



GUILDFORD
BOROUGH

James Whiteman
Managing Director

www.guildford.gov.uk

Contact:

James Dearling,
Overview and Scrutiny Manager
01483 444141

1 July 2019

Dear Councillor,

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** to be held in Council Chamber, Millmead House, Millmead, Guildford, Surrey GU2 4BB on **TUESDAY, 9 JULY 2019** at **7.00 pm**.

Yours faithfully,

James Whiteman
Managing Director

MEMBERS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Chairman: Councillor Paul Spooner
Vice-Chairman: Councillor James Walsh

Councillor Colin Cross
Councillor Liz Hogger
Councillor Tom Hunt
Councillor Gordon Jackson
Councillor Steven Lee

Councillor Masuk Miah
Councillor John Redpath
Councillor Tony Rooth
Councillor Deborah Seabrook
Councillor Patrick Sheard

Authorised Substitute Members

For the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, there is no limit on the number of substitute members for each political group on the Council.

QUORUM: 4

WEBCASTING NOTICE

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Guildford Borough Council

Millmead House, Millmead, Guildford, Surrey GU2 4BB

THE COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Vision – for the borough

For Guildford to be a town and rural borough that is the most desirable place to live, work and visit in South East England. A centre for education, healthcare, innovative cutting-edge businesses, high quality retail and wellbeing. A county town set in a vibrant rural environment, which balances the needs of urban and rural communities alike. Known for our outstanding urban planning and design, and with infrastructure that will properly cope with our needs.

Three fundamental themes and nine strategic priorities that support our vision:

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| Place-making | Delivering the Guildford Borough Local Plan and providing the range of housing that people need, particularly affordable homes |
| | Making travel in Guildford and across the borough easier |
| | Regenerating and improving Guildford town centre and other urban areas |
| Community | Supporting older, more vulnerable and less advantaged people in our community |
| | Protecting our environment |
| | Enhancing sporting, cultural, community, and recreational facilities |
| Innovation | Encouraging sustainable and proportionate economic growth to help provide the prosperity and employment that people need |
| | Creating smart places infrastructure across Guildford |
| | Using innovation, technology and new ways of working to improve value for money and efficiency in Council services |

Values for our residents

- We will strive to be the best Council.
- We will deliver quality and value for money services.
- We will help the vulnerable members of our community.
- We will be open and accountable.
- We will deliver improvements and enable change across the borough.

AGENDA

ITEM NO.

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

2 **LOCAL CODE OF CONDUCT AND DECLARATION OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

In accordance with the local Code of Conduct, a councillor is required to disclose at the meeting any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) that they may have in respect of any matter for consideration on this agenda. Any councillor with a DPI must not participate in any discussion or vote regarding that matter and they must withdraw from the meeting immediately before consideration of the matter.

If that DPI has not been registered, the councillor must notify the Monitoring Officer of the details of the DPI within 28 days of the date of the meeting.

Councillors are further invited to disclose any non-pecuniary interest which may be relevant to any matter on this agenda, in the interests of transparency, and to confirm that it will not affect their objectivity in relation to that matter.

3 **MINUTES** (Pages 1 - 6)

To confirm the minutes of the Committee meeting held on 4 June 2019.

4 **SAFER GUILDFORD PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT 2019** (Pages 7 - 20)

5 **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT, 2018-19** (Pages 21 - 68)

6 **G-LIVE AND LEISURE MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP**

To consider the establishment of a working group to scrutinise the Council's G-Live and Leisure Partnership Agreement contracts monitoring and report back to the Committee. Since 2016, one group has undertaken this role, but there is the option for two separate groups. The group's membership for 2018-19 was Councillors Christiansen, Phillips, Sarti, and Searle.

[For information, the Council entered into a ten-year contract and lease to operate G Live with HQ Theatres Guildford Limited (HQT), ending on 30 September 2021. The Council's asset management responsibilities are for maintaining, repairing, and replacing the structural parts and the access road. HQT are responsible for all other maintenance and replacement items for the building and equipment.

The Council entered into a 10 year Leisure Partnership Agreement (LPA) with Greenwich Leisure Ltd (GLL) with effect from 1 November 2011, to deliver leisure services throughout the borough at Guildford Spectrum, Guildford Lido and Ash Manor Sports Centre. GLL has sub-contracted elements of the service to Wealden Leisure Limited trading as Freedom Leisure.]

7 **MATTERS OUTSTANDING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS** (Pages 69 - 70)

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alternative format**

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

4 June 2019

* Councillor James Walsh (Vice-Chairman)

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| * Councillor Colin Cross | * Councillor John Redpath |
| * Councillor Liz Hogger | * Councillor Tony Rooth |
| * Councillor Tom Hunt | * Councillor Deborah Seabrook |
| * Councillor Gordon Jackson | * Councillor Patrick Sheard |
| * Councillor Steven Lee | * Councillor Paul Spooner |
| Councillor Masuk Miah | |

*Present

Councillors Paul Abbey, Christopher Barrass, Chris Blow, Angela Goodwin, Lead Councillor for Housing (social and affordable), Homelessness, Access and Disability, Angela Gunning, Julia McShane, Lead Councillor for Health and Wellbeing, the Voluntary Sector, Grants Panel, Play Strategy and Project Aspire, Dennis Price, Maddy Redpath, John Rigg, Deputy Lead Councillor for Sustainable transport, Transformation & Regeneration and Economic Development, Pauline Searle, Lead Councillor for Arts, Parks, and Countryside, James Steel, Lead Councillor for Leisure, Heritage, Tourism, and PR and Communications, and Fiona White, Deputy Leader of the Council and Lead Councillor for Safeguarding, Inclusion, Public Safety, Community Safety, and Vulnerable Families.

In accordance with Council procedure Rule 23(j), Councillor George Potter attended as a substitute for Councillor Masuk Miah.

OS1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

The Committee was advised of an apology for absence from Councillor Masuk Miah and a substitute as detailed above.

OS2 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED: That Councillor Paul Spooner be elected Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2019-20 municipal year.

Councillor Spooner thereupon took the Chair.

OS3 LOCAL CODE OF CONDUCT AND DECLARATION OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

There were no declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.

OS4 MINUTES

The minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 5 March 2019 were approved.

In response to a question, the Committee agreed that actions outstanding from previous meetings should be reported through a standing agenda item.

OS5 FOOD POVERTY - REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TASK AND FINISH GROUP

The Chair welcomed Dr Martin Caraher, professor of food and health policy at the Centre for Food Policy, at City, University of London, Maria Zealey, from Surrey Welfare Rights Unit, and members of the food poverty task group.

Dr Caraher gave a presentation entitled, 'Food poverty and hunger in the UK: Race to the bottom.' He confirmed that he would focus on the issues at a national level rather than the specifics of the task group's report.

Dr Caraher stated that a lack of cookery skills was not in itself a cause of poverty. He criticised notions of a deserving poor and undeserving poor and indicated that the need for food banks and charity showed a dismantling of state provision. He informed the meeting that the root causes of food banks required attention. The meeting was advised that 14 million people in the UK live in poverty, with 8 million struggling to put food on the table, and over 4 million children at risk of food poverty.

Dr Caraher indicated that the first government measurement of food insecurity would be available in 2020/21 from the inclusion of questions in the Family Resources Survey starting in April 2019. He suggested that data within the food poverty task group's report provided sufficient proxy measures to act on.

The meeting was advised of the link between obesity and food poverty and the need for a comprehensive policy approach to such issues, rather than separate strategies.

Dr Caraher indicated that the 25 per cent increase in food prices between 2007 and 2012 had had a disproportionate effect on those on low incomes. He stated that between 1998 and 2009 household income for low-income households rose 22 per cent while food prices rose by 33 per cent.

Dr Caraher advised the meeting that households saved an average of 4 per cent between 2007 and 2010 by trading down to cheaper products. He noted that low-income households have not managed to make savings by trading down probably because they were already purchasing cheaper products. He stated that food was the elastic item in household budgets and that the lowest income decile typically bought less food rather than trading down.

Dr Caraher stated that falling income and static welfare benefits (after housing costs) combined with rising food prices had reduced food affordability by over twenty per cent for the lowest income decile households between 2007 and 2010. Dr Caraher advised the meeting that the energy intake of households fell by almost 10 per cent between 2007 and 2010. He indicated that food prices were forecast to increase by 15 per cent in the next 6 months, regardless of any impact from Brexit.

Dr Caraher provided information indicating that average household debt in the UK had almost doubled between 2000 and 2015, to nearly £12k. The meeting was advised that NHS workers, and supermarket workers were among those people taking out pay day loans to pay for essentials such as food, while Asda had contributed £20m to food charities at the same time as employing many low paid workers. The Committee was advised of the adverse implications of the gig economy (with over 900,000 people on zero hour contracts in the UK) for family life, food poverty, and obesity.

The meeting was informed that numbers of food banks had grown since the financial crisis of 2005. Dr Caraher stated that food banks did not address the root causes or drivers of food

poverty, but at best tackled issues of immediate want. The meeting was advised that about 8 out of 10 people living in food poverty do not use a food bank or charity provision. The meeting was advised that the weekday opening hours of food banks often meant low-income workers were unable to access them.

Dr Caraher informed the meeting that the Beveridge Report had no reference to food, as the assumption at the time was that such issues would be addressed through a basic income.

Maria Zealey advised the Committee that action could be taken locally, not just nationally, to address issues within the report.

The Committee Chairman introduced the members of the task group and indicated that Councillors Angela Goodwin and Pauline Searle had recently become members of the Executive. He invited Councillor Angela Goodwin to present the task group's report. Councillor Goodwin confirmed that she and Councillor Searle were attending the meeting not as members of the Executive, but to help explain the review and its conclusions and to answer questions from the Committee.

Councillor Goodwin, along with the other members of the task group, drew attention to selected aspects of their report. The Committee was advised about the working poor and low-income families in food insecurity and the existence of poverty in both rural and urban settings within the Borough was highlighted. With reference to the East Surrey Poverty Truth Commission, the meeting was informed that Guildford was not the only area in Surrey looking to address poverty.

The Committee was advised that an estimated 8.4 million people experienced food insecurity in the UK, including approximately 19 per cent of children. The Committee was advised of the financial costs to families caused by the absence of free school meals during the summer holidays. The meeting was advised about the CHIPS holiday playscheme running in the Westborough and Stoke wards and the lack of similar schemes in other parts of the Borough.

A member of the task group referred the Committee to the considerable amount of surplus food generated by supermarkets and subsequently distributed to charities and other organisations in the south east. The Committee was advised that the stigma associated with food poverty caused residents to access food banks far outside their neighbourhood areas. In addition, the meeting was informed of the failure of the relevant Lead Councillor to respond to the task group's requests to contribute to the review.

A member of the task group suggested the importance of monitoring the impact of Universal Credit.

