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**POSSIBLE REVIEW OF COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES, PARTICULARLY IN RELATION TO OPPORTUNITIES FOR BACKBENCH<sup>1</sup> MEMBERS' PARTICIPATION AT MEETINGS OF FULL COUNCIL**

To: **Overview & Scrutiny Panel, 14 January 2014**

Main Portfolio Area: **Business, Corporate and Regulatory Services**

By: **Democratic Services & Scrutiny Manager**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Ward: **N/A**

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**Summary:** **This report is to inform the Panel of the findings of a desktop exercise that has been carried by democratic services officers as a result of observations and concerns expressed by the Panel at its previous meeting**

**For Decision**

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**1.0 Introduction and Background**

1.1 Following the decision of the Panel on 8 October 2013 (*Minute No. 364 refers*):

“THAT a more detailed report be brought back to the Panel detailing the options for ‘new governance arrangements’ at Council meetings that would facilitate a report being presented to the Constitutional Review working Party and then Standards Committee prior to presentation to Council for a final decision”

officers carried out online research to explore the range of opportunities that are available for enhancing backbenchers’ participation at full council meetings and to establish how certain characteristics of meetings at Thanet council compared with those of other East Kent councils.

1.2 Members will recall that at the Panel meeting on 8 October, the following suggestions were made:

1.2.1 fuller debate of the Leader’s Report in which backbench members could take part, with earlier notification to Members of the topics to be covered;

1.2.2 review of the number of items (particularly policy framework matters) on the Council agendas;

1.2.3 greater scope for backbenchers’ questions without notice;

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<sup>1</sup> Backbench members are, for the purposes of this report, interpreted as being all members apart from cabinet members

- 1.2.4 swifter actions on urgent matters arising from council meetings.
- 1.3 The last point above is not covered in this report, as processes have, since 8 October 2013, been put in place by officers to ensure that urgent actions are followed up quickly after council meetings.
- 1.4 The other suggestions by the Panel have been taken into account in the research, the findings of which are summarised below. It is hoped that the information will enable the Panel to discuss options to improve participation in full council debates, and enable it to take a decision as to whether to refer these issues to the Constitutional Review Working Party.

## **2.0 Post 2000 publications on enhancing the role of full council meetings**

- 2.1 Around the time of implementation of the Local Government Act 2000, under which it was mandatory for most councils to adopt new executive governance arrangements, attention was given to the importance of the role of council meetings.
- 2.2 Leading local government academics invited Council to consider the following possible items (with an officer commentary added against some):
  - 2.2.2 ***First and second-reading debates*** on important plans and budgets. In the first-reading debate, party discipline could be relaxed with expression of individual views encouraged and voting dispensed with as the only decision would be to refer a proposal to a committee or review group. The second-reading debate would, on the contrary, be more formal with party discipline applied. Whilst such an approach might well increase opportunities to participate in the development of policies, a potential downside is that it would be very likely to increase the time it takes to obtain agreement to them, more or less adding a “committee cycle” in each case.
  - 2.2.3 ***Consider reports from the executive*** with, perhaps, each cabinet member introducing a discussion on their role on a periodic basis. On this, it needs to be borne in mind that the Overview and Scrutiny Panel already does something similar, by inviting portfolio holders to address Panel meetings.
  - 2.2.4 ***Have a question time*** at each meeting, with the executive having to respond. This would be unlike the current Leader’s report, in the sense that any Member would be able to ask a question, and such questions would probably be without notice (i.e. not limited to something that the leader has already said on report).
  - 2.2.4 ***Discuss reports from overview and scrutiny committees and review groups.*** Though some Councils allow their scrutiny committee to present general reports to Council without them needing to contain specific recommendations, it must be noted that Thanet’s Overview and Scrutiny Panel already has the right to refer reports to Council which do contain specific recommendations.
  - 2.2.5 ***State of the area debates*** to focus on key issues facing the locality. It was suggested this would give expression to the Council’s role in community leadership. Any Member could participate in such debates, which could have wide-ranging remits, most likely not limited to services the Council itself delivers.

