



******PLEASE NOTE: THIS SURVEY IS NO LONGER ACTIVE******
Census 2006 – Alternative Arrangements Authorities

Guidance on completion and return of questionnaire

Thank you for participating in this survey. This survey is intended to collect information on the political management arrangements in your authority.

The questionnaire will take a few minutes to complete, in most cases by placing a tick in the box that most closely matches the structures and activities in your authority. A self addressed envelope is enclosed for you to return the survey. We should be grateful if you would return the survey as soon as possible and no later than **XXXXX**.

All information provided will be treated as confidential, and will only be used by researchers at the University of Manchester and researchers working on the evaluation of the Local Government Modernisation Agenda. The detailed results of the research will be provided to ODPM and are likely to be widely disseminated. However, no information will be passed on from the researchers to ODPM or any other party which would divulge the identity of individual respondents or of individuals discussed in the responses. Furthermore the identity of your organisation will not be divulged in any report or publication, unless you expressly give permission for this to occur.

The results of the survey will make a valuable contribution to the evaluation of the Local Government Act 2000 and a copy of the final research report will be provided to your authority.

If at any stage you have a query about either the questionnaire or the process, please contact our help-line on XXXX XXX XXXX. You can also email us on stephen.greasley@manchester.ac.uk.

With many thanks in advance

EVALUATING LOCAL GOVERNANCE: New Constitutions and Ethics

Please give the name of your authority.....Council

Please give a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address for the officer completing this questionnaire

.....

CONTROL OF YOUR COUNCIL

1. Are there party groups represented on your council?

Yes []

No [] GO TO QUESTION 4

2. Please tick which of the following best describes how the administration of your authority is conducted

[] By one party with an overall majority (**Please say which**).....

[] By one party without an overall majority (**Please say which**).....

[] By a recognised ‘coalition’ (**Please describe**).....

[] Other (**Please describe**).....

3. During the past four years, has this pattern of control

[] Remained stable throughout.....

[] Changed at the last election (**please say from what**).....

[] Changed since the last election (**please say from what**).....

[] Been unstable throughout

[] Changed in some other way (**please say how**).....

4. How long has the current leader of the council been in position?

_____ years _____ months

5. How many leaders has the council had over the last four years?

[]

6. How long has the Head of Paid Service been in post?

_____ years _____ months

FULL COUNCIL

7. How frequently were the meetings of the full council held in 2001, and how frequently have they been held this year?

	2001/2	2005/6
Weekly	[]	[]
Monthly	[]	[]
Six-weekly	[]	[]
Quarterly	[]	[]
Other (please specify)	[]	[]

.....

8. At full council does your authority allow

PLEASE TICK
ALL THAT
APPLY

Questions from members to leader	[]
Questions from members to committee chairs	[]
State of the Borough debates	[]
Debates on motions	[]
Consideration of reports	[]
Consideration of call-ins	[]
Questions from public to leader	[]
Questions from public to committee chairs	[]
Petitions	[]

9. Please describe any other ways you have used full council to involve the public in the authority's processes

.....

POLICY COMMITTEES

10. Please list the policy committees in your authority, how many members they have and the party group (if applicable) of the chair?

Name of committee	No. of members	Party of chair
1.	[]	[]
2.	[]	[]
3.	[]	[]
4.	[]	[]
5.	[]	[]

11. How often do policy committees meet?

- Twice a week []
- Weekly []
- Fortnightly []
- Monthly []
- Some other frequency (**please specify**) []

.....

12. In your authority do you define ‘key decisions’ and publish a forward plan?

- Key decisions are defined
- A forward plan is published
- Neither PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 16

13. How are key decisions defined (if applicable)?

.....

14. Has a standard threshold been set for significant expenditure (if applicable)?

- No
- Yes Please state the figure.....

15. Is the forward plan placed on your authority’s website (if applicable)?

- Yes
- No

16. Have you used policy committees to involve the public in the authority's processes through:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----|
| Public questions at committee | [] |
| Committees held away from Town Hall | [] |
| Public petitions at committee | [] |
| Other (please specify) | [] |

.....

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

17. How many overview and scrutiny committees and sub committees are there at your authority?

- | | |
|------------|----------------|
| Committees | Sub committees |
| [] | [] |

If one party has an overall majority please answer question 18. If there is no overall majority, please answer 19

18. How many overview and scrutiny committees chairs are held by....

- | | | |
|----------------|------------|----------------|
| | Committees | Sub committees |
| Majority party | [] | [] |
| Other parties | [] | [] |

NOW GO TO QUESTION 20

19. Please show the party breakdown of chairs of overview and scrutiny committees and sub committees:

Party	Number of O&S committee chairs	Number of O&S sub committee chairs
1.	[]	[]
2.	[]	[]
3.	[]	[]
4.	[]	[]
5.	[]	[]

20. To the best of your knowledge....

	Yes	No	Don't Know
Are party pre-meetings held prior to scrutiny committees	[]	[]	[]
Are decisions subject to party whips?	[]	[]	[]

21. How are overview and scrutiny committee agendas determined?

By the Committees themselves	[]
By Full Council	[]
By the policy committees	[]
By some other committee of the council (please say which).....	[]
.....	
In some other way (please describe).....	[]
.....	
.....	

