greater devolution of expenditure, for example roads maintenance, to Ward Forums. Given the amount of capital involved, it is difficult to recommend this step. If it were to be done then the money should be ring-fenced.

5.26 There were a number of detailed issues raised and the recommendations seek to address those concerns.

No.	Proposed Recommendation
R23	The concept of having a 'local spend' should be supported. There should be no distinction between capital and revenue spend.
R24	Notes of meetings should be taken by the Neighbourhood Governance Co-ordinator. There should not be a separate minute-taker.
R25	The Neighbourhood Governance Co-ordinators should ensure that the notes from each Ward Forum are made publicly available within 15 working days after the meeting.
R26	A code of best practice should be drawn up for publicising meetings. This might include posting public notices of forthcoming meetings in a variety of locations including schools, public noticeboards and churches; creating a new logo specifically for Ward Forums; and targeted leafleting.
R27	The administration budgets for Wards should be clarified and Ward Councillors should have control over these budgets. Full virement should be allowed between the administration budget and 'local spend'.
R28	Ward Forums should be reminded that they can set the number of meetings/joint meetings they wish to hold each Council year, within their administration budget.
R29	The current protocol for the filling of forms for project funding should be reviewed to analyse whether the process can be simplified. Where possible, recipients of funding should report back to the Ward Forum on the outcome of the project.
R30	There should be a requirement for ward-based officers, e.g. Envirocrime, to attend Ward Forums in their area on at least an annual basis. The Ward Forums should consider paying for the officer time involved.
R31	A paper should be produced, for public consumption, outlining the legal background for the decision-making process for Ward Forums.

Consultations

5.27 Panel members looked at current consultations and found that some were easier to understand than others. The number of responses to online consultations is very low and the recommendations seek to address this problem.

5.28 It was pointed out that some organisations suffer from 'consultation fatigue'. In order to avoid duplication, it is recommended that all Borough-wide consultations should be brought under centralised control.

No.	Proposed Recommendation
R32	Councillors should be used as a form of 'focus group' on Borough-wide consultations to help ensure the relevance and user-friendliness.

No.	Proposed Recommendation
R33	Borough-wide consultations should be brought under centralised control.

Other

5.29 There were a number of other matters considered. The main consideration was in the operation of the Council's Petitions scheme. It was considered that it was not appropriate for Officers to be the subject of petitions but that the relevant Portfolio Holder should be held to account instead. Also, to encourage public participation the threshold for such a petition should be reduced to 300.

5.30 Section 9.10 of the Council's 'Council and Committee Procedures' allows a Member to propose referring a matter raised in a public question or petition to Cabinet. It would seem sensible to permit a Member to propose referral to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee instead.

No.	Proposed Recommendation
R34	The petition to hold an officer to account at a meeting of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee should be replaced with a petition that would instead hold the relevant Portfolio Holder to account.
R35	The threshold for the petitions holding a Portfolio Holder to account at a meeting of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee should be reduced from the 3,000 currently set for holding an officer to account, to 300.
R36	Section 9.10 of the Council's 'Council and Committee Procedures' be amended to permit any Member to move that a matter raised by a public question or petition be referred *either* to the Cabinet *or to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee*.
R37	The facility for the Health and Adult Social Services Scrutiny Panel to make recommendations to the Health and Wellbeing Board should be noted within the Board's terms of reference.
R38	A review of the Health and Wellbeing Board's Forward Plan should be made a standing item at each meeting of the Health and Adult Social Services Scrutiny Panel.

Future Monitoring

5.31 The Panel suggests that an appropriate Scrutiny Panel should undertake the monitoring of the implementation of the recommendations and further ongoing monitoring.

No.	Proposed Recommendation
R39	The Overview and Scrutiny Committee ensures that an appropriate scrutiny body undertakes the ongoing monitoring including the implementation of the agreed recommendations.

6.0   KEY LEARNING POINTS

6.1   Some of the key learning points for the Panel were:

- Engaging with the community – seeking the views of the local people through publicity, site visits and their attendance at Panel meetings were a very valuable source of gathering information directly from the key stakeholders.

- Benchmarking exercises provided important comparisons.

- Site visits made a significant difference to the information obtained.

- Established good contacts with some external agencies e.g. groups, providers, etc.

- The difficulty in engaging some external agencies and areas of the community.

- The inevitability of identifying problems in the current provision and making suggestions for improvements.

