

Community Governance Review Consultation results (second stage)

1. Introduction

The second stage of formal consultation on the Community Governance Review took place between Monday 22 January and Sunday 18 March 2018. A total of 299 responses were received, 125 were commenting on the area member panels arrangements.

The council used a variety of methods to seek feedback from residents and stakeholders:

- An online questionnaire, which generated 152 responses. This questionnaire was also available as paper copies tailored to each area and 147 paper surveys were returned.
- A flyer promoting the online questionnaire was included in the council's annual residents' survey. This was sent to 10,000 randomly selected households across the district, 51 of whom completed the CGR questionnaire
- Paper copies of the questionnaire were posted to 894 households directly affected by proposed changes to parish council boundaries. 139 responses were received from these residents, which may suggest they do not feel strongly enough about the proposals to complete the questionnaire
- Paper copies of the questionnaire were also available from various locations across the district; around 210 copies were distributed
- Written submissions were welcomed either by email or in writing and 27 were received
- The council held two focus groups:
 - One on Wednesday 21 February where residents who regularly attend area member panel meetings were invited to give their views on how the panels could be improved
 - One on Friday 9 March where residents who have never attended an area member panel meeting were invited to give their views on what would encourage them to attend a meeting
- Council officers attended meetings at Hersden Community Centre on Monday 26 February, and a meeting of Westbere Parish Council on Tuesday 13 March to seek views on the proposed alternative options for the Hersden area
- Council officers held individual meetings with parish councils affected by proposed boundary changes

In terms of who responded to the questionnaire:

- 291 individuals
- 1 from Adisham Parish Council
- 1 from St Cosmus and St Damian in the Blean Parish Council
- 1 from Kingston Parish Council
- 1 from the clerk to Chislet Parish Council
- 1 from the Campaign for Democracy in the Canterbury District
- 1 from Herne Bay Boccia
- 1 from Herne Bay Coastal Community Team
- 1 from Westbere Village Preservation Society

2. Area member panels

One part of the consultation sought views on how the area member panels could be improved. 125 completed questionnaires commented on this aspect of the consultation.

2.1. What would encourage people to take part in a council meeting

2.1.1. Questionnaire

In the questionnaire, respondents were asked what (if anything) would encourage them to take part in a council meeting about their local area. 131 responses were received to this question, 38 of whom have attended a meeting of one of the AMPs.

Comments can be categorised as follows:

Participation	<p>Three comments on each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To hear from local councillors ● To hear from other local residents ● If the three minute public speaking limit were extended or removed <p>Two comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If members of the public had the right to reply <p>One comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If the meetings took the form of an open debate on local issues
Representation	<p>One comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If community groups were included on the panels
Publicity	<p>30 comments:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings need to be better publicised <p>14 comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda items need to be better communicated
Agenda setting	<p>Three comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If agenda items had set timings attached to them <p>Two comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If it were easier for residents to suggest agenda items
Practicalities	<p>10 comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the meetings were held at a more convenient time <p>Six comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the meetings were held in a more convenient location <p>Two comments on each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If transport were arranged • If tea, coffee and biscuits were provided <p>One comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If parking were easier
Other comments	<p>30 comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To improve the local area and ensure local issues are dealt with <p>18 comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would attend if I felt my views would be listened to, currently I don't feel they are <p>17 comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda items would need to be directly relevant to me and my local area <p>Six comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Happy to attend and don't need any encouragement <p>Three comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If formal responses to issues raised at the meetings were provided <p>Two comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the meetings were apolitical

	<p>One comment on each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If more information were provided on what each of the various council committees and panels do • If the panels had the ability to make decisions on local issues
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2.1.2. Focus group for people who have never attended a meeting

A focus group was held at the council offices in Canterbury on Friday 9 March. Members of the council's community e-panel who have never attended an area member panel meeting were invited to attend and give their views on what would encourage them to attend a meeting.

The following comments were made:

Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a half hour networking session before the start of meetings, to give people chance to have tea/coffee/snacks and talk to their councillors and other residents • Councillors need to show they welcome, and value, public input • Offer more support for public speakers - contact them in advance to see if they need any help • Three minute time limit for public speakers is adequate, but public speakers should have the right to reply • Need strong but flexible chairing to prevent public speakers taking over the meeting
Representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The panels should be more inclusive • Need to do more to engage with the wider community, especially younger people • KCC should attend so they can answer any questions relating to county council services • Community groups should be invited to attend • Concern about community groups being co-opted onto panels - they aren't democratically elected and aren't necessarily representative of the wider community • Local residents with expertise in certain fields could give presentations on issues affecting the local area which they are experienced in • Charities and trusts (e.g. Catching Lives, church groups etc) should be invited to attend and give updates on the outcomes of their work
Publicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to know where and when meetings are held • Publicise meetings via posters in local shops and