- 2.3 It should be noted that to facilitate the above full council would probably require more frequent or longer meetings; standing orders governing discussion would need to be reviewed to allow more flexible approaches; and the role of the chairman would become more important in guiding business and in protecting the rights of all members, including non-executive members and those in opposition. Clearly, some of these options would require fairly detailed changes to the current Council Procedure Rules and some arguably go against the suggestions made by the Panel on the 8 October, as summarised above in paragraph 1.2.
- 2.4 It was also established during research that a publication of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (OPDM) (now known as the Department for Communities and Local Government), suggested other examples of “best practice”, including:
- 2.4.1 **Single issue council meetings and ‘council in seminar’** (*procedure rules suspended*) to enable deliberative debates of a policy, problem or proposal; though it must be noted that from time to time Council has adopted this approach (e.g. regarding “China Gateway”, where the council meeting was run as though it were a planning committee and public rights to speak were offered)
- 2.4.2 **Extended sessions for councillors to question lead councillors** (possibly following lead councillors’ report/s on key issues); again, this option could be considered akin to the current Leader’s report, but probably with wider ranging rights to speak than Thanet’s current rules, which limit speaking to group leaders
- 2.4.3 **Inviting outside speakers to facilitate or prompt debate**; where this has been done within Thanet, it has usually been kept separate from the main Council meeting, either taking place just before the Council meeting, or during an adjournment. Again, it needs to be borne in mind that the Overview and Scrutiny Panel already has wide-ranging powers to invite “witnesses” to attend meetings and generally adopts more flexible rules of debate than those currently applying to Council meetings.
- 2.4.4 **Individual councillors being able to initiate a council debate** on a particular subject;
- 2.4.5 **Opposition days** (debates take place on a subject chosen by the opposition group/s);
- 2.4.6 **Council acting in overview and scrutiny mode** by taking evidence from external witnesses on policy matters; though as suggested above, the Overview and Scrutiny Panel already has rights to refer matters to Council (and the executive).
- 2.4.7 **Non-executive councillors meeting as an ‘assembly’**;
- 2.4.8 **Time set aside for ward issues.**
- 2.5 But in considering the above options, it needs to be borne in mind that most again would require additional and/or longer Council meetings if the items were to be added, and in some cases it could be argued that the suggestions may well fit the framework of Overview and Scrutiny meetings as well as that of Council meetings.
- 3.0 **Reviews undertaken by two other Councils to enhance backbench Members’ participation at full council meetings**

- 3.1 Evidence of two studies similar to that currently commissioned by the Panel was found: firstly, that by Epping Forest District Council in 2005/06; and, secondly, that by Croydon Council in 2007.

#### **Epping Forest Council's review – 2005/06**

- 3.2 Following consideration of most of the options listed at paras 2.2 and 2.4 above, Epping Forest Council agreed to adopt:
- state of the district” debates;
  - single issue council meetings;
  - receiving reports from the Overview & Scrutiny Chairman, Leader and Portfolio Holders at every council meeting and giving Members the opportunity to ask questions without notice on those reports.
- 3.3 Epping Forest’ also provides that questions without notice can be put on “any other matter of a non-operational character relating to the powers and duties of the council or affecting the district or its inhabitants”.
- 3.4 As there was no evidence on their website to confirm that either state of the district debates or single issue council meetings were actually taking place, a telephone call to Epping Forest Council’s democratic services confirmed that those two options had never been implemented, but that the Council still received written reports from the scrutiny chairman and portfolio holders. Officers were informed that there had not been sufficiently sustained interest by Members to enable some of the options to take place. However, it was the intention of the council to hold a single issue/state of the district meeting in about a year’s time for the purpose of considering the council’s local plan.
- 3.5 If the panel is interested in the Epping Forest model, more details could be submitted to a meeting of the Constitutional Review Working Party.

#### **Croydon Council's review - 2007**

- 3.6 This resulted in the following refinements to council agenda items:
- 3.6.1 Extending a rotating “**Councillors’ Ward Open Session**” from 15 to 25 minutes and introducing a requirement that a cabinet member must respond to each ward councillor (the time limit being two minutes per response). Thus each of the five ward councillors have three minutes to speak on a subject matter of which they have given advance notice and the relevant Cabinet member(s) must respond.
- 3.6.2 The ‘**Business Report of the Cabinet and Councillors’ Written Questions**’ being renamed, ‘**Business Report & Councillors’ Written Questions**’ to include written reports of the Chair of Scrutiny.
- 3.6.3 The number of speakers on “**Urgent Debate Motions (x2)**” being restored to 6 (*from 4*) – with 18 minutes for each motion.
- 3.7 Croydon council still has each of those agenda items, although the urgent debate motions have been renamed, “motions for debate” and the business reports are now

taken in two parts: (1) the scrutiny business report (*to update the council on scrutiny activity since the previous council meeting and to advise on any major issues that need to be considered by scrutiny*); (2) business report of the Leader. Both business reports are subject to written and oral questions (i.e. those without notice) by all members of the council.

