

## Appendix A *Relating to Item 11: Scrutiny 2011 - Fit for Purpose Fit for Future*

12 out of 17 Members responded to the questionnaire (a response rate of 70.5%)

### Question 1

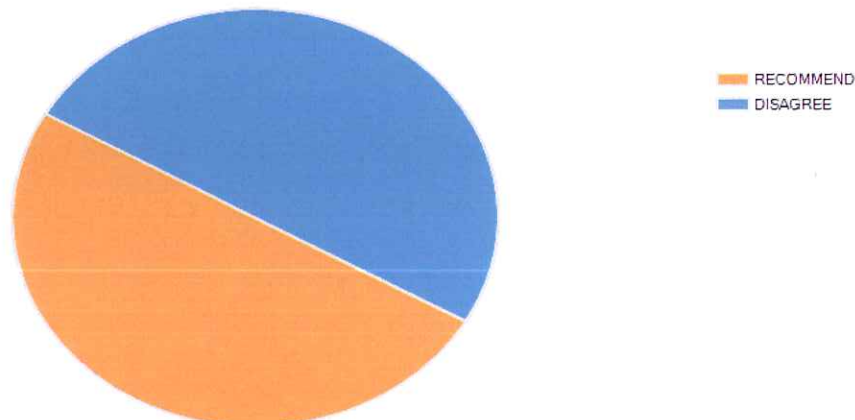
Reduce the number of Scrutiny Committees from 6 to 3: Policy and Corporate Resources. Regeneration and Neighbourhoods. Children and Health. The number of Members on each Committee would be increased to 17 to ensure as many Members as possible could participate in Overview and Scrutiny. The majority of the work will take place outside of Committee with the 17 Members splitting into task and finish groups to address individual topics. Members will be free to choose which task and finish groups, if any, they engage with, and how they do so.

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### Comments

*"Lack of focus, disinterest in scrutiny will grow further, lack of...."*

*"These are too large a portfolios now with restructure and its been found sub groups from these do not work and 17 members on these is too large nothing would get sorted."*

*"We should keep health on its own along with adults and childrens as these are so large."*

*"Where are the figures to show the savings by doing this?"*

*"Committee's will be too large and as current attendance levels are poor there will be even larger gaps in attendance. Organising smaller task and finish groups and setting meeting times will prove difficult."*

*"I feel 17 would be too many in number, four committee would be better than three.*

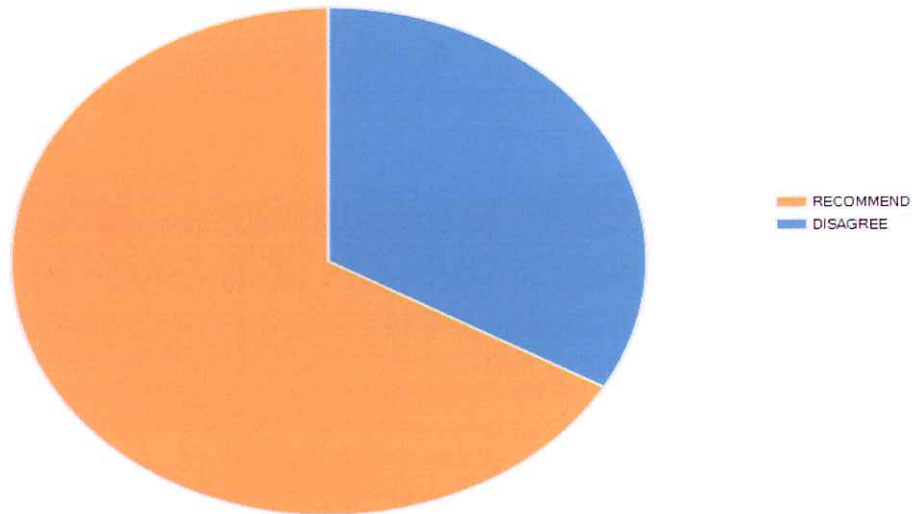
*"I am sure that it will come as no surprise that I disagree with the retiring of the H.O.S.C. this in my opinion is one of the most important committees we have in Blackburn with Darwen I think that over the years Policy and Review will have seen how this Committee has been developed, for instance Working with Lancashire County Council, Cumbria, Blackpool. Hopefully this working will extend to the Pennine area, as far as I can see this is enhancing the reputation of Blackburn with Darwen as a Committee that is committed to getting the work done and putting recommendations in at the end which will be taken seriously. Working more closely with Hospital trust's to an extent that they get in contact with scrutiny when they have a major problem, also once a month scrutiny meet at the Hospital trust for an informal meeting to discuss problems that each of us have had or may see any problems coming up in the future. One example of this is some 8 weeks ago we asked the question have we sufficient supplies of the Swine Flu vaccination available just in case it returned this winter, the answer was yes, had it been No then we would have carried out more investigations has to why not. (As you may well have seen in the media recently swine flu has again returned) these are the things that people do not see but are constantly on our radar. It also does not matter how many members you recommend to have on a committee, it will still be the same dedicated ones that turn up week in and week out. (I would like to add that in recent years I have been very lucky to have worked with some of the most dedicated members, and it has been a privilege to work with them) This committee has also been instrumental in writing to the Government telling them that their proposals for changes to Scrutiny committee structure is wrong which they would seem to have accepted? Relationships with L.I.N.K's has been forged to an extent that one member of Health scrutiny is a none voting member on their committee and one member of their committee is invitee to Overview Scrutiny meeting to give an up to date account as to what they have been doing and take into consideration what the committee recommended them to investigate".*

*"Too drastic. Reduction to at least four would be more acceptable"*

## Question 2

Depending on the topic - this will determine which Executive Members and Directors are asked to report to Committee. Scrutiny Members will also have the opportunity to meet Executive Members outside of Committee too (rather than have three report to one meeting).

