



**REPORT of
DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY, PERFORMANCE AND GOVERNANCE**

to
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
15 OCTOBER 2020

MECHANISM FOR SUBMITTING AN OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ITEM

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To agree an approach to manage the identification of Overview and Scrutiny items and development of a Workplan for the Committee.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) That the Committee agrees the proposed process set out at **APPENDIX A** to manage the way Overview and Scrutiny work is undertaken, to ensure efficiency and the delivery of clear outcomes;
- (ii) That the Committee agrees as part of the new process the form at **APPENDIX B** for use by all Members to submit a proposed scrutiny item;
- (iii) That the Committee's Working Group be convened ahead of scheduled meetings of the Committee to review submitted scrutiny requests and report to the Committee with a view to their inclusion in the Committee's Workplan.

3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 There is currently no proper process for reviewing Members' requests for scrutiny items prior to their inclusion in the Committee's Workplan. It is important that the Workplan includes only items of actual scrutiny, and a proper process will enable the actual area of scrutiny to be identified alongside a plan for how the scrutiny is to be undertaken together with a timescale and intended outcome.
- 3.2 The existing Workplan of the Committee has been under review in the recent meetings that have taken place. The question criteria suggested in **APPENDIX B** will help to identify items that should be referred to another Committee in the first instance or should otherwise first be picked up by Officers to provide any necessary clarification and information.
- 3.3 The suggested approach also aims to link in internal programmes such as the Project Management Office, to identify where the Outcomes from Scrutiny can link to future operational improvements. This also lines up our approach to Overview and Scrutiny with internal working practices.

- 3.4 The Committee has already established a Working Group and under the previous agenda item will have been asked to approve its terms of reference. Working Group notes will be available via Mod.Gov to all Members, which will enable the progress of scrutiny requests to be tracked, thus providing transparency in the approach to scrutiny work.
- 3.5 The proposed approach aims to bring our processes in line with best practice and reflect the principles set out in the latest Government Guidance.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The suggested process and detailed form are provided as a way to specify how we complete overview and scrutiny work, to ensure efficiency and clear outcomes are delivered from the Committee.

5. IMPACT ON STRATEGIC THEMES

- 5.1 The working practices and role of the Committee help to underpin the Performance and Efficiency theme.

6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – The process provides clarity for internal and external customers about the supportive work that the Overview and Scrutiny committee will provide by way of contributing towards efficiency and an improvement in public services.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – N/A
- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – A robust working approach to Overview and Scrutiny would help to minimise organisational risks going forwards.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – N/A
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – Clarity on the working practices and use of the working group to filter items for the workplan will lead to more efficient use of resources.
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – N/A
- (vii) **Impact on Strengthening Communities** – N/A

Background Papers:

Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities – Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government – May 2019

Enquiries to: Cheryl Hughes, Programmes, Performance and Governance Manager