3.8 Again, if the Panel is interested in such options, further details could be presented to the Constitutional Review Working Party.

#### **4.0 Current ways in which Thanet council backbench members can participate in full council meetings**

4.1 **Questions on notice**, under Council Procedure Rule (CPR) 14

4.2 **Supplementary question without notice**, under CPR 14

4.3 **Notices of motion** under CPR 16 (up to a maximum of 2 notices per member per meeting)

4.4 **Speaking on motions and amendments**, under rules of debate under CPR 19

4.5 **Submitting a petition**, under the petitions scheme (Part 5 – Codes and Protocols)

4.6 **Voting on recommendations before the council**

4.7 **Comments and questions on notice on the Leader's report** - other political Group Leaders only

#### **5.0 Analysis of full council meetings across East Kent**

5.1 The following analyses were undertaken:

#### **5.2 Opportunities for questions without notice at council meetings in East Kent**

5.2.1 Questions without notice (or spontaneous questions) can be used to call the executive to account.

5.2.2 The varying degrees to which Members can question executive members or committee chairmen without notice across the five councils in East Kent have been examined, with reference being made to the respective constitutions, minutes and agendas, and the findings are as summarised at Annex 1.

5.2.3 It will be noted that Ashford & Canterbury councils only receive minutes of the executive and committees (even when being requested to take the final decisions on matters). However, in Canterbury's case, the recommendations of the executive are set out in the agenda front sheet, together with supporting reasons, and Members are requested to bring along executive reports to the meeting. Thanet, Dover & Shepway, on the other hand, receive officers' reports setting out the recommendations of those bodies.

5.2.4 The extent to which questions without notice can be asked at council meetings can be ranked as follows:

*(Most scope)*

**Ashford** – allows questions without notice on any item being considered at the council meeting (i.e. not limited to the “speech” of a Member during a debate, as in TDC)

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**Canterbury** – allows questions without notice on both recommendations and resolutions recorded in the minutes of the executive and committees (*nb, in the research analysis, 6 questions on executive minutes were noted for the period from 1 January 2012 to 31 October 2013 ; and 2 questions on committee minutes*)

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**Shepway** – allows questions without notice on reports of Cabinet and committees

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**Thanet** – allows questions without notice on reports of Cabinet and committees but only if the questions are put during Members' speeches

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*(Least scope)*

**Dover** – has no scope for questions without notice (apart from on the Leader's report)

5.2.5 It could be argued that the ability of Thanet backbench members to participate in debates on cabinet and committee recommendations has improved since July 2007, as prior to that time, recommendations were simply listed on the agenda front sheet with their corresponding minute reference numbers and if a member wished to speak on any recommendation, they were required, under CPR 15, to notify the Corporate Programme Manager (would now be Democratic Services Manager) in advance of the meeting. The recommendations for which notice to speak had been received were then treated as “reserved minutes” at the meeting of council, i.e., they were debated, but only after formal adoption of other recommendations by the council. That can be regarded as something of a “legacy model” because it was similar to the way recommendations forward were made via minutes under the old-style committee system. Now that full reports are submitted to council where decisions are required, all recommendations of cabinet and committees are subject to the normal rules of debate.

5.3 Democratic Services could, if the Panel is interested, obtain and present to the Constitutional Review Working Party further details regarding asking questions without notice.

## **6.0 How Leader's Reports compare across East Kent**

### **Thanet – background to constitutional rule**

6.1 Until the annual meeting in 2009, Thanet applied the “announcements” clause of the modular constitutional council procedure rules relating to items of business for an ordinary meeting of council, as referred to in the first row Annex 1, as the only way to receive announcements by the Leader:

*“receive any announcements from the chairman, leader, members of the cabinet or the head of paid service”*

6.2 After May 2009, the practice of receiving a leader's report as a separate agenda item was adopted. At one meeting, a written report by the Leader was received; at another a joint written report by the Leader and the Chief Executive. Otherwise, the reports have been oral.

