



**MINUTES of
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
15 OCTOBER 2020**

PRESENT

Chairman	Councillor M W Helm
Vice-Chairman	Councillor R P F Dewick
Councillors	V J Bell, Mrs J L Fleming, S P Nunn, R H Siddall and W Stamp
In Attendance	Councillors Mrs P A Channer, A Hull, C Morris and C Swain

1. CHAIRMAN'S NOTICES

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the first remote meeting of the committee, held under new regulations which came into effect on 4 April 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. He took Members through some general housekeeping issues, together with the etiquette for the meeting and then asked Officers present to introduce themselves.

This was followed by a roll call of all Members present.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R P F Dewick and M S Heard.

In accordance with notice duly given Councillor W Stamp was in attendance as a substitute for Councillor M S Heard.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 5 March 2020 be approved and confirmed.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was none.

5. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

There were none.

6. COMMITTEE OPERATING PROTOCOL AND WORKING PRACTICES

The Committee considered the report and associated appendices of the Director of Strategy, Performance and governance that sought approval of a revised operating protocol and working practices for the committee.

The Chairman introduced the report and deferred to the Programmes, Performance and Governance Manager to present the detail. She drew Members attention to Appendix A that provided a suggested committee protocol for adoption. The aim was to set clear, detailed ways of working and agreed standards for defining and progressing items for overview and scrutiny thereby addressing the findings in the Corporate Governance Audit and comments raised in the Corporate Governance Working Group.

Appendix A also included a suggested terms of reference for the Overview and Scrutiny Working Group with the intention that this group meet ahead of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings to review the detail of items and recommend additions to the workplan.

In summary, she said the intention of the report and recommendations was to establish a good foundation and clear direction for the Committee, so that when it was reconstituted at the Statutory Annual meeting on 5 November 2020, the members appointed would have a clear direction for how they agreed their workplan, and work going forwards.

The Chairman moved the recommendations in the report and they were seconded by Councillor Stamp.

The committee thanked the Programmes, Performance and Governance Manager for the report and agreed that it provided much needed clarity. Councillors Bell and Siddall stressed the importance of Overview and Scrutiny training for new members post the Statutory Annual meeting on 5 November 2020. Councillor Nunn, referring to recent history, said that Overview and Scrutiny was an integral part of the Council's governance arrangements and should be used appropriately. Councillor Stamp raised an issue on behalf of Councillor Heard on predetermination and the Joint Standards Committee. It was acknowledged that a clear understanding of the Council's procedures was a priority for all Members.

The Chairman then put the recommendations to the committee and they were agreed by assent.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the Terms of Reference for the Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Working Group was agreed as at Appendix A.
- (ii) That the use of the O&S Working Group as an operational mechanism to review and recommend workplan items, and a standing requirement for the working group to meet ahead of the Committee meeting was agreed.

- (iii) That the revised operating protocol for the Committee be agreed

RECOMMENDED

- (iv) That the revised operating protocol be adopted by way of updating the constitution

7. MECHANISM FOR SUBMITTING AN OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ITEM

The Committee considered the report and associated appendices of the Director of Strategy, Performance and Governance to agree an approach to manage the identification of Overview and Scrutiny items and the development of a Workplan for the Committee.

The Chairman introduced the report and deferred to the Programmes, Performance and Governance Manager to present the detail. She took the committee through the report that provided a suggested approach, building on previous conversations and best practice around the mechanism for bringing forwards and managing Overview and Scrutiny items to their conclusion. It was intended that this process would be underpinned by officer support and through the established Overview and Scrutiny Working Group.

A step by step framework was outlined at Appendix A, which showed the robust review stages a scrutiny proposal would go through to determine if it was a valid item for the committee workplan. She concluded by drawing Members' attention to Appendix B that contained an outline of the form that would start off the process and what it would capture for member review and adoption.

The Chairman moved the recommendations in the report and they were seconded by Councillor Bell.

The Committee thanked the Programmes, Performance and Governance Manager for the report that provided a structure and clarity to the scrutiny process. With reference to the workflow circular diagram Councillor Nunn asked if proposers would receive feedback at stage 2. on the diagram (Forms are reviewed in Working Group meeting against tick list/criteria for whether it is valid). The Manager reassured Members that feedback would be provided on all category submissions. Councillor Siddall suggested that a flowchart as opposed to a circular diagram might work better as ostensibly the proposal could revert at any stage. For completeness he asked if the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would have sight of those unsuccessful proposals. The Programmes Performance and Governance Manager advised that the Committee agenda would have a standing item in the form of a report from the Overview and Scrutiny Working Group, therefore would have sight of all category proposals.

Councillor Stamp asked about political balance on the membership of the Overview and Scrutiny Working Group. It was agreed that this should be built into the terms of reference for the group but that given the Committee had just agreed those under the previous item this issue would be dealt with at the next Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting.

The Chairman then put the recommendations to the Committee and they were agreed by assent.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the Committee agreed 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 agreed 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.

8. ANY OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

Councillor Helm thanked the Committee for its input and support during his term as Chairman.

There being no further items of business the Chairman closed the meeting at 6.28 pm.

M W HELM
CHAIRMAN