

#NHS4ALL Download

Local Authority-based meetings

Cabinet Meetings

Cabinets are the executive committee for local authority councils. A handful of members make the Council's decisions. The members are all Councillors and apart from the Chair who is the Council Leader, each one is responsible for a Council department or Directorate

- eg Economy, Adult Social Care, Finance, Planning and Housing, Public Health, Customer Services etc.



Introduced by the New Labour Government, the Cabinet system is fundamentally undemocratic since it means a few Councillors control what decisions a Council makes. This leaves the rest of the Councillors rather powerless.

Cabinets make vital decisions like committing the Council to a local Integrated Care Service, so it's worth keeping an eye on what's on their agenda, lobbying the Cabinet, asking questions at the meeting, and making sure the local press know what's going on and report on important decisions.

Here's how to find your local Council <https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council>

On your Council website, go to the Council section (there are usually 3 sections: Residents, Businesses and Council).

There you should be able to find info about the Cabinet, its members and meetings calendar. Cabinet agendas and meeting papers are usually uploaded a week before the meeting. Here's some rather long winded but thorough government info about Council Cabinets

[COUNCIL CABINETS](#)

Full Council Meetings

Because of the Cabinet's executive decision making powers, Full Council Meetings are basically a piece of theatre where Councillors get up and make speeches to please their voters.

But occasionally they discuss and vote on Council Motions. It is possible to mount a lobbying campaign to get Councillors to present a motion to Full Council.

Here's info about an NHS and social care motion to Kirklees Full Council <https://bit.ly/2Ju5xP3>

Health and Wellbeing Board Meetings

Health and Wellbeing Boards are another creation of the 2012 Health and Social Care Act. They have no formal powers and are a kind of talking shop.

Health and Wellbeing Boards are increasingly involved in steps towards more Council/ NHS Integrated Commissioning. For instance, Dorset's health and wellbeing board, with Bournemouth and Poole, has shared accountability for a single joint commissioning board for health and social care across the three local authority areas. The Isle of Wight's board is overseeing the integration of health and social care based on a 'one island' budget.

Beware - not all meetings are in public. From asking questions at Calderdale Health and Wellbeing Board, we have found that private meetings of the Health and Wellbeing Board are not minuted – and that meetings of West Yorkshire Health and Wellbeing Board Chairs and Council Leaders are not held in public, nor are the minutes made public.

Not that we are a fan of the Kings Fund - far from it ([here's why!](#)) - but sometimes they have useful info. Here is their account of Health and Wellbeing Boards. Be aware that the Kings Fund is paid by NHS England to drive its Accountable/Integrated Care agenda, and discount any bias accordingly.

<https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/publications/health-wellbeing-boards-explained>

Health and Wellbeing Board members include:

- *Council Officers and Councillors with Cabinet responsibility for adult social care, children's and young people's services and public health etc;*
- *Clinical Commissioning Group Governing Body Chairs and CCG Chief Execs;*
- *Reps of all local organisations involved in activities that have any bearing on health and wellbeing including police, housing, schools, voluntary sector etc.*

They are the forum for talking about how to integrate social care and NHS services, particularly through the Better Care Fund.

The Better Care Fund was set up in the ConDem government's June 2013 Spending Round with a budget of £3.8bn (not new or additional money but taken from the supposedly ringfenced NHS budget).

AKA the Integration Transformation Fund, it transfers NHS funding into Councils' adults social care and public health budgets which have suffered huge cuts as central government has slashed its grants to local authorities.

It is being used to drive integration of NHS, social care and public health services, by requiring the money to be spent on integrated schemes between NHS and social care staff. that will take pressure off the NHS. For example, social care schemes to tackle delayed discharge of patients from hospital because there is nowhere for them to go if they need rehab/ social care.

The Better Care Fund requires CCGs and local authorities to enter into pooled budgets arrangements and agree an integrated spending plan.

Here is official NHS England info about the Better Care Fund. Ignore the spin. <https://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/part-rel/transformation-fund/bcf-plan/>

Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee

Council Scrutiny Committees are REALLY important. They exist both at the level of individual councils, and as joint scrutiny committees across councils where proposed NHS changes cover multiple council areas - such as Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships/Integrated Care Systems at STP level.

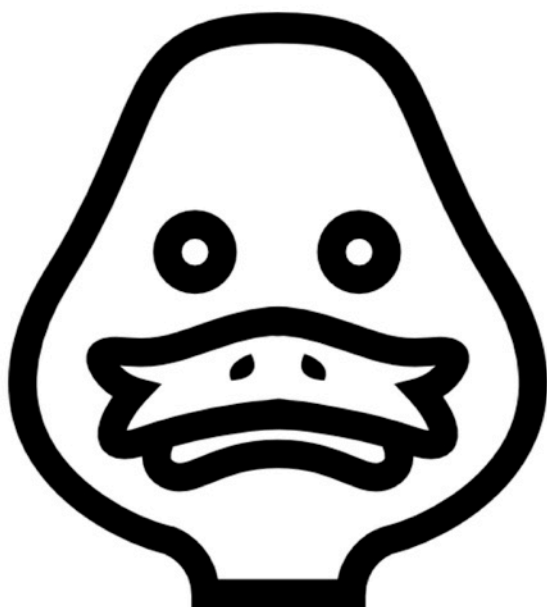
They're important because they have the POWER to call in any public body in their area - including their own council - in order to scrutinise proposals and decisions, and they can refuse them and refer them back if these proposals and decisions are not in the interests of the public in their area.

They also have the DUTY to use their POWER. So if they're not calling in and scrutinising proposals and decisions that they should be, you can get on their case and tell them to.

Local group 999 Calderdale & Kirklees (CK999) has been attending scrutiny committees for years, you can read about it here if you like.

<https://calderdaleandkirklees999callforthenhs.wordpress.com/?s=scrutiny>

Good Luck and keep asking for answers.



what the duck?

