

Public Forum

Committee Model Working Group

27th January 2023



Questions	
Number	Name
PQ 01 PQ02	Suzanne Audrey
PQ 03 PQ04 PQ05	Joanna Booth

Suzanne Audrey

Q1. As far as I am aware, four members of the working group voted against holding the governance referendum, two members wrote articles during the run-up to the referendum saying they opposed the committee model, and two members (including the Chair) currently serve in the Mayor's Cabinet, some members of which continue to make disparaging remarks about the committee system. What reassurance can you give to the public that those members of the working group who opposed the governance referendum and/or the committee model are now working positively to develop the new committee model of governance for the city?

A1. This is a question for individual Councillors and should be directed to them as appropriate, however anyone in attendance at the meeting may choose to respond.

Q2. The Vice-chair of the governance working group appeared to suggest that only '12 nerds' across the city were interested in the early meetings of the committee model working group. I disagree, and the public engagement meeting I attended would suggest that there are plenty of people who are keen to understand and improve local democracy. However, it is not always easy for people to attend meetings or to get their voices heard. In what ways will the working group engage citizens in the development and understanding of the new committee model of governance?

A2. The Committee Model Working Group has prepared a [Communications and Engagement Strategy](#) which sets out Members' commitment to engaging with the public and the ways in which they will do this. In addition to the activities set out in the Strategy, meetings of the CMWG will now be held in public, which provides residents with the opportunity to submit statements and ask questions, even if they are not able to attend in person.



Joanna Booth

Q3. How have they ensured that scrutiny will be done outside the committees themselves so that those performing executive functions do not also scrutinise their own actions?

A3. The Committee Model Working Group will be considering the approach to scrutiny at a future meeting.

Q4. How is the committee ensuring that the system that will come into place in May 2024, will have sufficient resources (i.e. won't be affected by the Labour administration's cuts to Democratic Services) to perform its functions?

A4. Discussions about the resources required to support the committee system will take place when more details about the potential structure are available.

Q5. At a recent public meeting, the chair, Cllr Helen Holland, implied the group was looking at how to create a 'strong leader' model. This is not what Bristol voted for. How is the committee planning to make sure we have a committee system, which the people voted for, and not a leader and cabinet system?

A5. The referendum on the Council's governance will result in a move to the Council being run by 'one or more Committees made up of elected Councillors.' Councillor Holland may wish to comment further on this question.