	<p>supermarkets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Publicise agenda items in advance to be able to see if anything affects me and my local area ● Publicise agenda items via social media ● Publicise agenda items in the local press ● Create a dedicated section on the council website for each town and publicise the meetings there ● Publicise the outcomes of issues discussed more widely - not just by publishing meeting minutes on the website, also in local press and social media ● Go to schools, community centres and pubs to talk to local people and get them involved ● Engage more with residents' associations and parish councils - they can help by promoting the meetings to their residents
Agenda setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Local residents with expertise in certain fields should be able to suggest agenda items ● Not keen on the idea of themed meetings, some subjects (e.g. parking) would have too many people wishing to speak on them ● Public call for issues for agenda items several weeks before the meeting - via social media and email <p>Topics for discussion at the meetings should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Homelessness ● Parking ● Planning ● Students
Practicalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Councillors should personally welcome people as they arrive ● Seating layout should be less formal, councillors and the public should sit together ● Vary the day of the meetings - e.g. CAMP is always on a Monday which isn't convenient for everyone ● Vary the time of the meetings - have some during the day and some in the evening ● The word "member" should be dropped from the name - it makes it sound like a club ● Those present at the meeting should have name cards in front of them, i.e. councillor name, party and ward; officer name and job title ● Provide better information on parking arrangements
Other comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Would have to be an issue I feel strongly about for me to attend ● Wouldn't attend every meeting, can't commit to seven meetings a year ● Would attend if I felt my views would be listened to ● Each panel should be able to make decisions on issues

	<p>that only affect their local area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a decision taken by councillors is contrary to my view, this is ok as long as councillors explain why they have made the decision they have and how they arrived at that decision • Outcomes of issues discussed at the meetings need to be fed back to attendees
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2.2. Canterbury Area Member Panel (CAMP)

2.2.1. Questionnaire

44 responses were received regarding CAMP. 31 of these people live in Canterbury wards and 15 have attended a CAMP meeting.

Comments can be categorised as follows:

Participation	<p>Five comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The time limit for public speakers should be extended or removed <p>Three comments on each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings should include an open discussion • Councillors need to respect members of the public, and each other <p>One comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limit should be set of four or five public speakers per agenda item
Representation	<p>Eight comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KCC should attend <p>Six comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community groups should be invited to attend <p>Four comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External representatives should be invited to attend <p>Three comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents' associations should be invited to attend <p>One comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate who is on the panel and how they

	were chosen
Publicity	<p>Seven comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicise the meetings via email <p>Six comments on each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings need to be better publicised • Publicise the meetings via social media <p>Two comments on each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulate agendas to residents' associations and community groups to distribute to their members • Publicise the meetings via posters and notice boards <p>One comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish the agenda in the local press
Agenda setting	<p>Five comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make it easier for residents to suggest agenda items <p>Two comments on each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda items should be set well in advance • Residents should be able to put agenda items forward electronically if they are unable to attend the meeting <p>Some respondents also suggested topics they feel CAMP should discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highways (six comments) • Refuse collection (three comments) • Homelessness (two comments) • Housing (two comments) • Planning (two comments) • Street cleaning (two comments) • Environmental issues (one comment)
Frequency	<p>Three comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings should be held monthly <p>One comment on each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings should be held every two months • Meetings should be held quarterly • Meetings need to align with the committee cycle
Practicalities	<p>Four comments on each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The seating layout should be less formal to remove a feeling of "them" and "us" • The Guildhall is the right location <p>Three comments on each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tea and coffee should be provided

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The name should be changed as the current name does not make the function of the meetings clear <p>Two comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members of the public should be personally welcomed as they arrive <p>One comment on each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggest the meetings are called "City Matters" Suggest the meetings are called "Canterbury Matters" Suggest the meetings are called "Canterbury Community Forum" Suggest the meetings are called "Canterbury City Forum" Suggest the meetings are called "Your Choice"
Opportunities Fund	<p>One comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CAMP should actively seek projects to fund rather than deciding on applications received
Other comments	<p>Seven comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CAMP should be decision-making <p>Four comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The council should develop action plans and provide formal responses to issues discussed at CAMP <p>One comment on each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CAMP should remain advisory Do not want additional bureaucracy Did not know CAMP existed

2.2.2. Focus group for people who have attended a meeting

A focus group was held at Canterbury College on Wednesday 21 February. Residents who regularly attend CAMP were invited to attend and discuss their views on how it could be improved with officers and councillors.

The following comments were made regarding CAMP:

What works well and what doesn't?	
Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brilliant chairman Opps Fund gives the ability to spend Ability to invite community groups to attend
Bad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussions can be frustrating as no opportunity to respond Opportunities Fund has become a grants fund rather than an AMP initiative fund

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities Fund lacks structure • Opportunities Fund vote can be divisive • Amenity groups aren't treated as equals • Thematic boundaries are unclear • No opportunity to formulate resolutions
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Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make it less intimidating - if you are speaking, lots of uncertainty about time • Tap into the expertise of the public and of community groups • Provide better support for public speakers • Ongoing relationships are key
Representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replicate RAMP arrangements with residents' groups at CAMP • How do we include the BID? • Community groups should have boundaries - what about areas that don't have any? • Spend a year focusing on setting up residents' groups in areas without any • Residents' groups - elections, AGM, open membership • Mini town councils through residents' associations? • Engage with students and students' unions - should universities and student bodies be invited? • Engage with the business community • Engage with as many groups as possible
Publicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide better information on meetings • Have a dedicated webpage for each AMP • Hard-to-reach groups - publicise via local press, District Life and social media
Agenda setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be a single, meaty issue at each meeting • At the start of the year, produce a list of topics and promote the meetings around these topics • Should be an annual meeting to outline focus and priorities - "town hall" meeting where the public give their priorities for the year • Ability for residents' associations and parish councils to suggest agenda items • Set up a webpage where people can suggest agenda items • Filter suggested agenda items - how do we decide? <p>Topics for discussion at meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-street parking • Trees - Tonbridge and Malling have area planning committees who set a threshold and their forums are then delegated to decide on applications

