

Comments from KLACC

The Chair welcomed Councillors Devereux and Moriarty and Terry Huggins to the meeting.

Councillor Devereux introduced the item and explained the work which had been carried out so far. A Task Group had been set up to look at the Governance arrangements which lead to a workshop in November, organised by Terry Huggins, for all Councillors.

Councillor Kemp – Would like to see KLACC with its own budget to enable the Committee to be more proactive. The Committee was supposed to function as a Parish Council for King's Lynn but doesn't have a budget. The status of the Committee needed to be upgraded.

Councillor John Collop – It has been a problem that the Committee was just a Consultative Committee. The Committee has always had to request funding from Cabinet as it did not have its own budget. It was frustrating that the Committee could not spend its own money.

Cllr Howman – The Committee's Terms of Reference needed to be revised, and should be given the same power as a Parish Council. The Committee needs to be reviewed, modernised and restructured.

Councillor Kemp – The Committee needed to be forward thinking and the structure did need improving. The area would be benefitted if the Committee could have a capital budget, for example health infrastructure. She made reference to the Millennium Agreement at NORA.

Councillor Jo Rust – She understand the issues that had been raised relating to KLACC, but this was governance arrangements overall and was wider than just this Committee. She added that there was no longer an overwhelming majority and now was the opportunity to consider alternative governance arrangements.

Terry Huggins – Need to know reasons why things are not working.

Councillor Howman – There was not an adequate representation on Cabinet – someone from King's Lynn should be on it. KLACC was supposed to represent people but had no delegated powers or budget.

Councillor Bone – want to help people in his ward. With a Committee system it would be more individual than party driven. There was now more debate at full Council meetings.

Councillor Jones – being a new member in May, he did not know how the two systems would work. He considered that Cabinet should have a more proportionate representation.

Terry Huggins explained that the change to a Committee system would be massive. Some local authorities had reintroduced a Committee system but was different from a traditional committee system.

The Chair added that some frustrations he was aware of related to issues from full Council being referred to Cabinet.

Councillor Mrs Wilkinson reminded the Committee that when Labour was in control and a Committee system was used previously, there were opposition Chairs. She considered that there should be more workable arrangements.

Terry Huggins explained that nothing had been decided, work to date had focused on what needed to be fixed. He added that there was no single model and it was about designing what worked best for this Council.

The Chair added that the Mayor was normally decided by the ruling group. Many people felt that it should be decided on the length of service. Another issue related to outside bodies and the fact that people should be appointed on expertise and not what political party they were from.

Councillor Moriarty explained it was in 2002 when Labour brought in the Cabinet system.

Councillor Hudson considered that equal representation was needed from different groups. All decisions should go to full Council. Minutes needed to be more detailed – she did not have enough time to go to all the Panel meetings.

Councillor Moriarty – in last few years, Council made the decision to change the way of taking minutes. Recording of meetings was being considered and could come forward.

Councillor Howman – CPP was a toothless entity. Cabinet Scrutiny Committee was chaired by the opposition and worked well. There needed to be effective scrutiny.

Councillor Kemp explained that she served under a Committee system and was fairer and included a greater mix of people. She welcomed audio recording and live streaming of meetings.

Councillor Tyler – should a local political party have to follow a national party.

Councillor Bambridge referred to the last set of E&C minutes and added that people did get comments recorded. The onus was on Councillors to look at meetings and go along to meetings. Councillors could ask for something to be minuted.

Terry Huggins – Thank you for comments. You can send an email with further points ensuring that you explain why something is not working and a solution.

Councillor Moriarty suggested that the Committee looked at minutes from the Task Group published on mod.gov for background.

Councillor Devereux thanked the Committee for their comments.

The Chair thanked Councillors Devereux, Moriarty and Terry Huggins for attending the meeting.