6.3 A review took place at the end of November 2010, culminating in the adoption of a new CPR 2.2, based on the Kent County Council rules, which allowed the Leader of the Council to give an oral report, each of the other political group Leaders to make comment and ask questions, and the Leader of the Council to have a right of reply.

6.4 The new CPR 2.2. has been adapted over time, owing to changed circumstances – primarily the increased in the number of group leaders - but the basic principles on which it is based have not changed.

6.5 CPR 2.2 currently reads:

The Leader of the Council may make an oral report, not exceeding ten minutes, on key issues arising since the last meeting of Council.

The Leaders of any other Political Group may comment on the Leader's Report. The comments of the Leaders of the other Political Groups shall be limited each to five minutes. The other Group Leaders will comment in an order determined by the number of Councillors within those Political Groups, with the largest Group commenting first, and so on.

The Leader has a right of reply to each Group Leader limited to two minutes, in hierarchical order, to any comments made on his/her report.

The Leader of the Council and the Leader of any other Political Group may appoint substitutes to speak on their behalf.

No motions may be moved nor resolutions passed under this item.

6.6 Clearly, CPR 2.2 restricts participation by backbenchers, as previously any member, as opposed to only political group leaders, could comment and ask questions.

6.7 The summary of practices in other councils in East Kent is as follows:

- **Ashford:** announcements under the modular constitutional rule (*as outlined at para 7.1 above*) only
- **Canterbury:** in practice, announcements only
- **Shepway, Dover & Thanet:** share the same principles, i.e. Leader's report is oral; Leader receives comments and questions without notice from other political group leaders; and the Leader has a right of reply.

6.8 Clearly, there are changes that could be made to how the Leaders report could work including requiring the report to be written, and potentially opening out the ability to ask questions beyond Group Leaders. However although this could potentially increase the ability of Members to get involved, it could easily become difficult for the Chairman to manage such an open-ended session, and time-limits or other means of "managing" such an agenda item may be needed.

## **7.0 How many full council meetings do the five East Kent councils have?**

7.1 One comment made by members of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel was that they felt backbench members did not have sufficient time or opportunity to participate in debates at Council meetings. It is noted that some of the above options could lengthen the Council meetings. Thus, in order to provide some context, a review of

the length of Council meetings in east Kent was undertaken. Data found in relation to the period from 1 January 2012 to 31 October 2013 is set out in table 1.

Table 1

<b>Council</b>	<b>Total number of meetings (excluding annual)</b>	<b>Number of ORDINARY meetings</b>	<b>Number of EXTRAORDINARY meetings</b>	<b>DURATION of ordinary and extraordinary meetings</b>
Thanet	14	10	4	31 hrs 50 mins
Canterbury	12	11	1	23 hrs 11 mins
Dover	15	10	5	25 hrs, 28 mins
Ashford	11	9	2	Info not available from the council's website
Shepway	15	10	5	-do-

7.2 It should be noted that two of Dover's extraordinary meetings took the form of presentations by external organisations, and two of Canterbury's extraordinary meetings which were convened for the purpose of conferral of freedom of the city have been excluded from the analysis.

7.3 It is clear from the above analysis that Thanet already devotes the most time to council meetings, and aside from Dover, has a broadly comparable number of meetings.

## **8.0 More detailed analysis of meeting statistics of Dover, Canterbury & Thanet**

### Questions, Motions on Notice and Petitions

8.1 Data relating to the number of questions, motions on notice and petitions received / debated by Thanet, Canterbury & Dover councils during the period from 1 January 2012 to 31 October 2013, is as shown in Table 2.

Table 2

<b>Council</b>	<b>No. of public questions</b>	<b>No. of Members' questions (on notice)</b>	<b>No. of motions on notice submitted</b>	<b>No. of motions on notice debated</b>	<b>No. of petitions</b>	<b>No. of petitions debated</b>
Thanet	21	24	17	12	8	5
Canterbury	4	1	1	1	20	2
Dover	1	70	11	9	0	0

8.2 It will be noted that Dover council receives considerably more questions on notice than the other two councils. However, that may result from the restriction in their constitution that precludes Members' questions without notice (apart from on the Leader's report),



- 8.3 Thanet receives by far the most public questions. However, a large proportion of the 21 questions received were in relation to the Pleasurama Development site. It is expected that the overall number of questions from members of the public may reduce once locally topical or contentious issues have been resolved.
- 8.4 Thanet also receives the highest number of motions on notice and debates the most petitions and motions on notice.