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and licensing will always be out of scope
Frequency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are meetings frequent enough? 4 x meetings / special meetings
Practicalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More mingling - public and councillors together • Clearer signage about seating • Rotating chairmanship? • Put a time limit on the meeting to give people some certainty • Suggest calling the meeting a forum - implies openness and everyone welcome, but sounds stuffy to some • Suggested name "Canterbury City Forum" • Suggested name "Canterbury City Public Meeting" • Guildhall is the right location - has gravitas and the right infrastructure • Could be a case for different locations across the city? • Can parking restrictions be relaxed? • Names should be printed on cards (including councillor, party and ward) so everyone knows who is who • Provide refreshments
Opportunities Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs better publicity • Larger budgets • Should be a project fund to commission things • Spend the money we have more wisely - too much money left over, need to be more proactive • Provide more support for people making applications • Provide clearer criteria for people making applications
Other comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision making powers would shut down debate/discussion • Opportunity to be briefed on substantive issues • Look for issues that affect lots of people • Could AMPs become a mini-JTB? • Seek feedback from the public on big issues coming up in the future

2.3. Herne Bay Area Member Panel (HBAMP)

2.3.1. Questionnaire

22 responses were received regarding HBAMP. 17 of these people live in Herne Bay wards and 12 have attended a HBAMP meeting.

Comments can be categorised as follows:

<p>Participation</p>	<p>Four comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public speakers should have the right to reply <p>Three comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It currently feels like the meetings are run by councillors for councillors, rather than for the people they represent <p>One comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillors need training to improve the chairing of meetings
<p>Representation</p>	<p>Five comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community groups should be invited to attend <p>Three comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KCC should attend <p>Two comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local businesses should be invited to attend
<p>Publicity</p>	<p>Five comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicise the meetings in the local press <p>Four comments on each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings need to be better publicised • Publicise the meetings via social media <p>Three comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicise the meetings via email <p>One comment on each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicise the meetings in the local library • Publicise the meetings in District Life • Publicise the meetings via posters and notice boards • Circulate agendas to residents' associations and community groups to distribute to their members
<p>Agenda setting</p>	<p>One comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make it easier for residents to suggest agenda items <p>Some respondents also suggested topics they feel CAMP should discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking (two comments) • Disability and accessibility issues (one comment) • Dog fouling (one comment) • Littering (one comment) • Serco performance (one comment)
<p>Frequency</p>	<p>Two comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings should be held monthly

	<p>One comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings should be held every six months • Meetings need to align with the committee cycle
Practicalities	<p>Four comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The meeting time should be changed (two suggestions that some meetings are held during the day and some in the evenings, one suggestion that some should be held on Saturdays) <p>Three comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Herne Bay Baptist Church is the right location <p>Two comments on each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The seating layout should be less formal to remove a feeling of "them" and "us" • The name should include the words "local" and "councillors" <p>One comment on each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members of the public should be personally welcomed as they arrive • Tea and coffee should be provided • Meetings should be held at the King's Hall • Suggest the meetings are called "Herne Bay Forum" • Suggest the meetings are called "Herne Bay Community Forum" • Suggest the meetings are called "Herne Bay Town Forum" • Suggest the meetings are called "Herne Bay Town Meeting"
Other comments	<p>One comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HBAMP should be decision-making

2.3.2. Focus group for people who have attended a meeting

A focus group was held at Canterbury College on Wednesday 21 February. Residents who regularly attend HBAMP were invited to attend and discuss their views on how it could be improved with officers and councillors.

The following comments were made regarding HBAMP:

What works well and what doesn't?	
Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillors know their areas well • Feels non-political • Ability to meet and discuss issues with councillors before and after the meeting

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Opportunity for councillors to engage with the public - breaks down barriers between "them" and "us" ● Best council meeting for communicating with the public ● Important council meeting as it is often the beginning of the decision-making process
Bad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meetings are too infrequent - possibly monthly? ● Not enough power - more decisions should be made at this level ● Not enough debate ● Not enough opportunity for the public to participate in the debate ● Intimidating for the public sometimes - too formal ● Not enough information on the decision-making process - confusing for the public ● Opportunities Fund not used effectively - need a better scoring system ● Hearing is sometimes difficult - accessibility issues ● Publicise meetings better - no information on town notice boards

Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Issues with formality ● Need a working together attitude, not "them" and "us" ● Chairman to set out rules of engagement at the beginning of the meeting ● Don't like the lack of opportunity to come back in debates ● Networking opportunity for the public to chat with councillors
Representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Issue of non-elected representatives from community groups - should be invited ● Community groups should be encouraged as part of the process ● Herne Bay more of a united town - no historical residents' associations or community groups ● People in the town group together through themes, not geography
Publicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Publicise the meetings more widely ● Provide community groups with information packs ● Create webpages specific to each town and panel
Agenda setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discuss big issues affecting lots of the town <p>Topics for discussion at meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parking and yellow lines - should be entirely decided by HBAMP ● Local events e.g. Herne Bay Festival - should be decided by HBAMP

Frequency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More frequent meetings - possibly monthly?
Practicalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venue is good but layout could be improved - break down barriers and make it less formal • Provide refreshments • Suggested name "Herne Bay Forum" • Suggested name "Herne Bay Matters"
Other comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need strong and flexible chairing - not tied down by formal constraints • Chairs need proper training • Independent chairing? • Time should be used more wisely - less presentations • Not restricted on certain topics - need to be helpful and signpost people to the right place • Important to manage expectations - need to consider resources to minimise frustration • Driving forward vision for the town - area action plan to be revisited • Give more updates about previous discussions • Co-ordinate and oversee local events

2.4. Whitstable Area Member Panel (WAMP)

2.4.1. Questionnaire

33 responses were received regarding WAMP. 25 of these people live in Whitstable wards and 11 have attended a WAMP meeting.