The Committee was advised that four of the Borough's wards were within the third most deprived areas of England. The meeting was informed that 14.5 per cent of the Borough's children lived in poverty [after housing costs] and in three neighbourhoods the figure was over a quarter of children.

The Committee was advised that in 2017-18 over 2,000 food parcels were distributed to households in the Borough and that the number was expected have risen for 2018-19.

The Committee's discussion raised the following points and clarifications:

- The meeting was advised that Food cycle was a scheme providing meals using surplus food cooked in spare kitchen space.

- Councillors discussed the value in providing food aid as part of a wider umbrella project delivering a range of services, such as occurs at the Lighthouse Centre in Woking.
- In response to a Committee member suggesting the merit of a strategy with a wider focus than food poverty, the Committee was advised that the recommended food insecurity forum could provide a basis for a wider partnership approach.
- Members highlighted some of the health and social impacts of poverty and the interrelationships between issues.
- The extension of the CHIPS holiday playscheme to rural areas was suggested.
- The Committee requested confirmation of whether the Council paid the real Living Wage or the national Living Wage. In addition, the Committee asked for the number and percentage of Guildford Borough Council employees that are not paid the real Living Wage.
- The meeting heard proposals for the calculation of a minimum income standard for the Borough or county, leading to a Guildford or Surrey Living Wage. Dr Caraher indicated that some regional variations for the minimum income standard had been calculated
- Councillors discussed the value of proactive, early intervention or a triage approach to help people avoid a crisis. A member of the Committee suggested that organisations such as Citizens Advice and Christians Against Poverty did not have the resources to deal with the numbers of people seeking their advice and were unable to provide more accessible opening hours for those at work. The value in extra resources for existing advice services was suggested.
- With reference to the task group's recommendations about developing signposting to the help available to people in food insecurity, a Committee member suggested the benefit in deploying improved branding.
- A Committee member suggested the possibility of using green spaces and other land within the Borough for growing local food, perhaps through community schemes.
- The Committee was advised of evidence about differential supermarket pricing.
- The Committee was advised of the social significance of food in the UK and the impacts of excluding people from it.
- The meeting was informed that research had demonstrated the benefits of providing meals at work to both employers (for example, directly through higher productivity) and to employees' family life.
- Committee members noted the evidence within the report about the impact of Universal Credit on food bank demand. The meeting was advised that the transfer to Universal Credit of those in receipt of legacy benefits would involve millions of households. The Committee was informed that 1½ million children would lose rights to free school meals when Universal Credit was rolled out fully.
- A member of the Committee advocated cookery programmes to address the lack of food skills.

- The task group members confirmed that they had been presented with evidence of faith-based obligations or interventions at local food banks.
- A member of the Committee commented on the task group's recommendation to extend the remit of the Mayor's Local Distress Fund and review its application procedure. He indicated that the matter was one for the trustees of the Fund and questioned the proposal to review the ongoing involvement of a third party and the extension of the Fund's use.
- The Lead Councillor for Health and Wellbeing, the Voluntary Sector, Grants Panel, Play Strategy, and Project Aspire welcomed the task group's report and indicated she would be speaking further to the task group members.
- The Director of Community Services indicated that food banks were a response to the underlying issue of low income.
- Dr Caraher informed the meeting that England's Chief Medical Officer was considering subsidising healthy foods. Furthermore, Dr Caraher he indicated a need to consider strategies in an integrated way, reminding the meeting that Aneurin Bevan had been the minister for health and housing.
- In response to questions about local actions, the meeting was advised of alternative models to food banks: the food bank plus model centred on early intervention work rather than crisis response, Can Cook in Liverpool, Food Nation at Newcastle, Food Cycle, and community stores. Dr Caraher suggested that rather than adopting any particular existing model, Guildford should consider other models in the process of developing its own and consider joining the Sustainable Food Cities network.
- Maria Zealey suggested the importance of action on the Local Housing Allowance. With reference to the payment card system used in the Surrey County Council Crisis Fund, the meeting was advised to avoid designing specific services for poor people.

The Chairman thanked Dr Martin Caraher and Maria Zealey for attending to inform and advise the Committee.

RESOLVED: (I) That the Committee adopt the report of the Food Poverty Overview and Scrutiny task and finish group.

(II) That the Food Poverty Overview and Scrutiny report be referred for consideration at Full Council on 23 July 2019.

(III) That the findings and recommendations of the Food Poverty Overview and Scrutiny report be commended to the Executive, with a response to the Committee required by November 2019.

The meeting finished at 8.48 pm

Signed

Chairman

Date

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee Report

Report of Managing Director

Author: Dawn Nicol

Tel: 01483 444510

Email: dawn.nicol@guildford.gov.uk

Relevant Lead Councillor(s): Councillor Fiona White

Tel: 07896 575507

Email: Fiona.white@guildford.gov.uk

Date: 9 July 2019

Safer Guildford Partnership Annual Report 2019

Officer recommendation:

That the Committee considers and comments on the Safer Guildford Partnership Annual Report for 2019 and notes the progress made against its priorities.

Reason(s) for Recommendation:

To inform the Committee of the work of the Safer Guildford Partnership

1. Executive Summary

1.1 The purpose of this report is to enable the Committee to review the work and operation of the Safer Guildford Partnership over the past 12 months, together with its future priorities. In addition, the report details the review of the Surrey Fire and Rescue Service and its implications for Guildford and the Safer Guildford Partnership.

1.2 This report sets out progress made during 2018/19 including:

- the Partnership's current ways of working and its continued effectiveness in service delivery that results in positive outcomes
- the new Serious Organised Crime Joint Action Group
- the new Beggars / Rough Sleepers (Town Centre) Group [working title under review]
- the pilot initiative launched under the Safer Guildford Partnership on the needle exchange within Guildford Action
- Prevent training

2. Background

2.1 The 1998 Crime and Disorder Act gave local agencies a shared responsibility for developing and introducing strategies to reduce crime and disorder in their area.

2.2 In a two-tier authority area such as Surrey, where a County Council works alongside District and Borough Councils, there is a requirement for a county level Community Safety Strategy group.

2.3 In Surrey this is known as the Community Safety Board (CSB). Chaired by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey, its membership includes a wide range of partners that work together to provide strategic leadership on issues that affect the whole of Surrey.

2.4 Surrey County Council's current priorities are:

- Domestic Abuse
- High Harm Crime (serious organised crime, modern slavery, human trafficking)
- Prevent (counter terrorism)

The CSB works collaboratively with other boards, such as the Health and Wellbeing Board to ensure they are working together effectively.

2.5 Within Guildford the agencies come together as a Community Safety Partnership (CSP) known in Guildford as the Safer Guildford Partnership (SGP). Statutory members are:

- Surrey Police
- Guildford Borough Council
- Surrey County Council
- Surrey Fire & Rescue Service
- Surrey & Sussex Probation Trust
- Clinical Commissioning Group

2.6 The aims of the Safer Guildford Partnership are to reduce crime and disorder, anti-social behaviour, the fear of crime, and reduce reoffending. It will do this by:

- fulfilling the obligations set out in the Crime and Disorder Act (1998) and subsequent legislation
- promoting the integration of community safety plans into mainstream policies and services agreeing specific targets for improving community safety
- reviewing achievements against targets and taking appropriate action
- considering the annual assessment of crime and disorder trends and its impact on community safety strategy
- promoting effective co-ordination of community safety activities
- promoting information sharing and best practice in community safety
- promoting the work of the SGP and its projects in the media and community as appropriate
- identifying and exploring opportunities to attract funding
- leading and / or supporting bids for funding.

2.7 The SGP is responsible for compliance with statutory duties and responsibilities. The legislative framework that underpins the work of the Partnership is the:

- Crime and Disorder Act 1998 sections 5 and 6
- Police and Justice Act 2006
- Policing and Crime Act 2009
- Domestic Violence, Crime and Victim Act 2004 section 9 (Domestic Homicide Review)
- Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Prevent Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Modern Day Slavery Act 2015

2.8 The Statutory Obligations are:

- to set up a strategic multi-agency group (the Safer Guildford Partnership)
- regularly engage and consult with the community
- set up protocols for data sharing
- analysis of a wide range of crime data and set out priorities in a strategic assessment
- develop a partnership plan and monitor
- produce a strategy for Reducing Reoffending
- commission Domestic Homicide Reviews

3. Safer Guildford Partnership

3.1 The current arrangements of the Partnership are:

- the partnership meets four times a year and holds meetings lasting no longer than two hours (it retains the flexibility to call extraordinary meetings for Domestic Homicide Reviews and Emergency matters)
- the partnership is chaired by the Managing Director of Guildford Borough Council and the vice chair is the Police Superintendent of Guildford
- all governance arrangements are reviewed annually and refreshed as necessary
- membership has been further expanded and now includes Surrey University, Experience Guildford, Surrey County Council Adult Services, and Domestic Abuse representation through the local outreach service provider South West Surrey Domestic Abuse Outreach Services
- an induction process is in place for all new members

4. Safer Guildford Partnership Priorities and Mission Statement

4.1 The SGP strategic priorities remain unchanged for 2019/20. These are:

- Serious Organised Crime (including), Child Exploitation and Modern Slavery
- Domestic Abuse
- Prevent – Threat of Radicalisation
- To identify and tackle Anti-Social Behaviour hotspot locations and perpetrators

- To promote reassurance to our public to help make our communities stronger
- 4.2 In addition the Safer Guildford Partnership will:
- Retain a strategic oversight on reducing re-offending
 - Facilitate and secure a robust partnership response to the emerging issue of Rough Sleepers and Beggars in Guildford Town Centre
 - Monitor emerging issues of Cyber related crime
- 4.3 The partnership has an agreed mission statement:
- “All partners contribute to the work of the Safer Guildford Partnership to ensure Guildford remains a safe borough for residents, businesses and visitors”*
- 4.4 This strategic overview of priorities does not mean the partnership ceases to deal with lower level crime types. Rather, it enables resources to be allocated appropriately, delivering what is essential and core business as opposed to what is nice to do. Operational delivery continues through the Community Harm and Risk Management Meeting (CHaRMM), the new delivery group of Serious Organised Crime JAG (SOC JAG), and the Joint Action Group (JAG).
- 4.5 This year has also seen the development of partnership delivery plans. These plans will ensure all partners contribute to delivery against the priorities and that the partnership can monitor performance and its delivery mechanisms. The information captured enables the partnership to evaluate what has gone well, what has not gone so well, and what could be done differently moving forwards. It will also support the partnership in holding organisations to account and / or break down any barriers to progress. Appendix 1 provides examples of partnership delivery.
- 4.6 There is a continued appetite to develop partnership operations and it is imperative that any operation is completely evidence led.
- 4.7 Serious Organised Crime is made up of a variety of crime types thus the partnership has aligned its priorities with that of Surrey Police to ensure maximum use of resources across all agencies.
- 4.8 To support delivery against 4.7 a key piece of partnership work has been to establish the Serious Organised Crime Joint Action Group (SOC JAG). This is a multi-agency group that comes together every six weeks to be updated on the latest serious organised crime picture for the Borough, share information, and look at ways to prevent, protect, and prepare the Borough against the latest issue.
- 4.9 There are underlying concerns over serious organised crime and locations around the Borough where this could be occurring – these are locations identified either as part of a national intelligence picture or more local intelligence.
- 4.10 Partners coming together for joint action and visits are organised out of this group, as well as the continued sharing of information and awareness raising of the issue. Joint visits and action have taken place at locations such as nail

bars, multi occupancy premises and hotels around the Borough. This group is chaired by the Police Commander, Inspector Andy Hill.