- Through the meetings, have raised the profile of Scrutiny and the Council in the borough and promoted discussion between organisations.

- Has produced ideas for future development.

- An important element in the success of initiatives is the promotion and communication of activities, opportunities and new initiatives to the widest audience using relevant communication channels.

7.0   <u>MEMBERSHIP AND ATTENDANCE</u>

7.1   The Table below shows the membership and attendance of Panel Members and will be updated after each meeting.

Membership and Attendance at Panel Meetings

Name	Total Possible	Actual Attendance	Apologies Received
Cllr Anthony Young (Chair)	3	3	-
Cllr Yoel Gordon (Vice Chair)	3	3	-
Cllr Tej Ram Bagha	3	3	-
Cllr Theresa Byrne	3	2	-
Cllr Ann Chapman	3	3	-
Cllr Tejinder Singh Dhami	3	3	-
Cllr Susan Emment	3	3	-
Cllr John Gallagher	3	3	-
Cllr Gurmit Mann	3	2	1
Cllr Rajinder Mann	3	3	-
Cllr Zahida Noori	3	1	-
Cllr Harvey Rose	3	3	1
Cllr Jason Stacey	3	2	1

Substitutes and Other Councillors

<u>Meeting 1</u>:
Cllr Andrew Steed substituted for Cllr Harvey Rose.

<u>Meeting 3</u>:
Cllr Sitarah Anjum substituted for Cllr Theresa Byrne.
Councillor Chris Summers

<u>Meeting 4</u>:

<u>Meeting 5</u>:

Other
Centre for Public Scrutiny
Representatives of various Local Organisations
Residents

8.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION
8.1 **Useful Papers**

Ealing Council's Constitution, available at
http://www.ealing.gov.uk/info/200892/decision_making/597/council_constitution

Scrutiny Review Panel 1 – 2013/2014: Governance
Terms of Reference; Work Programme; Agenda Papers and Minutes of Meetings are available at
http://ealing.cmis.uk.com/ealing/Committees/tabid/62/ctl/ViewCMIS_CommitteeDetails/mid/381/id/36/Default.aspx

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 2012/2013: Agenda, Minutes and Reports available at
http://ealing.cmis.uk.com/ealing/Committees/tabid/62/ctl/ViewCMIS_CommitteeDetails/mid/381/id/34/Default.aspx

Other information about Scrutiny at Ealing is available at:
http://www.ealing.gov.uk/info/200892/decision_making/344/scrutiny

Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007

Localism Act 2011 and Plain English Guide to the Localism Act 2011 (DCLG):
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/5959/1896534.pdf

8.2 **Useful Websites**
1. Ealing Council – www.ealing.gov.uk
2. Centre for Public Scrutiny – www.cfps.org.uk
3. Government Services and Information – www.gov.uk
4. Brent Connects Forums, London Borough of Brent – http://www.brent.gov.uk/your-community/brent-connects/brent-connects-forums/
5. Isleworth and Brentford Area Forums, London Borough of Hounslow – http://democraticservices.hounslow.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=576&Year=2013

8.3 **Further Information**

For further information about Scrutiny Review Panel 1 – 2013/2014: Governance, please contact:

Harjeet Bains
Scrutiny Review Officer
Ealing Council
Tel: 020-8825 7120
Email: bainsh@ealing.gov.uk

9.0 PROPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS

Rec No.	Proposed Recommendation
Overall Structure	
R1	That the Council retains its present Leader and Cabinet system.
R2	That the number of Councillors be reduced to 48.
Council	
R3	Each individual Councillor should only be able to ask one written question.
R4	Two full debates should be permitted at each Council meeting. Opposition business as such, should not continue. If there is a debate on the Budget or on the Corporate Plan then there should be no other debates. A debate generated as a result of a public petition should be a full debate and not restricted to 30 minutes.
R5	The right to propose a motion be allocated to individual Councillors by ballot, by reverse proportionality. Those Councillors allocated a debate may pass on that right to another Councillor, if they so wish.
R6	Seconding of amendments to motions should be formal, with the speaker reserving their right to speak.
R7	There should be six normal Council meetings a year plus Annual Council and Budget-making, being eight in total.
R8	There should be a time limit on the response to Council Questions of 3 minutes.
R9	The Council should investigate the use of cameras at Council meetings so that these can be live-streamed from the Council's website.
Cabinet	
R10	There should be a number of minority party non-voting members of Cabinet, with full speaking rights.
R11	Other Councillors should be able to speak at Cabinet subject to the discretion of the Cabinet.
R12	Members of the public should not be able to speak at Cabinet.
R13	Wherever possible, decisions should be taken by Portfolio Holder decision, with the right being given to the Shadow Portfolio Holder to require the matter to be considered by full Cabinet instead.
R14	Backbench aides should be formally appointed, one for each Portfolio Holder. They should not receive any special allowance.
R15	The Cabinet forward plan should contain more detail so as to facilitate pre-scrutiny. Specifically, the abstract that heads each report should be included in the forward plan.
R16	There should be a constitutional requirement for all strategic or annual plans and policies, as opposed to specific decisions, to be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee before being submitted to Cabinet for approval.
Scrutiny	
R17	There should be a formal protocol for any members of the public speaking at Scrutiny.
R18	The Overview and Scrutiny Committee should be able to see the Budget background papers, as seen by the Star Chamber,