Comments can be categorised as follows:

Participation	<p>Four comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings should include an open discussion <p>Two comments on each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public speakers should have the right to reply • Councillors need training to improve the chairing of meetings
Representation	<p>Four comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KCC should attend <p>Three comments on each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community groups should be invited to attend • Concerned about community groups being co-opted onto WAMP
Publicity	<p>Seven comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicise the meetings via social media

	<p>Five comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings need to be better publicised <p>Four comments on each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicise the meetings via email • Publicise the meetings in the local press <p>Three comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action points should be published on a dedicated Whitstable page on the council's website <p>Two comments on each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicise the meetings in District Life • Publicise the meetings via posters and notice boards <p>One comment on each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicise the meetings on the local radio • Circulate agendas to residents' associations and community groups to distribute to their members • Live stream the meetings
Agenda setting	<p>Two comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make it easier for residents to suggest agenda items <p>Some respondents also suggested topics they feel WAMP should discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic and parking (four comments) • Planning (three comments) • Anti-social behaviour (two comments) • Events, including Whitstable Oyster Festival and Regatta (two comments) • Dog fouling (one comment) • Housing (one comment) • Serco performance (one comment) • Street cleaning (one comment)
Frequency	<p>Three comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings should be held quarterly <p>Two comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings should be held monthly <p>One comment on each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The frequency of meetings is about right as it is • Meetings need to align with the committee cycle
Practicalities	<p>Six comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whitstable Castle is too small as a venue <p>Four comments:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The seating layout should be less formal to remove a feeling of “them” and “us” <p>Three comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The name should be changed as it is unclear from the current name that anyone can attend <p>Two comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The meeting time should be changed (one suggestion that some meetings are held during the day and some in the evenings) <p>One comment on each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set a finish time for the meeting and adhere to it • Members of the public should be personally welcomed as they arrive • Tea and coffee should be provided • The acoustics in Whitstable Castle are poor • The lighting in Whitstable Castle is poor • Suggest the meetings are called “Whitstable Spark” • Suggest the meetings are called “Whitstable Engage” • Suggest the meetings are called “Whitstable Matters” • Suggest the meetings are called “Whitstable Forum” • Suggest the meetings are called “Whitstable Community Forum” • Suggest the meetings are called “Whitstable Town Forum”
Other comments	<p>Four comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to feed back to attendees on the outcomes of issues discussed at WAMP <p>Two comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WAMP should be decision-making <p>One comment on each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WAMP should remain advisory

2.4.2. Focus group for people who have attended a meeting

A focus group was held at Canterbury College on Wednesday 21 February. Residents who regularly attend WAMP were invited to attend and discuss their views on how it could be improved with officers and councillors.

The following comments were made regarding WAMP:

What works well and what doesn't?
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Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opinions from WAMP to service committees have a significant impact on committee decisions • Councillors are good at engaging with the public and give people the opportunity to reply • Forum that residents can see their councillors in - good visibility
Bad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most residents don't know WAMP exists • Difficult to find WAMP information on the council website and explanation is unclear • Rules on public speaking are too rigid and put some people off - need revised rules that allow more flexibility • Not enough paper copies of agendas available • Has no power - can't and doesn't make decisions • Because WAMP isn't decision-making, residents have to attend both WAMP and the relevant service committee to give their views • Whitstable Castle is not the right venue - poor layout, acoustics, lighting and temperature, and not accessible for disabled people • Name of off-putting and doesn't make it clear what the panel does

Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability for the public to reply depends on the chairman • Should be more of a public meeting than a meeting in public, i.e. item discussed by councillors and the public, then councillors vote
Representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People with expertise through experience need to be able to speak • Representatives of trusts (including Whitstable Castle, Horsebridge Centre, Whitstable Museum) should attend annually to give a progress report • KCC councillors should attend - many people don't understand that CCC do some things and KCC do others • Councillors should be the only voting members - not KCC or community groups • Community groups must have a mandate to speak on behalf of their members and not speak without their members' knowledge
Publicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website needs improving - better content and a dedicated webpage for WAMP • Invite people to sign up to email updates to receive agendas, minutes and action points from the meetings • Publicise meetings in District Life • Install a town notice board where the meetings could be advertised