- 4.11 With ever-reducing resources it is imperative that the Partnership remains focused and able to share and improve its use of resources. This means a greater emphasis on collaborations with an emphasis on innovative thinking.

Rough Sleepers

- 4.12 A further new group has been formed to facilitate a programme of support for town centre rough sleepers and / or beggars (currently referred to as the BRS). Its aims are:

- to agree, identify and implement robust support plans to help improve the quality of life for beggars and / or rough sleepers
- to reduce the occurrence of begging and / or rough sleeping in Guildford Town centre
- to oversee the effective co-ordination of developing individual action plans
- to oversee the implementation of required/identified enforcement actions
- to promote information sharing and best practice in dealing with begging and / or rough sleeping.

Needle Exchange – Guildford Action

- 4.13 There have recently been issues identified around an increase in shoplifting within a major chemist in the town centre. It was determined that the primary source of the issue lay with thefts by clientele of the needle exchange service.
- 4.14 A pilot scheme has been implemented to provide needle exchange services within Guildford Action. The Safer Guildford Partnership has provided initial set up funding to help support this and to provide further opportunities to engage with service users.
- 4.15 The initial target group has been service users excluded from other needle exchange provisions and substance misuse clients who are not actively engaged in treatment services.
- 4.16 In the first 4 months more than 500 units have been distributed with a return rate of around 70 per cent, which is double that of other dispensers locally.

Alongside the distribution of needles, wound care kits and foils Guildford Action are also supporting clients who are ready to access specialist treatment services. To date over 50 per cent of users are not scripted.

Prevent

- 4.17 The Safer Guildford Partnership commissions Applied Resilience to support delivery of all obligations arising from the Prevent agenda. To support this a commitment was made to continue delivery of Prevent training. Historically this has been delivered for Councillors and all GBC staff. This has now been extended and is offered to all partners of the SGP and beyond. There is a further dedicated session planned for all GBC service leaders.

5.0 Information on the review of Surrey Fire & Rescue Services and its implications for Guildford and the Safety Guildford Partnership

- 5.1 The changes under the proposal contained in the statutory 'Making Surrey Safer' consultation are designed to bring Surrey Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) into line with national good practice as well as re-aligning its resources against the risks in Surrey. The proposals will also address the issues raised in [Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services \(HMICFRS\) inspection report](#), which said that the response to incidents is inefficient and that the service does not undertake enough prevention and protection activity to save lives by preventing emergencies happening in the first place.
- 5.2 In addition to this, the proposals take account of five years of evidence about incidents in Surrey, and a comprehensive review of all nationally and locally available historical and predictive data which has been independently verified when coming to conclusions.
- 5.3 This has included reviewing the volume of calls to fires and road traffic collisions, which drop significantly at night-time when some changes are proposed, to ensure that SFRS uses its resources in the most effective and efficient way.
- 5.4 There are no plans to close any fire stations in Surrey, and there will be no reduction in the number of fire engines or any firefighter redundancies. Instead, it is proposed changing how some fire stations are crewed in order to re-align some resources to life-saving prevention work and to ensure the right resources are in the right places to deal with the risks in Surrey. SFRS will continue prioritising and responding quickly to emergencies.
- 5.5 Changes are proposed in the Banstead, Camberley, Egham, Fordbridge, Guildford, Haslemere, Painshill, Walton and Woking areas where some of the cover at night would come from neighbouring fire stations. Whilst these changes may lead to a minor increase (12 seconds) in the average time taken to respond to emergencies, other improvement work is being undertaken which it is believed will counter this, including bringing in new technology to speed up call out times. Furthermore, one of the misunderstood aspects of the response model is that when SFRS respond to emergencies they do so via the nearest available fire engine, which may not be from the local fire station as fire engines are moving around constantly. This has always been the case and may not be commonly understood.
- 5.6 In terms of the Guildford area specifically, changes are proposed to how Guildford fire station will be crewed at night and at weekends when some of the night cover may come from neighbouring fire stations.
- 5.7 The proposals mean there would be one wholtime fire engine and crew available 24/7 from Guildford fire station and a second one would be available during the day (7am – 7pm) when the risk is higher.
- 5.8 From 7pm until 7am and at weekends, if a second fire engine was needed in the area, this may come from a neighbouring fire station or Guildford's on-call crew, whichever arrives the fastest.

- 5.9 The impact of this proposal on response times has been modelled and it is believed the impact is small and that residents will certainly be made safer because the increased prevention work will prevent some emergencies from happening in the first place.
- 5.10 There will also be more fire engines available at night than are needed. The modelling indicates that 16 are needed at night to keep Surrey safe. The proposal provides for 23 to be available at night. This additional capacity allows extra resilience for larger and longer emergencies.
- 5.11 Prevention has been a real success in this sector with the number of household fires nationally down by 50 per cent in the last ten years. There are plans to significantly increase the service's prevention work, prioritising residents most at risk. Safe and Well visits will increase from 3,500 (far less than the national average) to 10,000 in year one and 20,000 by year three.
- 5.12 The service will also increase school visits from 10 to 520 per year, develop follow ups for Youth Engagement Schemes and Safe Drive, Stay Alive initiatives with all colleges, and increase its joint working with borough and district councils on preventative initiatives. As well as targeting unsafe behaviours that can increase the risk of fire, staff will help residents to develop an escape plan. Should a fire occur, they are more likely to escape safely before the fire takes hold.
- 5.13 There will be a continual need to regularly review the service's distribution of resources as population numbers and distribution changes over time, to ensure adequate resources are provided that continue to meet the risk and changing needs of communities.
- 5.14 Timescales:
- Public consultation completed 26 May
 - During June SFRS to analyse findings and review the draft plan
 - Reviewed proposals go to the Surrey County Council Environment Committee
 - 24 September final proposals go to Surrey County Council Cabinet for approval

6. Progress

- 6.1 Operational work continues to thrive in a strong and engaging environment through the work of the CHaRMM and JAG and now SOC JAG and BRS.
- 6.2 The Borough Police Inspector chairs the CHaRMM and this group's focus is People. This group works to support some of our most vulnerable by both enforcement (if necessary) and the engagement of partners and colleagues in the provision of wrap-around services and support.
- 6.3 The Council's Director of Environment chairs the JAG and this group's focus is on *Place* and therefore works on geographical hotspot locations.
- 6.4 The Community Safety Manager co-chairs the BRS with the local Town Centre Police Officer.

- 6.5 The Operational Management Group (OMG) monitors the partnership plan for 2019/20. This group's membership consists of the Police Borough Inspector and Guildford Borough Council's Community Safety Manager and Community Safety Project Officer, and is responsible for providing the Executive of the Partnership with regular reports on progress against the priorities.

7. Staffing

- 7.1 The current Council resource to the dedicated community safety function is one part time post of Community Safety Manager, 22 hours. This post is responsible for ensuring the strategic components of community safety are developed, delivered and managed. It is also responsible for the operation of the SGP and delivery against all the priorities. There is also one Community Safety Officer (25 hours) and this role covers the operational elements including CHaRMM, SOC JAG, JAG and Community Triggers. The post is currently vacant.
- 7.2 There is a temporary post (until December 2019) of Community Safety Project Officer working 20 hours per week covering the strategic assessment and delivery plans.

8. The future

- 8.1 The ambition of the Partnership is to continue with the evidence / intelligence led approach and to continue to work collaboratively with the ability to use resources smartly as set out within the community safety plan 2019/21. This will ensure the partnership is in a strong and healthy position of evidential practice that drives up performance and provides tangible outcomes.
- 8.2 The Partnership will continue to evolve and improve. It remains ambitious in setting its priorities and will continue to explore new opportunities and ways of working.
- 8.3 The SGP Executive is responsible for the overall delivery of the Partnership Plan. The groups and mechanisms used to deliver against the Partnership's priorities are set out in Appendix 2.
- 8.4 The profile of the Partnership is continuing to improve, and options shall be explored on how all partnership organisations could work towards raising the profile and wider understanding of its role and work.

9. Financial Implications

- 9.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

10. Legal Implications

- 10.1 The Borough Council has a statutory obligation under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to work with its partners to consider crime reduction and community safety when undertaking all of its duties and do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime, disorder and antisocial behaviour.

11. Human Resource Implications

- 11.1 Community safety continues to respond as best it can amidst an environment of reducing resources both human and financial and an ever-increasing complexity of crimes.
- 11.2 There are no direct human resource implications arising from this report

12 Key Risks

- 12.1 The partnership continues to perform its statutory role, but this is in the context of reduced resources from partners and the removal of previous central government funding.

13 Consultation

- 13.1 This report has been prepared in consultation with partners from the Safer Guildford Partnership.

14. Suggested issues for overview and scrutiny

- 14.1 The committee is invited to comment on the progress of the Safer Guildford Partnership and its approach to delivery.

15. Conclusion

- 15.1 This item presents the annual report on crime and disorder scheduled for this Committee. It details the Partnership's focus; the priorities and the actions being taken to deliver against them.

