

An Introduction to Scrutiny

July 2023

Membership of the Committee

Part 5 of the Councils Constitution

The Scrutiny Committee will comprise a permanent Chairman and Vice Chairman (appointed by Council), and 9 other elected Members, that follow the political proportionality of the Council.

No Members of the Committee may be members of the Cabinet, their deputies or members of any of the Cabinet Advisory Committees.

The membership of the Committee can be found at Appendix H - Membership of Council Committees, Cabinet and Advisory Committees.

Functions of the Scrutiny Committee

- Scrutinise the executive (Cabinet)
 - Invite Portfolio Holders to the Committee to report on their areas
 - Call-in key decisions
- Review and scrutinise the performance of other public bodies in the area
 - Invite external bodies to the Committee
- Review performance
 - Receive regular performance reports
 - Carry out in-depth Scrutiny
- Annual report to Council

Functions of the Scrutiny Committee

- Recognise the remit of other Committees e.g. Audit, Governance, Advisory Committees
- Don't duplicate the work of other Committees
- Policy development and overview is covered by Advisory Committees
- Cannot scrutinise quasi-judicial decisions e.g. Planning or Licensing decisions
- Invite the Police along once per year to discuss
- Work constructively with external organisations
- Ask questions in advance of a meeting. Especially if relating to more information around performance reports.

In-Depth Scrutiny

- Scrutiny Committee resolve to constitute a working group to look at a particular topic
- A clear term of reference should be agreed by the Scrutiny Committee
- The Group Chair should be appointed by the Committee
- Ordinarily between 3 and 5 Members should form the working group
- This can include Members who do not sit on the Committee but not members of the Executive
- A degree of admin support can be provided from Officers
- The report will be written by Members
- Depending on the topic, typically an interim report is provided at the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee with a final report to the meeting after

In-Depth Scrutiny continued...

- The working group will make recommendations as part of its report.
- The report and its recommendations are discussed by the Scrutiny Committee
- Recommendations that are agreed by the Committee are put to Cabinet for their consideration
- Responses from Cabinet to these reports are a standing item on the Scrutiny Committee agenda