Agenda setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Agenda for the coming year should be agreed at the start of the year - might encourage more people to attend if they know what's being discussed ● Each meeting should be themed, e.g. transport, events, environmental issues etc ● Local people should have a greater opportunity to propose agenda items - might encourage more people to attend <p>Topics for discussion at meetings - annual updates on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Yellow lines ● Whitstable Oyster Festival ● Whitstable Harbour ● Parking ● Rubbish ● Trusts
Frequency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Frequency of meetings is about right as it is
Practicalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Councillors should sit with members of the public, not away from them ● Venue needs changing ● Suggested venue - St Alphege school ● Suggested venue - methodist church ● Name needs changing ● Suggested name "Whitstable Together" ● Suggested name "Whitstable Forum" ● Put the agenda up on screen via a projector ● Provide refreshments
Other comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Whitstable councillors should make decisions on Whitstable issues (e.g. recent committee decisions on dog control order and Tankerton FC lease could and should have been made by WAMP). This could be achieved by service committees giving a view first and then setting parameters within which WAMP could make a decision ● Chairs need to be trained - they're not all as effective as each other ● Visibility needs improving ● WAMP needs to be the first port of call for residents to raise issues ● WAMP should have the power to commission reports on issues to go the relevant service committee ● If a service committee overturns a WAMP recommendation, the committee should have to attend WAMP to justify this

2.5. Rural Area Member Panel (RAMP)

2.5.1. Questionnaire

26 responses were received regarding RAMP. 15 of these people live in rural wards and six have attended a RAMP meeting.

Comments can be categorised as follows:

Representation	<p>One comment on each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Local people who are involved in local issues should be invited to attend ● Village hall management committees should be invited to attend
Publicity	<p>Five comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meetings need to be better publicised <p>Two comments on each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Publicise the meetings in District Life ● Publicise the meetings in parish newsletters <p>One comment on each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Publicise the meetings via email ● Publicise the meetings via social media
Agenda setting	<p>One comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Agenda items should be sought by surveying members of the public <p>Some respondents also suggested topics they feel CAMP should discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Community safety issues (three comments) ● Anti-social behaviour (three comments) ● Litter (two comments) ● Planning (two comments) ● Environmental issues (one comment)
Frequency	<p>One comment on each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meetings should be held monthly ● Meetings should be held every three to six months ● Meetings should be held five times a year ● Suggest the number of meetings is divided by the number of parish councils so each parish attends one meeting a year
Practicalities	<p>Two comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meetings should be held in village halls <p>One comment on each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Suggest the meetings are called "Rural Voice" ● Suggest the meetings are called "Rural Area Committee"
Other comments	<p>Four comments:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RAMP should be decision-making <p>Three comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not know RAMP existed <p>One comment on each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to feed back to attendees on the outcomes of issues discussed at RAMP • Feeling that there is no need for RAMP to continue
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2.5.2. Focus group for people who have attended a meeting

A focus group was held at Canterbury College on Wednesday 21 February. Residents who regularly attend RAMP were invited to attend and discuss their views on how it could be improved with officers and councillors.

The following comments were made regarding RAMP:

What works well and what doesn't?	
Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brilliant chairman • Open discussions with the public • Invites agenda items from the public • Ability to invite community groups to attend • Ability to set council's agenda • Public speaking not limited to three minutes
Bad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities Fund has become a grants fund rather than an AMP initiative fund • Opportunities Fund lacks structure • Opportunities Fund vote can be divisive • Meetings can be hijacked by agenda items • Thematic boundaries are unclear • No opportunity to formulate resolutions

Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make it less intimidating - if you are speaking, lots of uncertainty about time • Tap into the expertise of the public and of community groups • Provide better support for public speakers • Ongoing relationships are key
Representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrangements with residents' groups work well • Parish councillors are equal in debate but not in vote • Community groups should have boundaries - what about areas that don't have any? • Spend a year focusing on setting up residents' groups in areas without any • Residents' groups - elections, AGM, open

	<p>membership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mini town councils through residents' associations? • Engage with students and students' unions - should universities and student bodies be invited? • Engage with the business community • Engage with as many groups as possible
Publicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide better information on meetings • Have a dedicated webpage for each AMP • Hard-to-reach groups - publicise via local press, District Life and social media
Agenda setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be a single, meaty issue at each meeting • At the start of the year, produce a list of topics and promote the meetings around these topics • Should be an annual meeting to outline focus and priorities - "town hall" meeting where the public give their priorities for the year • Ability for residents' associations and parish councils to suggest agenda items • Set up a webpage where people can suggest agenda items • Filter suggested agenda items - how do we decide? <p>Topics for discussion at meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-street parking • Trees - Tonbridge and Malling have area planning committees who set a threshold and their forums are then delegated to decide on applications • Planning and licensing will always be out of scope
Frequency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are meetings frequent enough? 4 x meetings / special meetings
Practicalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More mingling - public and councillors together • Clearer signage about seating • Rotating chairmanship? • Put a time limit on the meeting to give people some certainty • RAMP is often on the same night as parish council meetings • Suggest calling the meeting a forum - implies openness and everyone welcome, but sounds stuffy to some • Guildhall is the right location - has gravitas and the right infrastructure • Could be a case for different locations across the city? • Can parking restrictions be relaxed? • Names should be printed on cards (including councillor, party and ward) so everyone knows who is

	<p>who</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide refreshments
Opportunities Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● RAMP drums up support for Opportunities Fund (e.g. playing field award) ● Needs better publicity ● Larger budgets ● Should be a project fund to commission things ● Spend the money we have more wisely - too much money left over, need to be more proactive ● Provide more support for people making applications ● Provide clearer criteria for people making applications
Other comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Decision making powers would shut down debate/discussion ● Opportunity to be briefed on substantive issues ● Look for issues that affect lots of people ● Could AMPs become a mini-JTB? ● Seek feedback from the public on big issues coming up in the future ● Help parish councils with GDPR

2.5.3. Submission from St Cosmus and St Damian in the Blean Parish Council

The chair of St Cosmus and St Damian in the Blean Parish Council made the following comments on RAMP:

“There is a difference between RAMP and the other member panels. Whilst WAMP, CAMP and HBAMP have a very specific identity within the towns they serve and represent. There is a stronger identity and more specific areas of interest, development and focus. RAMP serves a wider and more diverse area.