Rec No.	Proposed Recommendation
	once a Cabinet decision has been made so as to allow more effective scrutiny of the Budget.
R19	Call-ins should specify whether or not Overview and Scrutiny Committee is being asked to refer a decision back to Cabinet. Otherwise, there should be no change in the current arrangements for call-ins.
Planning/Regulatory	
R20	A paper should be produced, for public consumption, outlining the legal background for the decision-making process for both Planning and Licensing.
R21	There should be a protocol for planning applications where there is a wide public interest. This should include site visits, speaking rights, venue and video transmission.
R22	Consideration should be given to an attendance allowance for Councillors serving on Licensing Panels.
Ward Forums	
R23	The concept of having a 'local spend' should be supported. There should be no distinction between capital and revenue spends.
R24	Notes of meetings should be taken by the Neighbourhood Governance Co-ordinator. There should not be a separate minute-taker.
R25	The Neighbourhood Governance Co-ordinators should ensure that the notes from each Ward Forum are made publicly available within 15 working days after the meeting.
R26	A code of best practice should be drawn up for publicising meetings. This might include posting public notices of forthcoming meetings in a variety of locations including schools, public noticeboards and churches; creating a new logo specifically for Ward Forums; and targeted leafleting.
R27	The administration budgets for Wards should be clarified and Ward Councillors should have control over these budgets. Full virement should be allowed between the administration budget and 'local spend'.
R28	Ward Forums should be reminded that they can set the number of meetings/joint meetings they wish to hold each Council year, within their administration budget.
R29	The current protocol for the filling of forms for project funding should be reviewed to analyse whether the process can be simplified. Where possible, recipients of funding should report back to the Ward Forum on the outcome of the project.
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Consultations	
R32	Councillors should be used as a form of 'focus group' on Borough-wide consultations to help ensure the relevance and user-friendliness.

Rec No.	Proposed Recommendation
R33	Borough-wide consultations should be brought under centralised control.
Other	
R34	The petition to hold an officer to account at a meeting of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee should be replaced with a petition that would instead hold the relevant Portfolio Holder to account.
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R37	The facility for the Health and Adult Social Services Scrutiny Panel to make recommendations to the Health and Wellbeing Board should be noted within the Board's terms of reference.
R38	A review of the Health and Wellbeing Board's Forward Plan should be made a standing item at each meeting of the Health and Adult Social Services Scrutiny Panel.
R39	The Overview and Scrutiny Committee ensures that an appropriate scrutiny body undertakes the ongoing monitoring including the implementation of the agreed recommendations.

10.0 PROPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS WITH OFFICER COMMENTS
(This Table will be completed once the Panel agrees the recommendations for the Final Report)

Rec No.	Proposed Panel Recommendations	Service Officer Comments *(Including any Resource and Legal Implications)*	Recommended Cabinet Response *(Accept/Reject)*
R1			
R2			
R3			
R4			
R5			
R6			
R7			
R8			
R9			
R10			
R11			
R12			
R13			
R14			
R15			
R16			
R17			
R18			
R19			
R20			
R21			
R22			
R23			
R24			
R25			
R26			

Rec No.	Proposed Panel Recommendations	Service Officer Comments *(Including any Resource and Legal Implications)*	Recommended Cabinet Response *(Accept/Reject)*
R27			
R28			
R29			
R30			
R31			
R32			
R33			
R34			
R35			
R36			
R37			
R38			
R39			