

Cabinet Advisory Groups

1. Introduction

The Cabinet, or individual Cabinet Members following notification to the Director of Law & Governance may appoint Cabinet Advisory Groups. It is intended that no more than five such Advisory Groups will be appointed at any one time unless particular circumstances necessitate the appointment of additional Groups.

Cabinet Advisory Groups are not formal meetings of the Council and do not have the status of advisory committees under the Local Government Act 1972 Section 102(4).

Cabinet Advisory Groups will assist the Cabinet by focusing on Cabinet-identified priorities linked to the Corporate Plan. They will have the following common terms of reference although their specific remit will be determined by the appointing body/member.

2. Terms of reference:

- (i) will explore key policy issues selected by Cabinet and which align to corporate priorities and will make recommendations upon them to Cabinet and/or to the appropriate Cabinet Member;
- (ii) may conduct research, community and other consultation in the analysis of policy and possible options;
- (iii) may liaise with other organisations operating in the area, whether national, regional or local, to ensure that policy recommendations are thus enhanced to reflect the interests of local people;
- (iv) will operate as task and finish groups;
- (v) will be chaired by the relevant Cabinet Member as part of their portfolio responsibility or by a nominated vice-chairman in his/her absence;
- (vi) will have a membership of approximately 7 members including the chairman appointed to it although the precise number may vary according to the issue under consideration;
- (vii) will follow the rules of political proportionality following receipt of nominations from group leaders having regard to:
 - (a) A member's interest in the topic in question;
 - (b) Geographical representation – that is, membership from across Oxfordshire;
 - (c) Cross party – reflecting the balance of the political parties within the Council as a whole;

- (viii) will have quorum of three members one of which should be the Cabinet Member chairing it or its vice-chairman;
- (ix) notwithstanding that the Groups are not formal committees of the Cabinet or Council, there will be a presumption that meetings will take place in public; nevertheless there may be occasions when the Groups may not wish to meet in public having regard to the issues being considered and the exploration of all available options;
- (x) will in any case report formally to the Cabinet and/or to the appropriate Cabinet Member;
- (xi) will meet on the dates and at the times and places determined by the chairman of the Group which shall be set as far as possible in advance and notified to members of the Group and if appropriate to the public
- (xii) will operate such that agendas and reports are sent to members of the Groups at least five clear days in advance of each meeting and that any public meetings are published as if the access to information rules applied ;
- (xiii) may give consideration to any petitions received by the Council which may be of relevance to the topic area under consideration;
- (xiv) will determine their final recommendations to Cabinet and/or the appropriate Cabinet Member by consensus if at all possible or by means of a show of hands if necessary.