

# ANNEXE 1

## **Proposed Consultation Leaflet**

### **LEADERSHIP OF YOUR LOCAL COUNCIL**

The Leadership of your local authority is very important. Councils are run by elected representatives from the local community, who set the strategic direction, decide the annual budget and Council Tax, and oversee the delivery of important public services, like recycling and housing.

Council elections are held in Waverley every four years. The political party that wins the most seats in the election forms the administration of the Council, selecting a Leader (who is formally elected every year by a meeting of the full Council), and an Executive Committee of nine majority group Councillors who each take responsibility for a portfolio of services.

This 'Leader and Executive' model of Council leadership was introduced in 2001 by central government legislation. At the same time, new laws allowed Councils to choose whether they wanted to be run by a directly-elected Mayor instead of a Leader and Executive. All Councils were asked to consult their local communities to see if there was support for a directly-elected Mayor. In Waverley we consulted, and the results were:

16% of you wanted an elected Mayor and Cabinet  
57% of you wanted a Council Leader & Cabinet  
27% of you wanted an elected Mayor and Council Manager

Now the Government is requiring all Councils to consult their communities again.

We are asking you, the members of our Citizens' Panel; to consider the two Council leadership models carefully and tell us which one you think is most suitable for Waverley. Please read the following information carefully and then complete the question at the end of this form and return it to us using the freepost envelope provided.

Thank you!

Mary Orton  
Chief Executive  
Waverley Borough Council

## What are the differences between the two leadership options?

### **Option 1: Strong Leader**

This option is virtually identical to the system Waverley uses now, with only some minor changes.

#### Key features of the strong leader model

- The leader of the Council is chosen by councillors from all the councillors elected at Borough elections to represent their wards. These elections take place every four years.
- The leader is elected for a four-year term. At the moment, the leader is elected every year.
- The leader appoints a 'cabinet' of between two and nine councillors. The leader decides how much power the councillors in the cabinet have to make decisions, how much power is given to the cabinet as a whole and how much is delegated to officers.
- The leader can be removed from his/her position by resolution of the Council.

#### Implications of choosing this model

- This option is similar to the current system. It means minimal disruption to the way the Council works and minimal changes to the Council Constitution.
- This option does not have any financial implications.
- The leader is selected by the Council, which means that members can select the best and most appropriate person for the role.
- The leader is accountable to the full Council, who can trigger a vote of no confidence, or de-select the leader.
- The Executive take the most important decisions collectively, and they consult with local ward Councillors. This means that everybody's views are taken into account.
- There is a clear differentiation between the political leadership of the Council and its professional senior managers.

### **Option 2: Directly Elected Mayor**

#### Key features of the directly-elected mayor model

- The public chooses the mayor in a separate election. The mayor represents the whole of Waverley Borough rather than a specific ward.
- Elections for a mayor take place every four years. If there are three or more candidates for the position of mayor, the election uses the Supplementary Vote System. This means you can choose your first and second preference candidates on the ballot paper.

- The mayor is single-handedly responsible for all Executive decisions and provides strategic direction.
- The mayor cannot be removed by the Council, only by the electorate.
- The mayor can carry out the ceremonial duties of a civic mayor, but cannot chair Council meetings.
- Under this system, the civic mayor requires a name change, or for the post to be absorbed into that of the elected mayor's.

Implications of choosing this model:

- There would be a huge financial implication for this option. If Waverley were to introduce a Mayor, we would need to hold a referendum, which would cost an estimated £100,000 to run. The Mayoral elections themselves would cost £80,000-£140,000 every four years. In addition, the cost of having a Mayor rather than a 'strong leader' would be significant – estimated at £50,000 in additional allowances and £130,000 in additional policy and secretarial staff. This would place a huge pressure on the Council's budgets and would mean that services would have to be cut as a result.
- Decision-making powers could be concentrated in the hands of only one person, without the checks and balances of collective governance through an executive. The full Council would have very little decision-making power, and would not be able to hold the Mayor to account (because a Mayor cannot be removed from office by Council, but only by the electorate).
- A directly elected Mayoral system would not easily represent the geographical diversity of Waverley's different towns and village communities. A Mayor would not represent any specific community, but would have very strong decision-making powers on behalf of Waverley's communities.

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Waverley's Executive strongly believe that the strong leader model is the right one for our Borough at present. But we want to hear what you think before any decisions are made.

Please vote for one of the following options:

- Waverley should have a 'strong leader' and executive
- Waverley should have a directly elected Mayor

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Please return in the FREEPOST envelope provided by (date)

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