Within RAMP there are 26 parishes, with as many as 3 parishes being represented in one ward. These 26 parishes although have some common elements, are very diverse in their development, targets and community interaction.

I believe that RAMP could develop in the following areas:

- A forum to share innovations, good practice, initiatives to tackle common areas of difficulties
- A forum to develop working partnerships to address the issues affecting rural parishes - sharing responsibilities, resources and experiences with each other. Also an area of development of working partnerships with CCC officers using ward councillors as pathways until relationships are developed and respect for each other’s roles, responsibilities and limitations are in place
- Parish councils are non political and this should extend to their dealings with CCC, whatever political party has control of the council
- Public participation is important to all panels. Within RAMP we are

unique as we already have two tiers of elected representation. However, further public participation is important and gives a more extended opinion on issues. I think the 3 minute rule should continue as an aid to concise debate with a final round up from parish councils and then ward councillors before a decision

- Regarding decisions - I would like to see a decision being made at RAMP and it being ratified by the appropriate committee, rather than the system recommendation for a decision. I appreciate this may require a change to the constitution. Also could it be investigated as to the possibility of allowing to vote at the meeting. However, areas such as policy and budget would not be appropriate as these must be in the hands of CCC
- Encouraging more parish councils to attend. Attendance similar to KALC area. Timing of meeting - Monday often a parish council meeting date - travel and parking. RAMP on tour to villages that have appropriate facilities. Is RAMP effective or just a talking shop, need to be shown to be making changes and having a positive effect. 'Sing our own praises'. Name of group perhaps Rural Voice or Rural Partnership
- Opportunities Fund split into two areas: Community groups/parish council perhaps a 40/60 split, with parish council applications being supported by ward councillors demonstrating the merit of the application and how it fits into the work/vision of the parish council. Community and charitable groups which have a direct impact within the rural community."

2.6. Written submissions

The council received five written submissions regarding area member panels. These all comment on the panels in general, rather than a specific area.

2.6.1. Campaign for Democracy in the Canterbury District

"What sort of local issues should the meetings be considering?"

Any issues specific to the locality. Local residents should be actively encouraged to propose items for the agendas. To prevent the items for discussion from being merely a random list of issues, we propose that each AMP should have an overall forward planning framework within which to identify specific issues. This could take the form of an annual identification of priorities for the coming year, and/or a four year action plan (perhaps guided by a mission statement). Local residents should be involved in the setting of priorities.

What should the meetings be called?

Canterbury/Herne Bay/Whitstable Community Forum

Where and when should the meetings take place?

The current locations (the Guildhall, Herne Bay Baptist Church, etc.) should continue to be used. Although there is a case for holding meetings in a variety of more local venues so as to encourage people to attend meetings closer to where they live, the advantages are outweighed by the convenience of having

a regular meeting place. However, the current venues should be made more welcoming, with different seating arrangements so that local residents are not seated separately from councillors.

How often should they meet?

More often than at present - between 6 and 10 times a year. Some meetings might, as at present, need to be timed to fit in with the committee cycle, but additional meetings could be scheduled, including a meeting to set priorities at the beginning of the council year. It should not be necessary for each of the AMPs to have the same number of meetings. They can vary depending on the amount of business and the degree of participation by residents.

How can the council best promote them to residents?

Public notice boards could be installed to display notices of meetings. A list of residents' associations, community groups and other membership groups should be created and information about meetings should be circulated to those groups. Individual residents could ask to be included on a mailing list. More use could be made of electronic communication via online 'social media'.

How can the public be made to feel more welcome and that their views are listened to?

Members of the public should be personally welcomed, and offered tea/coffee. Having the opportunity for informal chatting before the formal start of the meeting would help to break down boundaries. We recognise that it would be difficult for council officers to perform the welcoming role as they would be busy setting things up for the formal part of the meeting. We therefore propose that volunteers should be recruited to form a Community Forum Support Group, with the responsibility to welcome people, serve refreshments, etc.

We also propose that local residents should have greater speaking rights than they are able to exercise at present. Even if local people register to speak at the beginning of an agenda item and use their three minute entitlement, it is very frustrating for them then to listen to the discussion by councillors and have no opportunity to remind councillors of what they said, correct any misunderstandings, answer objections and criticisms, and contribute to the formulation of proposals. The public would have a greater feeling of being listened to if they were able to take part in the discussions.

We suggest that all chairs of AMPs should have proper training for chairing meetings, to ensure that they are adept at making the public feel welcome, and at the same time are able to manage effectively the timing of meetings so that increased speaking rights for members of the public do not lead to discussions which drag on interminably.

Should they continue to give their views to other committees or should they be given new powers to make decisions?

They should continue to make recommendations to the service committees, but they should also be given some decision-making powers. We suggest that an important area in which decision-making should be delegated would be that of public realm improvements - installing and improving street furniture,

planting trees and flower beds, improving play areas, installing public art etc. The aim should be to foster and cater to people's sense of pride in their locality.