Thanet's CPR 16.3 – motions on notice

- 8.5 Possible changes to Thanet's procedural rule 16.3 were presented to the last meeting of Council on 5 December but were rejected. Thanet's rule is different from the rule of other councils in that it makes provision for a member of the controlling political group to have a right of reply prior to the decision on whether or not the motion "stands referred" to cabinet or appropriate committee:

*CPR 16.3 Putting the motion at the meeting*

*"The Member whose name appears first on the notice will move the motion during his or her speech and call for a seconder. If seconded, a Member from the controlling political group will be entitled to a reply, the motion shall then stand referred without further discussion to the Cabinet or appropriate committee for determination or report unless the Council decides to debate the motion in accordance with Rule 19".*

- 8.6 In some Councils, if a motion on notice "stands referred", no Member is permitted to speak to it, not even the proposer.

Policy Framework Issues and Reports / recommendations from Cabinet

- 8.7 It is difficult to make meaningful comparisons between the number of policy framework matters that Thanet council debates with that debated by other councils as the non-statutory list of policy framework documents varies from council to council.
- 8.8 However, it was found that in the case of Thanet council:
- 8.8.1 five policy framework issues were considered in the period from 1 January 2012 to 31 October 2013;
- 8.8.2 three policy framework issues were debated at the ordinary meeting on 19 April 2012; 8.8.3 one policy framework issue was debated at the ordinary meeting on 28 February 2013; and
- 8.8.4 one (community safety plan) was debated at the extraordinary meeting which followed the annual meeting on 16 May 2013.
- 8.9 It could be argued that the agenda for Thanet council's meeting on 19 April 2012 was too congested in that it had three policy framework items (in addition to two other recommendations from Cabinet).
- 8.10 If, for each of the 3 councils, the cabinet recommendations on policy framework matters are combined with other cabinet recommendations (*excluding those on budget reports, HRA account or treasury reports*), a more like to like comparison, as shown at Table 3, can be made.

Table 3

Council	Number of Cabinet Recommendations
Thanet	17
Canterbury	16
Dover	10

**9.0 Comparative length of speeches during debate**

9.1 The times allowed by Members to speak during debates are as illustrated in Table 4:

Table 4

Thanet	Cabinet members and Chairmen of Committees – when presenting items – 5 minutes  Proposer winding up – 5 minutes  All others – 3 minutes
Canterbury	Under Rules of debate – content and length of speeches:  10 minutes for the Leader to present a report to the council or the budget; 10 minutes for the Leader to deliver his/her priorities speech at annual or budget meetings In those cases, leaders of two largest opposition groups – 10 minutes each Leader allowed 10 minutes in total to respond to opposition speeches  Otherwise, 3 minutes
Ashford	All – 5 minutes
Dover	Proposer to wind up 8 minutes Otherwise, 3
Shepway	All – 5 minutes

9.2 These are broadly comparable in terms of time allowed, with the exception of Canterbury, which allows more time.

**10.0 Examples of where options to enhance community leadership role and backbench Members' ability to call the executive to account have been adopted by councils across England**

10.1 **State of the District debates** – to promote community leadership

10.1.1 Interestingly, some councils who made provision for state of the district debates in their constitutions have either never initiated them (like Epping Forest – see above) or have phased them out over time (for example, Richmondshire, Adur, Bedford and Welwyn Hatfield councils)

10.1.2 However, in other councils debates still take place, albeit with varying profiles and formats.

10.1.3 Dover council receives a report from Cabinet on the state of the district:

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**Stratford-upon-Avon and Huntingdonshire** – Leader’s Annual State of the District Report / Address followed by open debate – part of ordinary meeting agenda. In Stratford’s case, the debate takes place at the first meeting after the annual meeting (*matters raised to inform the budgetary process for the following municipal year*); in Huntingdonshire, the annual debate takes place in the Autumn.

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**Sunderland and Borough of Poole** - an extraordinary or special meeting of council, held in a different venue.

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**Wyre Forest** - State of the District Event, not included in the council meeting calendar, although the public debate takes place in the council chamber.

10.2 If the Panel is interested in such options, further details could be presented to the Constitutional Review Working Party.