16. Background Papers

Community Safety Plan 2019/2021

17. Appendices

Appendix 1 Examples of Partnership delivery within the SGP

Appendix 2 Safer Guildford Partnership Groups and Delivery Mechanisms

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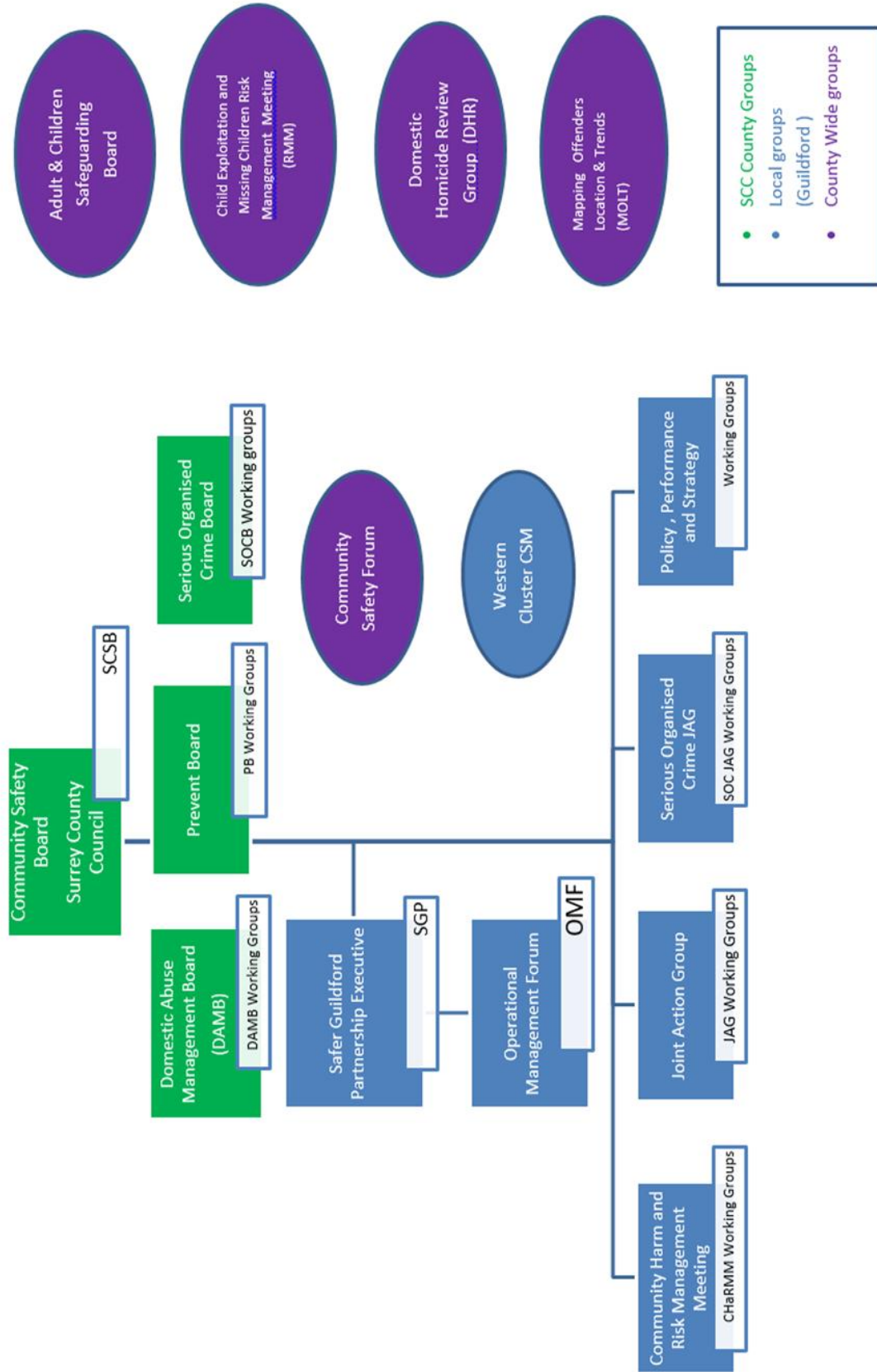
Examples of Partnership delivery

- SOC Training delivered at Guildford Borough Council by Surrey Police for benefit of all partners.
- Relaunch of Partnership Intel Form to ensure all partners share intel with Police.
- Entire Experience Guildford team attended Police SOC Partnership training which contributes to heightened vigilance in the town centre and correct use of intelligence sharing platforms.
- Creation of multi-agency SOC / JAG Group.
- Surrey Fire & Rescue conduct joint visits with Guildford Borough Council housing to potentially vulnerable tenants, including those at risk of cuckooing.
- Guildford Housing identification of potentially suspicious activity on tenant accounts, sharing with details Police for intel development.
- Guildford Chambers of Commerce hosted Modern Day Slavery (MDS) event organised by Surrey Police, Police & Crime Commissioner and Surrey Chambers of Commerce aiming to raise awareness of MDS amongst the business community, and how to recognise and report possible cases.
- Surrey Fire & Rescue delivery of presentation on the powers of Fire Safety Officers including how they can be used in the wider context of SOC. Facilitates better understanding of each agency's powers and capabilities when looking at any future joint action.
- Surrey County Council delivery of multi-agency domestic abuse learning and development framework that includes a range of courses available to all partners free of charge.
- Kent, Surrey & Sussex Community Rehabilitation Company integration of the intelligence sharing protocol from Surrey & Sussex Police and Prevent into KSS CRC practice.
- Surrey Police guidance to GBC on ASB powers helping to ensure best use of available powers specific to any given issue.

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Partnership Groups & Delivery Mechanisms

Safer Guildford Partnership Local Structure 2019



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Report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Report of Director of Finance

Author: James Dearling, Scrutiny Manager

Tel: 01483 444141

Email: james.dearling@guildford.gov.uk

Date: 9 July 2019

Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report, 2018-19

Executive Summary:

This report outlines the work undertaken by overview and scrutiny (O&S) during the past municipal year, its future work programme as thus far developed and, in the context of improving O&S further, considers the recently issued statutory guidance on O&S.

Decisions taken during the past municipal year under the 'urgency' provisions and the use of 'call-in' are listed within the report, and detailed within Appendix 3. In 2018-19, five decisions were taken under the Constitution's urgency provisions, while there were no call-ins.

Recommendations to Council (23 July 2019)

- (I) That this report be commended as the annual report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- (II) That the current rules relating to call in or urgency provisions remain unchanged; and
- (III) That the policies, practice, and approaches identified within the statutory guidance on O&S, attached as Appendix 2 to this report, be noted.

Reasons for Recommendation:

Article 8.2(d) of the Council's Constitution requires the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee to report annually to Full Council on the work undertaken during the year, its future work programme, and amended working methods if appropriate.

Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16(i), requires the operation of the provisions relating to call-in and urgency to be monitored annually and a report submitted to Full Council with proposals for review if necessary.

Statutory guidance on O&S has been published in May 2019 to ensure that local authorities carry out their O&S functions effectively.

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report has been prepared in accordance with Article 8.2(d) of the Constitution which requires the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) to report annually to Full Council on the work undertaken during the year, its future work programme, and amended working methods if appropriate.

- 1.2 Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16(i) requires that the provisions relating to 'call-in' and 'urgency' are monitored annually and reported to Full Council with proposals for review if necessary.¹
- 1.3 In addition, the report considers whether fresh measures to improve O&S at Guildford can be identified within the recently published statutory guidance on O&S.
- 1.4 Accordingly, this report asks the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to:
 - (a) note the issues and topics considered by O&S during 2018-19;
 - (b) consider and approve the future work programme for the OSC as developed thus far;
 - (c) consider the statutory guidance on O&S issued in May 2019 (attached as Appendix 2 to this report); and
 - (d) review the operation of provisions relating to 'call-in' and 'urgency'.

2. The Council's Strategic Framework

- 2.1 The O&S function strengthens the position of the Council to ensure that we are able to deliver our strategic priorities. For example, O&S assists the Council in improving value for money and efficiency and helps to ensure we are open and accountable to our residents.

3. Work of the OSC in 2018-19

- 3.1 In accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 7, the chairmen and vice-chairmen of the OSC and the Executive Advisory Boards (EABs) held joint work programme meetings in 2018-19. These meetings were held on four occasions to exchange, discuss, and agree work programmes for submission and approval to the OSC and EABs respectively.
- 3.2 In addition, the O&S work programme has been prepared and progressed through frequent meetings between the O&S Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Scrutiny Manager.
- 3.3 Lead Councillor question sessions continued as a regular item at OSC in 2018-19, with five members of the Executive attending such individual sessions, including the Leader of the Council. These sessions give an opportunity for non-Executive Councillors (and members of the public²) to question a member of the Executive about decisions and performance. Questioning can focus on targets and performance over time; particular decisions, initiatives, or projects; or on a section of a Lead Councillor's portfolio. Issues reviewed in this manner during 2018-19 include fire safety within the Council's housing properties and the Council's Budget gap.
- 3.4 The formal issues and topics considered by the OSC in 2018-19 include:

¹ Urgency provisions refers to the circumstances set out in the Access to Information Procedure Rules 15 (General Exception) and 16 (Special Urgency) and Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16(h) Call-in. [Guildford Constitution, Part 4, Procedure Rules.](#)

² The Committee may facilitate the asking of questions submitted in advance by members of the public. Council Constitution, Part 2 (Article 8), section 8.2(b)iii.

- Safer Guildford Partnership Annual Report 2018
 - Local Government Association's Corporate Peer Challenge - Action Plan
 - Guildford's Air Quality Strategy
 - Modal Shift: Encouraging Sustainable Travel
 - Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Update
 - Operation of the leisure management contract, 2017-18
 - Watercourse and Grill Clearance
 - Potential Impact of Brexit
 - Annual report and monitoring arrangements for the operation of the G-Live contract, 2017-18
 - Future Guildford
 - Emergency Planning in Guildford Borough
 - Embedding Health and Wellbeing in Council Decision-making
 - Guildford Community Lottery
- 3.5 Two additional issues were progressed in 2018-19 through an in-depth, task and finish group approach: On-street Parking and Food Poverty. Both reviews commenced in 2017. The report of the On-street Parking group was adopted by the OSC in June 2018 and its findings and recommendations considered by Guildford Joint Committee in September 2018.
- 3.6 The report of the Food Poverty task group was completed in March 2019 but, due to pre-election restrictions, was not able to be considered (and adopted) by the OSC until June 2019. Its findings and recommendations will be discussed by full Council on 23 July 2019, prior to the Executive responding as the decision-maker in August 2019.
- 3.7 Another task group review, on Older People's Services, was started in late 2018 but ceased following the May 2019 elections because it no longer had any members. To inform its decision about whether or not to re-establish the review in 2019-20, O&S has requested information on the timeframe for developing recommendations about the service for a decision by the Executive.
- 3.8 Since 2016, the OSC has scrutinised the Council's G-Live and Leisure Partnership Agreement contracts monitoring through a working group reporting back to the Committee.
- 4. Future Work Programme**
- 4.1 Attached at Appendix 1 is the overview and scrutiny work programme for 2019-20 as developed thus far.
- 4.2 To assist in developing the future work programme, all Councillors were invited to an externally facilitated session on 17 June 2019 to help consider and start prioritising potential work programme items.
- 4.3 A programme of Lead Councillor question sessions will be scheduled for 2019-20.
- 4.4 A working group drawn from non-Executive Councillors will be established to scrutinise the Council's Leisure Partnership Agreement and G-Live contracts monitoring. This group will report back to the Committee in November 2019 and January 2020 respectively.

