

Strong Leader or Elected Mayor

Council's consultation with local residents on the two new forms of Governance

From 19th July 2010 to the end of September 2010 the Council is consulting with residents on changes it has to make to its constitution.

Under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, the Council must change to one of two new forms of local government in May 2011. These two forms of government are:

1. a Leader with stronger powers – (which is known as the Strong Leader model)
2. Directly Elected Mayor

These are the only forms of local government now permitted and the Council has no choice but to change to one of them.

The Council would like to hear what the residents of Bromsgrove have to say on changing to either a Strong Leader or a Directly Elected Mayor form of local government. At the conclusion of the public consultation the views received from local residents will be collated and presented to councillors for consideration. A formal decision on which model to implement will be taken by Councillors at the meeting of the Full Council on 17th November 2010.

A summary of the changes is described below.

Current system:

The Council has a Leader and a Cabinet.

The Leader is appointed every year by the Council.

The Council decides how many people are in the Cabinet.

The Leader appoints the Cabinet every year.

The Leader decides what jobs the people in the Cabinet perform.

The Council decides a scheme of delegation to say what decisions the Cabinet and the Officers can make.

New Systems:

The differences are as follows:

The Elected Mayor is not a councillor. It is an additional post to the 39 councillors.

The Strong Leader is one of the 39 councillors

The Elected Mayor is elected by the residents once every four years.

The Strong Leader is elected by the Council for a four year term.

The Elected Mayor cannot be removed during his or her term of office.

The Council can remove the Strong Leader during his or her term of office.

But these things are the same for the Elected Mayor and the Strong Leader:

The Mayor or Strong Leader decides how many people are in the Cabinet.

The Mayor or Strong Leader decides what jobs the people in the Cabinet do.

The Mayor or Strong Leader appoints the Cabinet and can dismiss them at will.

The Mayor or Strong Leader decides a scheme of delegation to say what decisions the Cabinet and the Officers can make.

So in both cases there is a concentration of power away from the Council to one person, either an Elected Mayor or a Strong Leader.

We would like to hear your views as to which form of government the Council

should choose.

The Council currently prefers the Strong Leader model because:

- Strong Leader and Cabinet model preserves the links with the councillors and representation of wards in the present political system.
- Elected Mayor model introduces the prospect of personality into local politics which although it may be conducive to city government is less appropriate in a small district such as Bromsgrove.
- A Strong Leader can be removed by the Council during the term of four years and this is an important constitutional safeguard.

But we want to hear your views before we make any final decision.

By email to the Head of Legal Equalities and Democratic Services:

Insert link

or by post to:

Claire Felton
Head of Legal Equalities and Democratic Services
The Council House
Burcot Lane
Bromsgrove
B60 1AA

Further information:

[Link to full briefing note including FAQ's](#) (Word 55kb)

[Link to Cabinet Report with recommendations to Council 29 April 2010](#)