

What are we consulting on?

We are considering changing our decision-making arrangements. In summary, the changes we are considering are these:

- 1) **Area Forums** – To set up area forums in place of area committees. The area forums would be informal meetings dealing with issues of local concern and interest. Funds are available to ensure they can meet at least once a quarter if desired, and maybe more frequently depending upon local choice.
- 2) **Ward Member budgets** – To give each member of Council £1,500 to spend in relation to their Ward.
- 3) **Planning** – To set up two area planning committees to deal with planning applications. One committee would decide upon applications for the west of the City and one committee would decide upon applications for the east of the City. The committees would meet monthly and would usually be held in the Town Hall.
- 4) **Reaching executive decisions** – To introduce single member executive decision making. The draft proposal is to split decisions presently reserved to the City Executive Board so that many of them are decided by individual Executive Board members. All decisions would continue to be made in public and could be ‘called in’ by scrutiny committees.

If you feel it would be helpful to find out more before answering this questionnaire, the Council has agreed a paper *Democratic Arrangements – Proposed Changes* for consultation purposes. This contains further information including Ward member spending rules and the types of decisions that single executive members will be able to reach.

This consultation paper can be viewed and downloaded from the *Changes to decision-making arrangements* section on the consultation page of our website www.oxford.gov.uk/consultation. A paper copy is also available to view at the same location that you collected this questionnaire, or from the reception desk at the Town Hall, St Aldate’s, Oxford.

Have your say

We want your views on our proposals. Please answer the questions below. Space is available at the end of each question to offer additional comments.

- 1) Have you ever attended an area committee? **YES/NO**

- 2) (a) The Council proposes to set up informal area forums in place of area committees. Do you think area forums and other neighbourhood meetings offer the potential to involve local people in reaching decisions about their local areas? **YES/NO**

- (b) How would you like to see these area forums and neighbourhood meetings develop?

3) (a) The Council proposes to set up individual budgets that Ward members can spend, subject to clear rules and appropriate oversight, in their Wards. Are you in favour of this? **YES/NO**

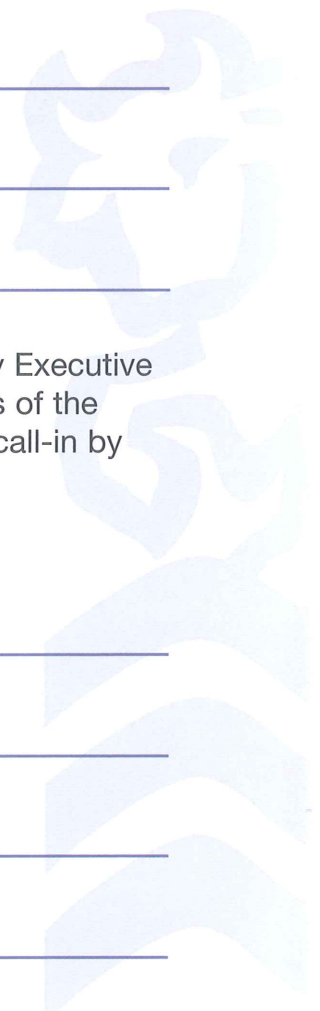
(b) Have you any other comments to make on this proposal?

4) (a) Are you in favour of planning applications being considered by two area planning committees covering larger geographical areas rather than the present area committees? **YES/NO**

(b) Have you any other comments to make on this proposal?

5) (a) The Council proposes to reduce the number of meetings of its City Executive Board, and instead have some decisions taken by individual members of the Executive in public, with advice from Council officers, and subject to call-in by scrutiny. Are you in favour of this? **YES/NO**

(b) Have you any other comments to make on this proposal?



6) Have you any comments to make on our proposals generally?

Consultation deadline and decisions

This consultation closes on Friday 25 March 2011.

The City Executive Board on 13 April and Full Council on 18 April 2011 will consider the consultation outcomes and determine the way forward. Any new arrangements will commence from mid-May 2011.

Who to contact at the Council

For further information about this consultation please contact:

William Reed, Democratic Services Manager,
telephone: 01865 252230
email: wreed@oxford.gov.uk

or write to:

William Reed
Democratic Services Manager
The Town Hall
Blue Boar Street
Oxford
OX1 4EY

Thank you for reading this questionnaire and responding to our consultation. Please complete this form and leave it at the reception at the Town Hall, St. Aldate's, Oxford or **place in an envelope** and return by **FREEPOST** before 5pm on **Friday 25 March** to:

Democratic Changes
Oxford City Council
FREEPOST OF10
OXFORD
OX1 1BR

This consultation is also available online until **25 March 2011**. Visit www.oxford.gov.uk/consultation and click on *Changes to decision-making arrangements*.