5. Improving Overview and Scrutiny

- 5.1 The continuing development of O&S at the Council is discussed below in the context of the Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities issued in May 2019.
- 5.2 The statutory O&S guidance includes a number of policies and practices authorities should adopt or should consider adopting when deciding how to carry out their overview and scrutiny functions. The Council 'must have regard' to the guidance but is not required to follow it in every detail.
- 5.3 Although it is statutory guidance, it is non-prescriptive and distinctly light-touch. It maintains that individual local authorities are best placed to decide how scrutiny³ should work within their own political structures. As such, individual local authorities are invited to determine whether to implement the policies and practices featured in the guidance.
- 5.4 The guidance identifies effective scrutiny using six themes: culture, resourcing, selection of committee members, powers to access information, planning of work programmes, and evidence sessions.
- 5.5 The key content of the six themes is summarised below in sections 5.6 - 5.25 and the full report is attached at Appendix 2. Limited comment is offered.

Culture

- 5.6 The guidance notes that the organisational culture within a local authority is a key determinant of the success or failure of O&S, and emphasises the importance of Councillors in setting an environment for effective scrutiny.
- 5.7 The guidance lists a range of suggested measures to help establish a strong organisational culture supportive of the role of scrutiny:

a) Recognising scrutiny's legal and democratic legitimacy

The guidance notes the need for all Councillors and officers to understand the importance and legitimacy of scrutiny, particularly its role as a check and balance on the executive.

b) Identifying a clear role and focus

The guidance advocates scrutiny having a clearly defined role within the organisation.

c) Ensuring early and regular engagement between the executive and scrutiny

The guidance suggests there should be early and regular discussions between scrutiny and the executive, especially about the future work programme of the executive.

d) Managing disagreement

The guidance suggests that it is the job of the executive and scrutiny to work together to reduce the risk of the executive disagreeing with the findings or recommendations of the OSC. To achieve this, the development of a protocol is suggested to manage instances when the executive disagrees with the OSC.

³ The guidance uses the term 'scrutiny' to refer to both overview and scrutiny and the same terminology is used within this report.

e) Providing the necessary support

The guidance notes that local authorities should consider the purpose of O&S when allocating resources to scrutiny.

f) Ensuring impartial advice from officers

The guidance confirms the need for all officers to be able to give impartial advice to OSCs to help ensure effective scrutiny.

g) Communicating scrutiny's role and purpose to the wider authority

The guidance notes that scrutiny can lack support and recognition due to a lack of awareness within a local authority about its role.

h) Maintaining the interest of full Council in the work of Scrutiny

The guidance notes the importance of the wider membership of the Council being kept informed of the work of scrutiny. The suggested mechanism for this is through submitting OSC reports and recommendations to full Council rather than solely to the Executive.

i) Communicating scrutiny's role to the public

The guidance recommends scrutiny have a profile in the wider community and suggests engaging the Council's communications officers to help with this.

j) Ensuring scrutiny members are supported in having an independent mind-set

The guidance notes the potential difficulties for O&S Councillors in having to scrutinise colleagues and their need for an independent mind-set.

5.8. Many elements above have already been addressed by the Council. For example, the power for the OSC to refer its reports and recommendations to full Council was introduced in 2018.

5.9. Moreover, given the role of O&S to provide challenge and act as a check and balance on the executive, Councillors may feel uneasy with the suggestion that the executive disagreeing with findings and recommendations from scrutiny is a risk to be minimised. At Guildford Borough Council, O&S minimises misunderstandings around its findings and recommendations by ensuring they are evidence-based and explained clearly, and provide a framework for debate.

Resourcing

5.10. The guidance suggests the resource allocated to scrutiny is fundamental in determining how effective the function is, before noting it is a matter for each local authority to decide.

5.11. Currently, the Council has a dedicated scrutiny officer post and a separate scrutiny budget for external advice and expertise.

Selecting Committee Members

5.12. The guidance notes how important the councillors serving on OSCs are to the effective functioning of scrutiny. The guidance identifies the need to consider experience, expertise, interests, ability to act impartially, ability to work as part of a group, and capacity to serve when selecting Councillors to serve on OSCs.

5.13. The guidance notes the importance and influence the role of Chairman has in the success of scrutiny. A suggestion is made for taking a vote by secret ballot as a

method for selecting a scrutiny Chairman, but it is made clear that each local authority can choose the best method for their circumstances.

- 5.14 The guidance recommends that an induction and ongoing training are provided for scrutiny Councillors to enable them to carry out their roles effectively.
- 5.15 The Council offers induction training and ongoing skills training to Councillors, usually facilitated by John Cade from the Institute of Local Government Studies (INLOGOV), University of Birmingham. All this training has been extremely well received by councillors and additional sessions on aspects of overview and scrutiny are envisaged during 2019-20. In addition, Councillors are able to attend external O&S training courses (for example, with the Centre for Public Scrutiny and the Local Government Association).

Power to Access Information

- 5.16 The guidance notes the legal powers of an OSC to access information in order to do its job effectively. The guidance suggests a number of considerations for scrutiny when seeking information from external organisations, including the need to explain the purpose of scrutiny, the benefits of an informal approach, how to encourage compliance with the request, and who to approach.

Planning Work

- 5.17 The guidance notes the importance of focusing on items that can make a tangible difference and having a long term plan, but one flexible enough to accommodate urgent, short term issues that arise.
- 5.18 The guidance suggests a variety of sources can inform the O&S work programme. A formal consultation with the public is suggested as likely to be ineffective, and less successful than individual Councillors having conversations with groups and individuals in their own local areas.
- 5.19 The guidance also recommends approaches to shortlisting topics should ensure that the items chosen are ones in which scrutiny can add value.
- 5.20 At Guildford Borough Council, the O&S work programme is considered regularly and agreed formally by the OSC. Topics are shortlisted with reference to a P.A.P.E.R. selection tool (attached as Appendix 4).
- 5.21 The Committee may wish to consider who else should be consulted in developing its work programme and how this could be accomplished.
- 5.22 The guidance suggest a number of ways to scrutinise topics, including as a single item on an agenda, a single item meeting, short or long-term task and finish groups, and a standing panel.
- 5.23 In the past year at Guildford, the majority of topics for O&S have been scrutinised as individual items on an agenda, a larger topic (Modal Shift) has involved a dedicated meeting, and more complex issues have been addressed through task groups or a standing working group.

Evidence Sessions

- 5.24 The guidance notes that evidence sessions are a key way for OSCs to inform their work and that they require effective planning. As far as possible there should be a consensus among scrutiny members about the objective of an evidence session.
- 5.25 Prior to each OSC meeting at Guildford Borough Council, a pre-meeting is held for discussing each agenda item and for question-planning. Given the importance of effective planning, the Committee might consider whether the current system of pre-meetings immediately before the meeting allows this to be accomplished or whether other mechanisms should be considered.

- 5.26 The guidance notes that recommendations from O&S should be evidence-based and SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timed). Such an approach has long been adopted by scrutiny at the Council.

6. Call-In Procedure and Urgency Provisions

- 6.1 The provisions relating to 'call-in' and 'urgency' are monitored on an annual basis and recommendations for changes will be submitted to the Council for consideration if necessary.

Call-in Procedure

- 6.2 Call-in is the power of Overview and Scrutiny to scrutinise a decision by the Leader/Executive or an individual Lead Councillor before it is implemented. The call-in provisions also apply to a decision made by an officer with delegated authority from the Leader/Executive.
- 6.3 The provisions relating to call-in are specified in the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules contained in the Council's Constitution. The call-in mechanism enables non-Executive councillors to intervene when they feel that a decision being made by the Leader / Executive should be revisited or changed. The effect of call-in is to prevent implementation of a decision until the OSC has examined the decision. The OSC has the power to refer a decision back to the decision-maker or to refer a matter for further review by the Council.
- 6.4 The call-in procedure has not been exercised at the Council since November 2012 (that is to say, not since the call-in in relation to the future provision of classical music in the Borough).
- 6.5 The call-in procedure was revised by the Council in October 2014 as part of a review of the Council's Constitution. In 2014, the call-in threshold was increased from three councillors to five, while retaining the call-in power of the OSC chairman and increasing the call-in period from 96 hours to 5 working days.
- 6.6 There are no changes proposed to the call-in procedure at this time.

Urgency Provisions

- 6.7 The 'urgency' provisions are specified in the Access to Information Procedure Rules and Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules. A principal purpose of these provisions is to enable the Leader / Executive or individual Lead Councillor, with the consent of the chairman of the OSC, to agree to preclude the call-in of any particular executive decision in cases of urgency. In addition, these provisions enable key decisions to be taken with less than 28 days' notice: either with at least 5 clear days' notification or less notice with the agreement of the OSC Chairman.
- 6.8 During 2018-19, the urgency provisions were used on five occasions:
- Surrey Leaders' Group – Nominations for appointment to outside bodies 2018-19. Executive decision, 22 May 2018.
 - Acquisition of leasehold interest in property. Decision taken by Leader, October 2018.

- Submission of Garden Village Bid for Wisley Airfield. Executive decision, October 2018.
- Slyfield Area Regeneration Project. Executive decision, March 2019.
- Acquisition of the Leasehold of an Industrial Unit. Executive decision, April 2019.

6.9 Further details of the five occasions during 2018-19 are attached at Appendix 3. This compares to three occasions in the 2017-18 municipal year.⁴

6.10 There are no changes proposed to the urgency provisions.

7. Legal Implications

7.1 This report on the operation of overview and scrutiny has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Council's Constitution. In particular, the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16(i) requires the operation of the provisions relating to call-in and urgency to be monitored annually and a report submitted to Full Council with proposals for review if necessary and Article 8.2(d) of the Council's Constitution requires the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee to report annually to Full Council on the work undertaken during the year, its future work programme, and amended working methods if appropriate.

7.2 Statutory guidance on O&S was published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in May 2019 under section 9Q of the Local Government Act 2000 and Schedule 5A paragraph 2(9) to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009. The Council must 'have regard' to the guidance when exercising and reviewing its O&S function. This means that it is not necessary to follow every detail of the guidance, but it should be followed unless there is good reason not to do so.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

9. Human Resources Implications

9.1 There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

10. Equality and Diversity Implications

10.1 The Council has a statutory duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 which provides that a public authority must, in exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The relevant protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

⁴ Surrey Leaders' Group – nominations for appointment to outside bodies, 2017-18. Executive decision, 23 May 2017. Guildford Bus Interchange: Stage 3 Report and Stakeholder Engagement Progress. Executive decision, 27 June 2017. Proposed Surrey Business Rates Retention Pilot. Executive decision, 24 October 2017.

- 10.2 This duty has been considered in the context of this report and it has been concluded that there are no equality and diversity implications arising directly from this report.

11. Conclusion

- 11.1 Having considered the statutory guidance on scrutiny, together with current and previously considered approaches to scrutiny at the Council, officers recommend no change to O&S at this time. However, the Committee is invited to consider the O&S guidance attached at Appendix 2 to this report, and the summary above, and confirm this view.