22. What kind of officer and expert support is provided to the scrutiny committees in general? Please also indicate any dedicated support provided to health scrutiny

PLEASE TICK ALL
THAT APPLY

	General	Health
Advice by special officer unit	[]	[]
Advice by external sources (e.g. universities, consultants)	[]	[]
Ad hoc advice depending on the topic	[]	[]
Committee-specific officer support	[]	[]
Servicing of meetings only	[]	[]
Other (please specify)	[]	[]
.....		
.....		
.....		

23. Do your Council’s overview and scrutiny committees

PLEASE TICK ALL
THAT APPLY

	Yes	No	Considering
Review service outcomes	[]	[]	[]
Explore innovative forms of service delivery	[]	[]	[]
Involve external stakeholders in their deliberations	[]	[]	[]
Establish ad-hoc panels /working groups	[]	[]	[]
Investigate non-local authority service-providers	[]	[]	[]

(If Yes, please describe briefly)

.....

.....

24. Over the last 12 months, how many scrutiny reviews relating to health issues have been conducted? []

25. Of these health scrutiny reviews how many included:

NUMBER

Looking at particular health issues (e.g. smoking, obesity)	[]
Looking at particular organisations (e.g. a specific PCT)	[]
Looking at services generally (e.g. dentistry)	[]
Joint health scrutiny exercises or reviews with neighbouring authorities	[]

26. Are policy committees required to respond to overview and scrutiny reports and recommendations?

No formal mechanism [] PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 28

Yes, in committee []

Yes, in writing []

Yes, other **(please describe)** []

.....

27. Is there a time limit for this response?

No []

Yes [] please say how long :

28. How many call-ins have there been over the previous council year? []

29. What is the call in criteria in your authority?

.....
.....
.....
.....

30. Have you used overview as scrutiny to involve the public in the authority's processes through:

- Public questions at scrutiny []
- Scrutiny held away from Town Hall []
- Inviting evidence from the public []
- Public role in setting agenda/ call-in []
- Other (**please specify**) []

.....

AREA STRUCTURES AND PARTNERSHIPS

31. Do you have Parish or Town Councils in your area?

- No []
- Yes, the area is partially parished []
- Yes, the area is wholly parished []

32. Does your council have a form of area-based arrangements?

- No [] PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 34
- Yes [] If Yes, please briefly describe.....
.....
.....

33. Are these arrangements consultative only or do they extend to decision-making?

- Consultative only []
- Decision-making []
- Both []

34. Who chairs the Local Strategic Partnership for your area:

Council leader []
The council's chief executive []
Other representative of the council (**please specify**) []

.....
Other (from outside council) (**please specify**) []
.....

35. Does your authority act as secretariat to the Local Strategic Partnership?

Yes [] No []

ETHICAL FRAMEWORK

36. How many members, including independent (non-elected) members, does your Standards Committee have, and from which category does the chair come?

	Number	Chair (please tick)
Elected	[]	[]
Independent members	[]	[]
Parish representatives	[]	[]

37. Over the last 12 months how many investigations has your authority conducted under the Section 66 regulations?

	Number		Number
Council members	[]	Parish councillors	[]

38. Over the last 12 months how many adjudications has your authority conducted under the Section 66 regulations?

	Number		Number
Council members	[]	Parish councillors	[]

39. Is it a requirement that adjudications be chaired by one of the independent (non-elected) members?

Yes []
No []

40. How many times over the last 12 months has the standards committee met?

[]

41. In addition to the functions required by legislation, what types of business is conducted by your standards committee?

- Developing / monitoring additional protocols relating to member conduct (e.g. member officer protocols) []
- Overview of whistleblowing policies []
- Overview of anti-corruption and fraud policies []
- Reviewing constitution []
- Ethical audits []
- Development of induction and training for members []
- Internal audit []
- Role relating to e.g. LSPs, ALMOs other partnership bodies []
- Responding to ombudsmen/ external audit []
- Other work (**please specify**) []

.....

AND FINALLY

42. Where does your authority look to for ideas and/or support on improving the following aspects of your authority’s operation? (**Please tick all that apply**)

	Central gov’t	External orgs. (eg. IDEA, LGA)	Leading local authorities	Networks or forums	Other local authorities	Mostly in house
Political leadership	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Overview and scrutiny	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Ethical framework	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Area working	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Full council	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Community engagement	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

43. Does the press attend and report on the following

	Yes, regularly	Yes, occasionally	No
Full council	[]	[]	[]
Policy committees	[]	[]	[]
Planning committee	[]	[]	[]
Licensing committee	[]	[]	[]
Scrutiny committees	[]	[]	[]
Area structures	[]	[]	[]

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TROUBLE TO COMPLETE OUR QUESTIONNAIRE.

If you have any queries please contact: THIS SURVEY IS CLOSED

Please return in the SAE provided to: THIS SURVEY IS CLOSED