## **11.0 General comparative analysis - 12 councils across England**

11.1 Online research, involving looking at agendas and council procedure rules, was carried out in relation to 12 councils in England:

Epping Forest, Arun, Ashfield, Breckland, Fenland, Rother, Welwyn Hatfield (*chosen on the basis that those 8 councils had been evidenced to have state of the district debates*);

Medway (*on the basis that it had been found to receive scrutiny reports at each council meeting*);

Aylesbury (*on the basis that it was known to have an open question time at its meetings*);

Bexley (*on the basis that it was known to publish a written Leader’s Report in council meeting agendas*)

East Hampshire and Bournemouth – *on a random basis*

11.2 The information sought in relation to opportunities for enhanced member participation and the number of councils in which that information was found are as detailed at Annex 2, with a fuller description of some examples being given in the last column of the table (where available).

11.3 Details of examples of other options to enhance debate, which were discovered on a more random basis, are provided at Annex 3.

## **12.0 Other provisions which can affect the length and nature of debates**

12.1 It is worth noting other provisions which can affect the length and nature of debates, for example:

### **12.2 Flexed Discussion**

At any time during a council meeting, CPRs 19.4 (Content and length of speeches) and 19.5 (When a member may speak again) can be waived to enable flexible discussion to take place, without the constraints on how long and how many times a member can speak at a meeting.

### **12.3 Closure motions**

Procedural motions, CPR 19.10 (c) to proceed to the next business; and (e) to adjourn a debate can be moved when debate is under way. CPR 19.11 outlines what procedures the Chairman must take if either closure motions is moved.

As pointed out in “Knowles on Local Authority meetings” – “A Manual of Law and Practice, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition, Deborah Upton with Stephen P Taylor” (page 158), there is nothing to prevent the chairman him/herself applying the closure, *with the consent of the meeting*, if they are of the opinion that the views of the minority have been reasonably heard<sup>2</sup>. This they can do simply calling on the mover of the motion to reply to the debate.

## **13.0 Options**

13.1 The Panel may wish to refer options to the Constitutional Review Working Party regarding:

13.1.1 Changing the Council Procedure Rules as set out in the report.

13.1.2 Changing the Council Procedure Rules using alternative ways to those set out in the report.

13.2 Alternatively, the Panel may decide not to make any recommendations regarding changing the Council Procedure Rules.

## **14.0 Corporate Implications**

### **14.1 Financial and VAT**

14.1.1 None arising directly from this report, although adoption of new options may have cost implications, for example, in terms of more frequent, or additional types of, meetings.

### **14.2 Legal**

14.2.1 Any constitutional changes arising from recommendations of the Panel must be considered by the Constitutional review Working Party, then Standards Committee, before being adopted by Council.

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<sup>2</sup> As per court ruling in Wall –v- Exchange & Northern Assets Corporation 1981.

### 14.3 Corporate

14.3.1 The options outlined in the report would affect the Council's constitution, and in particular, the Council procedure Rules, but may also affect other elements (e.g. the overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rules).

### 14.4 Equity and Equalities

14.4.1 None directly arising from the report.

### 15.0 Recommendation(s)

15.1 That the Panel considers the options outlined in the report and annexes and decided which, if any options or models should be presented to the Constitutional Review Working Party for further consideration.

### 16.0 Decision Making Process

16.1 Any recommendations of the Panel will be referred to the Constitutional Review Working Party, which will make recommendations to the Standards Committee, which, in turn, will make recommendations to Council for final adoption.

Future Meeting if applicable:	Date:
Constitutional Review Working Party	tbc
Standards Committee	6 March 2014
Council	24 April 2014

Contact Officer:	Glenn Back, Democratic Services & Scrutiny Manager, ext 7187
Reporting to:	Harvey Patterson, Corporate & Regulatory Services Manager and Monitoring Officer, ext 7005

#### Annex List

Annex 1	Comparison of council procedure rules of East Kent Councils as they relate to the ability of Members to ask questions without notice on executive and committee reports or minutes
Annex 2	Comparative analysis – across 12 councils
Annex 3	Examples of councils who have adopted “other” options to enhance debate – <i>found on a random basis</i>

#### Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
None	

#### Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Finance	<i>Will be undertaken as and when firmer proposals emerge</i>
Legal	<i>Harvey Patterson, Corporate &amp; Regulatory Services Manager</i>