We also support the proposal that the direction of flow between AMPs and council committees could in some cases be reversed, with the service committees delegating some decisions on matters specific to the relevant area and setting parameters within which AMPs could decide.

How can local priorities be balanced with the needs of the wider district?

There are no simple and precise criteria, but the guiding principle should be that local people are in a position to know what is best for their local area. Subsidiarity - that matters ought to be decided by the most competent authority - is the approach most likely to promote improved community engagement, better local democracy, and more effective and convenient delivery of local services. We believe that it is also important for AMPs to identify and respond to concerns specific to particular localities more local than the towns themselves, even if these have spill-over consequences for the wider district.

Should the meetings include representatives from community groups, KCC councillors, and others? Why? How should they be chosen?

Yes, representatives of community groups should be invited. We have said that members of the public should have increased rights to speak and participate in discussions, and we do not propose that representatives of community groups should have greater speaking rights than other members of the public. We do propose that community groups, if they meet appropriate criteria, should automatically be sent agendas and invited to propose agenda items, they should be recognised as groups speaking for their members, and their representatives should have name plates at the meetings to indicate that they are present as of right.

We recognise that residents' associations and other community groups are not necessarily completely representative of local residents. Nevertheless they can play a vital role in bridging the gap between the council and local people, by articulating and conveying the concerns of local residents, informing their members about what the council is doing, and thereby improving community engagement. We also suggest that increased participation in AMP meetings could function to responsabilise such groups and counter possible tendencies to knee-jerk negativity. Worries about how representative they are could be largely met by making it clear that they should not have voting rights. And when they speak on behalf of residents, they should be prepared to say what mandate they have for doing so.

We suggest the criteria for determining which community groups are invited to send representatives should be:

- A certain minimum number of members (to be determined)
- Membership open to anyone living in a defined area
- A written and agreed constitution
- A regular Annual General Meeting, to which councillors for the relevant ward(s) are invited

- Elections for officers
- Audited accounts

We believe that KCC councillors should also be invited to meetings, but should not have voting rights as they are elected to serve different constituencies. Their participation in meetings could help to address the confusion of many members of the public about which council is responsible for what.

We also propose that, for specific agenda items, local residents with recognised expertise or experience should be invited to attend meetings as 'expert witnesses' to contribute to the discussion of those items."

2.6.2. Submissions from individuals

"In my former community, district council meetings were televised live to the area served. There was quite an active viewership, as I know from personal experience, as I worked for the local authority and was always required to attend the meetings. Many friends and acquaintances commented to me on events occurring at the meetings they had viewed.

Granted, there was also a more thorough and widely read local newspaper which covered local issues, so the public had easy access to upcoming issues of interest.

Whether BBC South East would be interested in expanding their public role is a matter to be explored."

"A. From the beginning of the review I have supported the principle of the enhancement and development of the AMPs as a way of improving local democracy by introducing a system whereby appropriate residents and civic associations are included in discussions at AMPs where topics of discussion are appropriate to their geographical area. To this end I believe that the council should be required to establish a current database of all such associations and assume the responsibility to update and maintain it ensuring that contact details of appropriate secretaries and chairs are recorded. I would not advocate that any members of these associations be permanently appointed to AMPs but be invited on an ad hoc basis according to content and subject. It would be clearly understood that while invitees may be allowed to take part in discussion, it is only councillors who would vote since it is they who have the responsibility and accountability to make decisions on behalf of their electors. An important consideration would be to ensure that any system does not become burdensome and unworkable. As long as the principle is established then the detail would follow.

B. I firmly support the statutory requirement of our electoral system which requires councillors to be elected by their constituents to represent their interests and not unelected activists. However, I feel that having been elected some councillors lose track of who it is they are representing. Some, I believe,

consider they are representing a political party and feel little need between elections to consult or meet their electorate on important local issues which may be particularly relevant. I feel that this situation could be greatly improved if each councillor was required to hold an annual meeting with his/her constituents and report on the previous year's activities and performance. I operated this system very successfully a number of years ago as a county councillor in another jurisdiction.

C. In conclusion, I suggest that there will be some councillors (particularly the well established ones) who may not be as responsive to change as their younger contemporaries."

"How can the public be made to feel more welcome and that their views are listened to?"

The simplest way to achieve this would be literally to have someone welcoming members of the public when they arrive, explaining the set-up if they haven't been before, and offering refreshments (tea, coffee, biscuits). I realise that it would be difficult to have council officers performing this role as they are preoccupied with setting up the meeting, but there is no reason why this shouldn't be done by volunteers, and such an arrangement would be an 'easy win'. Having volunteers welcome residents presupposes that they are themselves there as of right, so it links with my other points below.

I recently attended a meeting of the RAMP and was struck by the fact that the councillors and representatives of parish councils were all sitting together, and all participated in discussions on equal terms. The result was that this also spilled over to other members of the public, who were similarly treated as equal participants, with no restrictions on speaking rights.

All this made a significant difference to the atmosphere of the meeting, and although the architecture of the Guildhall is not intrinsically welcoming, it felt like a more welcoming place. I think meetings should continue to be held there. It is just more convenient than anywhere else. Although there are attractions in moving the venue around to make it more accessible to different localities, I think there are bigger advantages in having the same regular venue with everyone knowing where it is.