Officers are not recommending any changes to call-in or urgency procedures at this juncture.

12. Background Papers

None.

13. Appendices

Appendix 1 – OSC work programme 2018-19, June 2019.

Appendix 2 – Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities, May 2019.

Appendix 3 – Key decisions taken by Executive in 2018-19 under urgency provisions / call-in waived.

Appendix 4 – P.A.P.E.R. selection tool.

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Overview & Scrutiny work programme, 2019-20

Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) – scheduled meetings
<p>9 July 2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safer Guildford Partnership Annual Report • Review of Overview and Scrutiny – Annual Report • Establishment of working group for G-Live and Leisure Partnership Agreement contracts monitoring
<p>10 September 2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead Councillor Question Session (Lead Cllr tbc) • Support for care leavers • Woodbridge Road Sports Ground Pavilion Refurbishment Project: post-project report • Review of Guildford's Joint Enforcement Team
<p>12 November 2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead Councillor Question Session (Lead Cllr tbc) • Operation of the Leisure Management contract, 2018-19 • Post-project review of ICT infrastructure • Progress report on Food Poverty recommendations
<p>14 January 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead Councillor Question Session (Lead Cllr tbc) • Air Quality Strategy - monitoring • Annual report and monitoring arrangements for operation of the G-Live contract, 2018-19
<p>3 March 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead Councillor Question Session (Lead Cllr tbc)
<p>14 April 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead Councillor Question Session (Lead Cllr tbc)

Unscheduled items

- Implementation of Future Guildford
- Spectrum 2.0
- Evaluation of Project Aspire
- Governance of Council's major projects
- Social housing – how to ensure truly affordable homes
- Transport network – to improve the urban environment in the future, alleviate congestion and improve air quality for next generation. Reviewing work undertaken and planned, and identifying further recommendations.
- Traveller encampments
- Council's use of consultants
- Council website
- Impact of Brexit

Task and finish group from 2018-19

Title	Current membership	Anticipated end date
Older People's Service Review	None	Timescale requested for developing recommendations for the service and for a decision by the Executive. This will inform the OSC's decision about whether to re-establish the review.

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Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities



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Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF
Telephone: 030 3444 0000

For all our latest news and updates follow us on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/mhclg>

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Ministerial Foreword

The role that overview and scrutiny can play in holding an authority's decision-makers to account makes it fundamentally important to the successful functioning of local democracy. Effective scrutiny helps secure the efficient delivery of public services and drives improvements within the authority itself. Conversely, poor scrutiny can be indicative of wider governance, leadership and service failure.

It is vital that councils and combined authorities know the purpose of scrutiny, what effective scrutiny looks like, how to conduct it and the benefits it can bring. This guidance aims to increase understanding in all four areas.

In writing this guidance, my department has taken close note of the House of Commons Select Committee report of December 2017, as well as the written and oral evidence supplied to that Committee. We have also consulted individuals and organisations with practical involvement in conducting, researching and supporting scrutiny.

It is clear from speaking to these practitioners that local and combined authorities with effective overview and scrutiny arrangements in place share certain key traits, the most important being a strong organisational culture. Authorities who welcome challenge and recognise the value scrutiny can bring reap the benefits. But this depends on strong commitment from the top - from senior members as well as senior officials.

Crucially, this guidance recognises that authorities have democratic mandates and are ultimately accountable to their electorates, and that authorities themselves are best-placed to know which scrutiny arrangements are most appropriate for their own individual circumstances.

I would, however, strongly urge all councils to cast a critical eye over their existing arrangements and, above all, ensure they embed a culture that allows overview and scrutiny to flourish.



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rishi Sunak'.

Rishi Sunak MP
Minister for Local Government

About this Guidance

Who the guidance is for

This document is aimed at local authorities and combined authorities in England to help them carry out their overview and scrutiny functions effectively. In particular, it provides advice for senior leaders, members of overview and scrutiny committees, and support officers.

Aim of the guidance

This guidance seeks to ensure local authorities and combined authorities are aware of the purpose of overview and scrutiny, what effective scrutiny looks like, how to conduct it effectively and the benefits it can bring.

As such, it includes a number of policies and practices authorities should adopt or should consider adopting when deciding how to carry out their overview and scrutiny functions.

The guidance recognises that authorities approach scrutiny in different ways and have different processes and procedures in place, and that what might work well for one authority might not work well in another.

The hypothetical scenarios contained in the annexes to this guidance have been included for illustrative purposes, and are intended to provoke thought and discussion rather than serve as a 'best' way to approach the relevant issues.

While the guidance sets out some of the key legal requirements, it does not seek to replicate legislation.

Status of the guidance

This is statutory guidance from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. Local authorities and combined authorities must have regard to it when exercising their functions. The phrase 'must have regard', when used in this context, does not mean that the sections of statutory guidance have to be followed in every detail, but that they should be followed unless there is a good reason not to in a particular case.

Not every authority is required to appoint a scrutiny committee. This guidance applies to those authorities who have such a committee in place, whether they are required to or not.

This guidance has been issued under section 9Q of the Local Government Act 2000 and under paragraph 2(9) of Schedule 5A to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, which requires authorities to have regard to this guidance. In addition, authorities may have regard to other material they might choose to consider, including that issued by the Centre for Public Scrutiny, when exercising their overview and scrutiny functions.

Terminology

Unless 'overview' is specifically mentioned, the term 'scrutiny' refers to both overview and scrutiny.¹

Where the term 'authority' is used, it refers to both local authorities and combined authorities.

Where the term 'scrutiny committee' is used, it refers to an overview and scrutiny committee and any of its sub-committees. As the legislation refers throughout to powers conferred on scrutiny committees, that is the wording used in this guidance. However, the guidance should be seen as applying equally to work undertaken in informal task and finish groups, commissioned by formal committees.

Where the term 'executive' is used, it refers to executive members.

For combined authorities, references to the 'executive' or 'cabinet' should be interpreted as relating to the mayor (where applicable) and all the authority members.

For authorities operating committee rather than executive arrangements, references to the executive or Cabinet should be interpreted as relating to councillors in leadership positions.

Expiry or review date

This guidance will be kept under review and updated as necessary.

¹ A distinction is often drawn between 'overview' which focuses on the development of policy, and 'scrutiny' which looks at decisions that have been made or are about to be made to ensure they are fit for purpose.

1. Introduction and Context

1. Overview and scrutiny committees were introduced in 2000 as part of new executive governance arrangements to ensure that members of an authority who were not part of the executive could hold the executive to account for the decisions and actions that affect their communities.
2. Overview and scrutiny committees have statutory powers² to scrutinise decisions the executive is planning to take, those it plans to implement, and those that have already been taken/implemented. Recommendations following scrutiny enable improvements to be made to policies and how they are implemented. Overview and scrutiny committees can also play a valuable role in developing policy.

Effective overview and scrutiny should:

- Provide constructive 'critical friend' challenge;
- Amplify the voices and concerns of the public;
- Be led by independent people who take responsibility for their role; and
- Drive improvement in public services.

3. The requirement for local authorities in England to establish overview and scrutiny committees is set out in sections 9F to 9FI of the Local Government Act 2000 as amended by the Localism Act 2011.
4. The Localism Act 2011 amended the Local Government Act 2000 to allow councils to revert to a non-executive form of governance - the 'committee system'. Councils who adopt the committee system are not required to have overview and scrutiny but may do so if they wish. The legislation has been strengthened and updated since 2000, most recently to reflect new governance arrangements with combined authorities. Requirements for combined authorities are set out in Schedule 5A to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.
5. Current overview and scrutiny legislation recognises that authorities are democratically-elected bodies who are best-placed to determine which overview and scrutiny arrangements best suit their own individual needs, and so gives them a great degree of flexibility to decide which arrangements to adopt.
6. In producing this guidance, the Government fully recognises both authorities' democratic mandate and that the nature of local government has changed in recent years, with, for example, the creation of combined authorities, and councils increasingly delivering key services in partnership with other organisations or outsourcing them entirely.

² Section 9F of the Local Government Act 2000; paragraph 1 of Schedule 5A to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

2. Culture

7. The prevailing organisational culture, behaviours and attitudes of an authority will largely determine whether its scrutiny function succeeds or fails.
8. While everyone in an authority can play a role in creating an environment conducive to effective scrutiny, it is important that this is led and owned by members, given their role in setting and maintaining the culture of an authority.
9. Creating a strong organisational culture supports scrutiny work that can add real value by, for example, improving policy-making and the efficient delivery of public services. In contrast, low levels of support for and engagement with the scrutiny function often lead to poor quality and ill-focused work that serves to reinforce the perception that it is of little worth or relevance.
10. Members and senior officers should note that the performance of the scrutiny function is not just of interest to the authority itself. Its effectiveness, or lack thereof, is often considered by external bodies such as regulators and inspectors, and highlighted in public reports, including best value inspection reports. Failures in scrutiny can therefore help to create a negative public image of the work of an authority as a whole.

How to establish a strong organisational culture

11. Authorities can establish a strong organisational culture by:

- a) **Recognising scrutiny's legal and democratic legitimacy** – all members and officers should recognise and appreciate the importance and legitimacy the scrutiny function is afforded by the law. It was created to act as a check and balance on the executive and is a statutory requirement for all authorities operating executive arrangements and for combined authorities.

Councillors have a unique legitimacy derived from their being democratically elected. The insights that they can bring by having this close connection to local people are part of what gives scrutiny its value.

- b) **Identifying a clear role and focus** – authorities should take steps to ensure scrutiny has a clear role and focus within the organisation, i.e. a niche within which it can clearly demonstrate it adds value. Therefore, prioritisation is necessary to ensure the scrutiny function concentrates on delivering work that is of genuine value and relevance to the work of the wider authority – this is one of the most challenging parts of scrutiny, and a critical element to get right if it is to be recognised as a strategic function of the authority (see chapter 6).

Authorities should ensure a clear division of responsibilities between the scrutiny function and the audit function. While it is appropriate for scrutiny to pay due regard to the authority's financial position, this will need to happen in the context of the formal audit role. The authority's section 151 officer should advise scrutiny on how to manage this dynamic.

While scrutiny has no role in the investigation or oversight of the authority's whistleblowing arrangements, the findings of independent whistleblowing investigations might be of interest to scrutiny committees as they consider their wider implications. Members should always follow the authority's constitution and associated Monitoring Officer directions on the matter. Further guidance on whistleblowing can be found at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/415175/bis-15-200-whistleblowing-guidance-for-employers-and-code-of-practice.pdf.