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## Comments

*"Scrutiny should not be silo'ed as per the executive members are!"*

*"Its up to scrutiny to decide who we want to speak to not the exec members or leader. as the main reason for this role is to scrutinise them and what they are doing and by down scaling things will be missed"*

*"We all have the opportunity to talk to and meet exec members outside of committee now, they are after all just ordinary members of the council just the same as all other members. Council forum is an opportunity for all members to question the executive. Under this proposal exec members could have to report to all three Committees."*

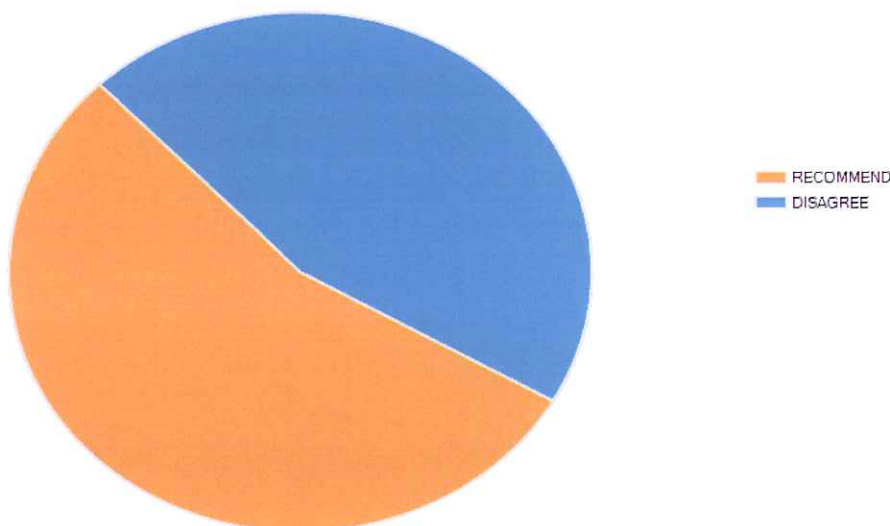
*"I think that if there was a problem question would and should be asked and passed onto the committee".*

### Question 3

Establish a standing Committee of 9 Members. This Committee would be convened from a virtual pool of non - Executive Members (an opportunity to choose the most experienced depending on topic - although not exclusively restrictive). This Committee would hear all Call Ins. One meeting each month would be scheduled in the Council diary to accommodate Call-In hearings. The meetings would be cancelled if no Call-Ins are received.

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### Comments

*"I feel that the same handfull will attend most call-in meetings, with the few councillorors that currently do not attend scrutiny regularly, having it easier to be absent. Scrutiny should be about commitment of all members also !!! Commitment and attendance should be heavily scrutinised in any future modifications."*

*"Those involved with a scrutiny area are far better placed to hear call-ins. This scheme will get politically hi-jacked and scutiny/call in function will be greatly diluted."*

*"If a person is not on the scrutiny they would find the call ins difficult to understand. this part should remain the same."*

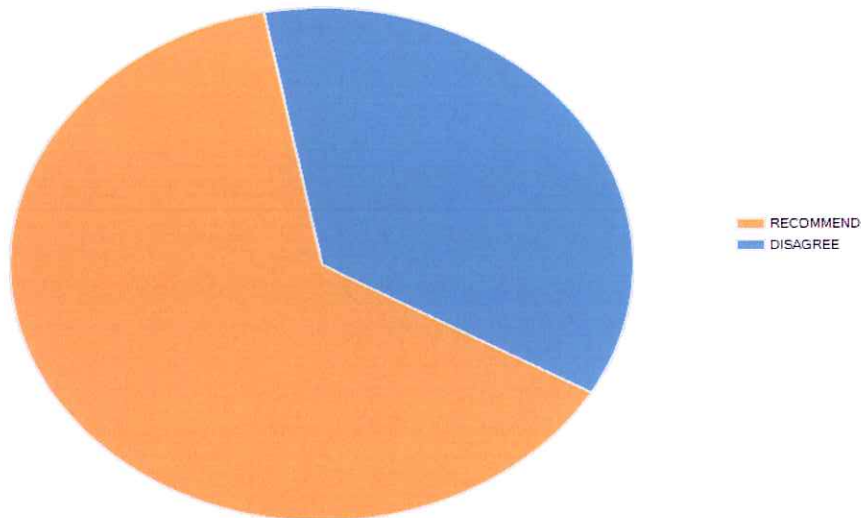
*"I assume this pool would be members of scrutiny commitees. If so this already exists. Some concerns around the chair of this commitee, how would that work?. Good idea to have a date each month but how would that work if a decision as made the day before the meeting was scheduled. Call in is currently of little value and often too political. Call in commitee needs more teeth."*

*“As said in the past questions this committee will have to be made up of reliable Members, and no political bias should be shown”.*

#### **Question 4**

No reports marked “to note” or “for information” will be Called In. These reports will be debated at scheduled meetings of the main Committees.

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#### **Comments**

*“Noting means a vote to continue a course of action. call in can question exactly this continuance.”*

*“We need to stay the same as we are.”*

*“This depends on the report content.”*

*“What would happen with petitions that could have hundreds of signatures and is causing great concern in one specific ward because debating them at a committee could be overruled by the virtue of the fact that there would be more members of the ruling party on that committee”.*