Having full speaking rights not only makes you feel more welcome, it also gives you more of a feeling that your views are being listened to. If you simply exercise your right to speak for three minutes at the beginning of an agenda item, and if you have no comeback in the discussion, you can easily feel that what you said is being ignored. I believe that members of the public should have the right to speak on the same terms as councillors (though not voting rights, of course). I appreciate that this carries the risk of making meetings longer, and it would require firm chairing of the meetings. I suggest that the chairs of all the AMPs should be given training to ensure that they are adept at dealing with this, as well as at making the public feel welcome.

Members of the public would also have more of a feeling that they are taken seriously if they could more easily propose items for the agenda. They do at

present have the right, at the end of a meeting, to suggest items for the next meeting, which then need to be formally proposed by a councillor in order to be put on the agenda, but this opportunity is rarely offered and you have to be alert and forceful in order to make suggestions. I think that there should be a clear mechanism for members of the public to ask, in advance, what topics should be on the agenda of meetings. There could be a designated council officer to whom proposals for agenda items should be sent. There would of course have to be procedures and criteria for deciding whether proposals were accepted.

Should AMPs be given new powers to make decisions?

Yes, I believe that they should have decision-making powers. I realise that there are necessarily constraints on the scope for them to make decisions, viz. (i) that AMPs should not be able to make decisions committing spending from budgets which are not under their control, and (ii) that the matter should be strictly local and not impacting on the rest of the district. I think that this still leaves some room for making significant decisions. In particular, AMPs should be empowered to make decisions for public realm improvements - generally enhancing the appearance of the city. This is small beer in one sense, but with significant potential.

I gather that the Opportunities Fund (the one matter on which AMPs can currently make decisions) was originally set up not for making grants to local organisations, but as a fund which AMPs themselves could use for particular projects which they identified. I think that the fund should be renamed and should revert to its original purpose. AMPs would then have a dedicated budget to spend on public realm improvements, without having to make claims on budgets outside their control. If this were done, I also think that the size of the Fund should be increased.

The Governance Committee recently tried to empower AMPs to make decisions on recommendations about on-street parking (yellow lines) direct to the KCC Cabinet Member for Transport, on the understanding that he/she would normally accept the recommendations, but KCC members for Canterbury declined to go along with this, so the present compromise is that AMPs can make recommendations direct to the Joint Transportation Board without having to go through another CCC committee. I think that another attempt should be made to empower AMPs to make recommendations directly to the KCC Cabinet Member. On-street parking is a matter on which local residents have strong views - and they are in a position to know what is needed.

AMPs should continue to have the power to make recommendations to the main CCC committees. In my experience they do not make as much use of this as they could. Too many agenda items consist of a meandering discussion which leads to nothing definite. There should be better liaison between CCC committees and AMPs to identify matters on which the committees invite recommendations. One way of doing this is for the committees to delegate decisions on particular matters to council officers on the understanding that they will be guided by the decision of the AMP. (This is a way round the proportionality rule).

Should the meetings include representatives from community groups?

I do think that residents' associations and other community organisations should be represented as of right. As noted above, the presence of parish council representatives at the RAMP meeting made a significant difference to the feel of the meeting, and set the presumption that everyone was there on an equal footing.

There would of course have to be criteria to determine which organisations could send representatives. I suggest something like the following:

- At least a certain number of members (20?)
- Membership open to anyone living in a defined area
- A written and agreed constitution
- A regular Annual General Meeting, to which councillors for the relevant ward(s) are invited
- Elections for officers
- Audited accounts

Organisations which satisfied these criteria would be at least as democratic and representative as parish councils (though they would not of course be 'statutory bodies', as the latter are).

I gather than in some of the focus groups in the first stage of the CGR consultation, the view was expressed that residents' associations did not always speak authentically for local residents (being too inclined to be automatically negative, for instance). There may be truth in this. But having to engage in discussion with councillors could itself have a salutary effect on how residents' associations see their own role. And the crucial point is that although residents' associations and community groups should have the same speaking rights as councillors, they should not have voting rights.

As well as representative of community groups having speaking rights on a par with councillors, individual members of the public should have speaking rights too. As noted above, this carries the risk that meetings would go on for too long. If this turns out to be a problem, maybe the chair should be able to exercise discretion and confine speaking rights to representatives of community groups where necessary. In any case, the situation could be reviewed after a year and the impact on the length of meetings assessed."

"It would be a good idea to live stream meetings for those who are interested. This would be a great step towards further transparency."

3. Other comments

Other comments received can be categorised as follows:

Canterbury	One comment: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feeling the council should do more to promote Canterbury as a holy city
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<p>Herne Bay</p>	<p>Two comments on each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Feeling the council ignores the needs of Herne Bay ● Perceived lack of parking enforcement <p>One comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Would have preferred a new parish council for Beltinge and Reculver ● Perceived lack of planning enforcement
<p>Whitstable</p>	<p>Two comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Would have preferred a new town council for Whitstable <p>One comment on each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Don't feel the need for a report on empty shops in the town centre to be discussed at WAMP ● Feeling the council uses Whitstable to make money
<p>General comments</p>	<p>Two comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Area member panels should have the same status as parish councils <p>One comment on each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Information about AMPs on the council's website is unclear ● Meetings need to run to time ● Feeling the council needs to offer more support for public speakers at meetings ● Feeling that councillors are distant from the communities they serve ● Feeling that councillors need to show more respect to public speakers ● Desire to be involved in local decision making but without bureaucracy and politics ● Would have preferred a unitary district council ● Feeling the council focuses too much on students ● Feeling the council needs to provide more CCTV