- c) **Ensuring early and regular engagement between the executive and scrutiny** – authorities should ensure early and regular discussion takes place between scrutiny and the executive, especially regarding the latter's future work programme. Authorities should, though, be mindful of their distinct roles:

In particular:

- The executive should not try to exercise control over the work of the scrutiny committee. This could be direct, e.g. by purporting to 'order' scrutiny to look at, or not look at, certain issues, or indirect, e.g. through the use of the whip or as a tool of political patronage, and the committee itself should remember its statutory purpose when carrying out its work. All members and officers should consider the role the scrutiny committee plays to be that of a 'critical friend' not a de facto 'opposition'. Scrutiny chairs have a particular role to play in establishing the profile and nature of their committee (see chapter 4); and
- The chair of the scrutiny committee should determine the nature and extent of an executive member's participation in a scrutiny committee meeting, and in any informal scrutiny task group meeting.

- d) **Managing disagreement** – effective scrutiny involves looking at issues that can be politically contentious. It is therefore inevitable that, at times, an executive will disagree with the findings or recommendations of a scrutiny committee.

It is the job of both the executive and scrutiny to work together to reduce the risk of this happening, and authorities should take steps to predict, identify and act on disagreement.

One way in which this can be done is via an 'executive-scrutiny protocol' (see annex 1) which can help define the relationship between the two and mitigate any differences of opinion before they manifest themselves in unhelpful and unproductive ways. The benefit of this approach is that it provides a framework for disagreement and debate, and a way to manage it when it happens. Often,

the value of such a protocol lies in the dialogue that underpins its preparation. It is important that these protocols are reviewed on a regular basis.

Scrutiny committees do have the power to 'call in' decisions, i.e. ask the executive to reconsider them before they are implemented, but should not view it as a substitute for early involvement in the decision-making process or as a party-political tool.

- e) **Providing the necessary support** – while the level of resource allocated to scrutiny is for each authority to decide for itself, when determining resources an authority should consider the purpose of scrutiny as set out in legislation and the specific role and remit of the authority's own scrutiny committee(s), and the scrutiny function as a whole.

Support should also be given by members and senior officers to scrutiny committees and their support staff to access information held by the authority and facilitate discussions with representatives of external bodies (see chapter 5).

- f) **Ensuring impartial advice from officers** – authorities, particularly senior officers, should ensure all officers are free to provide impartial advice to scrutiny committees. This is fundamental to effective scrutiny. Of particular importance is the role played by 'statutory officers' – the monitoring officer, the section 151 officer and the head of paid service, and where relevant the statutory scrutiny officer. These individuals have a particular role in ensuring that timely, relevant and high-quality advice is provided to scrutiny.
- g) **Communicating scrutiny's role and purpose to the wider authority** – the scrutiny function can often lack support and recognition within an authority because there is a lack of awareness among both members and officers about the specific role it plays, which individuals are involved and its relevance to the authority's wider work. Authorities should, therefore, take steps to ensure all members and officers are made aware of the role the scrutiny committee plays in the organisation, its value and the outcomes it can deliver, the powers it has, its membership and, if appropriate, the identity of those providing officer support.
- h) **Maintaining the interest of full Council in the work of the scrutiny committee** – part of communicating scrutiny's role and purpose to the wider authority should happen through the formal, public role of full Council – particularly given that scrutiny will undertake valuable work to highlight challenging issues that an authority will be facing and subjects that will be a focus of full Council's work. Authorities should therefore take steps to ensure full Council is informed of the work the scrutiny committee is doing.

One way in which this can be done is by reports and recommendations being submitted to full Council rather than solely to the executive. Scrutiny should decide when it would be appropriate to submit reports for wider debate in this way, taking into account the relevance of reports to full Council business, as well as full Council's capacity to consider and respond in a timely manner. Such

reports would supplement the annual report to full Council on scrutiny's activities and raise awareness of ongoing work.

In order to maintain awareness of scrutiny at the Combined Authority and provoke dialogue and discussion of its impact, the business of scrutiny should be reported to the Combined Authority board or to the chairs of the relevant scrutiny committees of constituent and non-constituent authorities, or both. At those chairs' discretion, particular Combined Authority scrutiny outcomes, and what they might mean for each individual area, could be either discussed by scrutiny in committee or referred to full Council of the constituent authorities.

- i) **Communicating scrutiny's role to the public** – authorities should ensure scrutiny has a profile in the wider community. Consideration should be given to how and when to engage the authority's communications officers, and any other relevant channels, to understand how to get that message across. This will usually require engagement early on in the work programming process (see chapter 6).
- j) **Ensuring scrutiny members are supported in having an independent mindset** – formal committee meetings provide a vital opportunity for scrutiny members to question the executive and officers.

Inevitably, some committee members will come from the same political party as a member they are scrutinising and might well have a long-standing personal, or familial, relationship with them (see paragraph 25).

Scrutiny members should bear in mind, however, that adopting an independent mind-set is fundamental to carrying out their work effectively. In practice, this is likely to require scrutiny chairs working proactively to identify any potentially contentious issues and plan how to manage them.

Directly-elected mayoral systems

12. A strong organisational culture that supports scrutiny work is particularly important in authorities with a directly-elected mayor to ensure there are the checks and balances to maintain a robust democratic system. Mayoral systems offer the opportunity for greater public accountability and stronger governance, but there have also been incidents that highlight the importance of creating and maintaining a culture that puts scrutiny at the heart of its operations.
13. Authorities with a directly-elected mayor should ensure that scrutiny committees are well-resourced, are able to recruit high-calibre members and that their scrutiny functions pay particular attention to issues surrounding:
 - rights of access to documents by the press, public and councillors;
 - transparent and fully recorded decision-making processes, especially avoiding decisions by 'unofficial' committees or working groups;
 - delegated decisions by the Mayor;
 - whistleblowing protections for both staff and councillors; and
 - powers of Full Council, where applicable, to question and review.

14. Authorities with a directly-elected mayor should note that mayors are required by law to attend overview and scrutiny committee sessions when asked to do so (see paragraph 44).

3. Resourcing

15. The resource an authority allocates to the scrutiny function plays a pivotal role in determining how successful that function is and therefore the value it can add to the work of the authority.
16. Ultimately it is up to each authority to decide on the resource it provides, but every authority should recognise that creating and sustaining an effective scrutiny function requires them to allocate resources to it.
17. Authorities should also recognise that support for scrutiny committees, task groups and other activities is not solely about budgets and provision of officer time, although these are clearly extremely important elements. Effective support is also about the ways in which the wider authority engages with those who carry out the scrutiny function (both members and officers).

When deciding on the level of resource to allocate to the scrutiny function, the factors an authority should consider include:

- Scrutiny's legal powers and responsibilities;
- The particular role and remit scrutiny will play in the authority;
- The training requirements of scrutiny members and support officers, particularly the support needed to ask effective questions of the executive and other key partners, and make effective recommendations;
- The need for ad hoc external support where expertise does not exist in the council;
- Effectively-resourced scrutiny has been shown to add value to the work of authorities, improving their ability to meet the needs of local people; and
- Effectively-resourced scrutiny can help policy formulation and so minimise the need for call-in of executive decisions.

Statutory scrutiny officers

18. Combined authorities, upper and single tier authorities are required to designate a statutory scrutiny officer,³ someone whose role is to:
 - promote the role of the authority's scrutiny committee;
 - provide support to the scrutiny committee and its members; and
 - provide support and guidance to members and officers relating to the functions of the scrutiny committee.

³ Section 9FB of the Local Government Act 2000; article 9 of the Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017

19. Authorities not required by law to appoint such an officer should consider whether doing so would be appropriate for their specific local needs.

Officer resource models

20. Authorities are free to decide for themselves which wider officer support model best suits their individual circumstances, though generally they adopt one or a mix of the following:
- Committee – officers are drawn from specific policy or service areas;
 - Integrated – officers are drawn from the corporate centre and also service the executive; and
 - Specialist – officers are dedicated to scrutiny.
21. Each model has its merits – the committee model provides service-specific expertise; the integrated model facilitates closer and earlier scrutiny involvement in policy formation and alignment of corporate work programmes; and the specialist model is structurally independent from those areas it scrutinises.
22. Authorities should ensure that, whatever model they employ, officers tasked with providing scrutiny support are able to provide impartial advice. This might require consideration of the need to build safeguards into the way that support is provided. The nature of these safeguards will differ according to the specific role scrutiny plays in the organisation.

4. Selecting Committee Members

23. Selecting the right members to serve on scrutiny committees is essential if those committees are to function effectively. Where a committee is made up of members who have the necessary skills and commitment, it is far more likely to be taken seriously by the wider authority.
24. While there are proportionality requirements that must be met,⁴ the selection of the chair and other committee members is for each authority to decide for itself. Guidance for combined authorities on this issue has been produced by the Centre for Public Scrutiny⁵.

Members invariably have different skill-sets. What an authority must consider when forming a committee is that, as a group, it possesses the requisite expertise, commitment and ability to act impartially to fulfil its functions.

25. Authorities are reminded that members of the executive cannot be members of a scrutiny committee.⁶ Authorities should take care to ensure that, as a minimum, members holding less formal executive positions, e.g. as Cabinet assistants, do not sit on scrutinising committees looking at portfolios to which those roles relate. Authorities should articulate in their constitutions how conflicts of interest, including familial links (see also paragraph 31), between executive and scrutiny responsibilities should be managed, including where members stand down from the executive and move to a scrutiny role, and vice-versa.
26. Members or substitute members of a combined authority must not be members of its overview and scrutiny committee.⁷ This includes the Mayor in Mayoral Combined Authorities. It is advised that Deputy Mayors for Policing and Crime are also not members of the combined authority's overview and scrutiny committee.

Selecting individual committee members

27. When selecting individual members to serve on scrutiny committees, an authority should consider a member's experience, expertise, interests, ability to act impartially, ability to work as part of a group, and capacity to serve.

⁴ See, for example, regulation 11 of the Local Authorities (Committee System) (England) Regulations 2012 (S.I. 2012/1020) and article 4 of the Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017 (S.I. 2017/68).

⁵ See pages 15-18 of 'Overview and scrutiny in combined authorities: a plain English guide': <https://www.cfps.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Overview-and-scrutiny-in-combined-authorities-a-plain-english-guide.pdf>

⁶ Section 9FA(3) of the Local Government Act 2000.

⁷ 2(3) of Schedule 5A to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009

28. Authorities should not take into account a member's perceived level of support for or opposition to a particular political party (notwithstanding the wider legal requirement for proportionality referred to in paragraph 24).

Selecting a chair

29. The Chair plays a leadership role on a scrutiny committee as they are largely responsible for establishing its profile, influence and ways of working.

30. The attributes authorities should and should not take into account when selecting individual committee members (see paragraphs 27 and 28) also apply to the selection of the Chair, but the Chair should also possess the ability to lead and build a sense of teamwork and consensus among committee members.

Chairs should pay special attention to the need to guard the committee's independence. Importantly, however, they should take care to avoid the committee being, and being viewed as, a de facto opposition to the executive.

31. Given their pre-eminent role on the scrutiny committee, it is strongly recommended that the Chair not preside over scrutiny of their relatives⁸. Combined authorities should note the legal requirements that apply to them where the Chair is an independent person⁹.

32. The method for selecting a Chair is for each authority to decide for itself, however every authority should consider taking a vote by secret ballot. Combined Authorities should be aware of the legal requirements regarding the party affiliation of their scrutiny committee Chair¹⁰.

Training for committee members

33. Authorities should ensure committee members are offered induction when they take up their role and ongoing training so they can carry out their responsibilities effectively. Authorities should pay attention to the need to ensure committee members are aware of their legal powers, and how to prepare for and ask relevant questions at scrutiny sessions.

34. When deciding on training requirements for committee members, authorities should consider taking advantage of opportunities offered by external providers in the sector.

Co-option and technical advice

35. While members and their support officers will often have significant local insight and an understanding of local people and their needs, the provision of outside expertise can be invaluable.

⁸ A definition of 'relative' can be found at section 28(10) of the Localism Act 2011.

⁹ See article 5(2) of the Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017 (S.I. 2017/68).

¹⁰ Article 5(6) of the Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017.

36. There are two principal ways to procure this:

- Co-option – formal co-option is provided for in legislation¹¹. Authorities must establish a co-option scheme to determine how individuals will be co-opted onto committees; and
- Technical advisers – depending on the subject matter, independent local experts might exist who can provide advice and assistance in evaluating evidence (see annex 2).

¹¹ Section 9FA(4) Local Government Act 2000

5. Power to Access Information

37. A scrutiny committee needs access to relevant information the authority holds, and to receive it in good time, if it is to do its job effectively.
38. This need is recognised in law, with members of scrutiny committees enjoying powers to access information¹². In particular, regulations give enhanced powers to a scrutiny member to access exempt or confidential information. This is in addition to existing rights for councillors to have access to information to perform their duties, including common law rights to request information and rights to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.
39. When considering what information scrutiny needs in order to carry out its work, scrutiny members and the executive should consider scrutiny's role and the legal rights that committees and their individual members have, as well as their need to receive timely and accurate information to carry out their duties effectively.
40. Scrutiny members should have access to a regularly available source of key information about the management of the authority – particularly on performance, management and risk. Where this information exists, and scrutiny members are given support to understand it, the potential for what officers might consider unfocused and unproductive requests is reduced as members will be able to frame their requests from a more informed position.
41. Officers should speak to scrutiny members to ensure they understand the reasons why information is needed, thereby making the authority better able to provide information that is relevant and timely, as well as ensuring that the authority complies with legal requirements.

While each request for information should be judged on its individual merits, authorities should adopt a default position of sharing the information they hold, on request, with scrutiny committee members.

42. The law recognises that there might be instances where it is legitimate for an authority to withhold information and places a requirement on the executive to provide the scrutiny committee with a written statement setting out its reasons for that decision¹³. However, members of the executive and senior officers should take particular care to avoid refusing requests, or limiting the information they provide, for reasons of party political or reputational expediency.

¹² Regulation 17 - Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012; article 10 Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017.

¹³ Regulation 17(4) – Local Government (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012; article 10(4) Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017.

Before an authority takes a decision not to share information it holds, it should give serious consideration to whether that information could be shared in closed session.

43. Regulations already stipulate a timeframe for executives to comply with requests from a scrutiny member¹⁴. When agreeing to such requests, authorities should:
- consider whether seeking clarification from the information requester could help better target the request; and
 - Ensure the information is supplied in a format appropriate to the recipient's needs.

44. Committees should be aware of their legal power to require members of the executive and officers to attend before them to answer questions¹⁵. It is the duty of members and officers to comply with such requests.¹⁶

Seeking information from external organisations

45. Scrutiny members should also consider the need to supplement any authority-held information they receive with information and intelligence that might be available from other sources, and should note in particular their statutory powers to access information from certain external organisations.

46. When asking an external organisation to provide documentation or appear before it, and where that organisation is not legally obliged to do either (see annex 3), scrutiny committees should consider the following:

- a) **The need to explain the purpose of scrutiny** – the organisation being approached might have little or no awareness of the committee's work, or of an authority's scrutiny function more generally, and so might be reluctant to comply with any request;
- b) **The benefits of an informal approach** – individuals from external organisations can have fixed perceptions of what an evidence session entails and may be unwilling to subject themselves to detailed public scrutiny if they believe it could reflect badly on them or their employer. Making an informal approach can help reassure an organisation of the aims of the committee, the type of information being sought and the manner in which the evidence session would be conducted;

¹⁴ Regulation 17(2) – Local Government (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012; article 10(2) Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017.

¹⁵ Section 9FA(8) of the Local Government Act 2000; paragraph 2(6) of Schedule 5A to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

¹⁶ Section 9FA(9) of the Local Government Act 2000; paragraph 2(7) of Schedule 5A to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

- c) **How to encourage compliance with the request** – scrutiny committees will want to frame their approach on a case by case basis. For contentious issues, committees might want to emphasise the opportunity their request gives the organisation to ‘set the record straight’ in a public setting; and
- d) **Who to approach** – a committee might instinctively want to ask the Chief Executive or Managing Director of an organisation to appear at an evidence session, however it could be more beneficial to engage front-line staff when seeking operational-level detail rather than senior executives who might only be able to talk in more general terms. When making a request to a specific individual, the committee should consider the type of information it is seeking, the nature of the organisation in question and the authority’s pre-existing relationship with it.

Following ‘the Council Pound’

Scrutiny committees will often have a keen interest in ‘following the council pound’, i.e. scrutinising organisations that receive public funding to deliver goods and services.

Authorities should recognise the legitimacy of this interest and, where relevant, consider the need to provide assistance to scrutiny members and their support staff to obtain information from organisations the council has contracted to deliver services. In particular, when agreeing contracts with these bodies, authorities should consider whether it would be appropriate to include a *requirement* for them to supply information to or appear before scrutiny committees.

6. Planning Work

47. Effective scrutiny should have a defined impact on the ground, with the committee making recommendations that will make a tangible difference to the work of the authority. To have this kind of impact, scrutiny committees need to plan their work programme, i.e. draw up a long-term agenda and consider making it flexible enough to accommodate any urgent, short-term issues that might arise during the year.
48. Authorities with multiple scrutiny committees sometimes have a separate work programme for each committee. Where this happens, consideration should be given to how to co-ordinate the various committees' work to make best use of the total resources available.

Being clear about scrutiny's role

49. Scrutiny works best when it has a clear role and function. This provides focus and direction. While scrutiny has the power to look at anything which affects 'the area, or the area's inhabitants', authorities will often find it difficult to support a scrutiny function that carries out generalised oversight across the wide range of issues experienced by local people, particularly in the context of partnership working. Prioritisation is necessary, which means that there might be things that, despite being important, scrutiny will not be able to look at.
50. Different overall roles could include having a focus on risk, the authority's finances, or on the way the authority works with its partners.
51. Applying this focus does not mean that certain subjects are 'off limits'. It is more about looking at topics and deciding whether their relative importance justifies the positive impact scrutiny's further involvement could bring.
52. When thinking about scrutiny's focus, members should be supported by key senior officers. The statutory scrutiny officer, if an authority has one, will need to take a leading role in supporting members to clarify the role and function of scrutiny, and championing that role once agreed.

Who to speak to

53. Evidence will need to be gathered to inform the work programming process. This will ensure that it looks at the right topics, in the right way and at the right time. Gathering evidence requires conversations with:
 - *The public* – it is likely that formal 'consultation' with the public on the scrutiny work programme will be ineffective. Asking individual scrutiny members to have conversations with individuals and groups in their own local areas can work better. Insights gained from the public through individual pieces of scrutiny work can be fed back into the work programming process. Listening to and participating in conversations in places where local people come together, including in online forums, can help authorities engage people on their own terms and yield more positive results.

Authorities should consider how their communications officers can help scrutiny engage with the public, and how wider internal expertise and local knowledge from both members and officers might make a contribution.

- *The authority's partners* – relationships with other partners should not be limited to evidence-gathering to support individual reviews or agenda items. A range of partners are likely to have insights that will prove useful:
 - Public sector partners (like the NHS and community safety partners, over which scrutiny has specific legal powers);
 - Voluntary sector partners;
 - Contractors and commissioning partners (including partners in joint ventures and authority-owned companies);
 - In parished areas, town, community and parish councils;
 - Neighbouring principal councils (both in two-tier and unitary areas);
 - Cross-authority bodies and organisations, such as Local Enterprise Partnerships¹⁷; and
 - Others with a stake and interest in the local area – large local employers, for example.

- *The executive* – a principal partner in discussions on the work programme should be the executive (and senior officers). The executive should not direct scrutiny's work (see chapter 2), but conversations will help scrutiny members better understand how their work can be designed to align with the best opportunities to influence the authority's wider work.

Information sources

54. Scrutiny will need access to relevant information to inform its work programme. The type of information will depend on the specific role and function scrutiny plays within the authority, but might include:

- Performance information from across the authority and its partners;
- Finance and risk information from across the authority and its partners;
- Corporate complaints information, and aggregated information from political groups about the subject matter of members' surgeries;
- Business cases and options appraisals (and other planning information) for forthcoming major decisions. This information will be of particular use for pre-decision scrutiny; and
- Reports and recommendations issued by relevant ombudsmen, especially the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

¹⁷ Authorities should ensure they have appropriate arrangements in place to ensure the effective democratic scrutiny of Local Enterprise Partnerships' investment decisions.

As committees can meet in closed session, commercial confidentiality should not preclude the sharing of information. Authorities should note, however, that the default for meetings should be that they are held in public (see 2014 guidance on '*Open and accountable local government*':

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/343182/140812_Openness_Guide.pdf).

55. Scrutiny members should consider keeping this information under regular review. It is likely to be easier to do this outside committee, rather than bringing such information to committee 'to note', or to provide an update, as a matter of course.

Shortlisting topics

Approaches to shortlisting topics should reflect scrutiny's overall role in the authority. This will require the development of bespoke, local solutions, however when considering whether an item should be included in the work programme, the kind of questions a scrutiny committee should consider might include:

- Do we understand the benefits scrutiny would bring to this issue?
- How could we best carry out work on this subject?
- What would be the best outcome of this work?
- How would this work engage with the activity of the executive and other decision-makers, including partners?

56. Some authorities use scoring systems to evaluate and rank work programme proposals. If these are used to provoke discussion and debate, based on evidence, about what priorities should be, they can be a useful tool. Others take a looser approach. Whichever method is adopted, a committee should be able to justify how and why a decision has been taken to include certain issues and not others.

57. Scrutiny members should accept that shortlisting can be difficult; scrutiny committees have finite resources and deciding how these are best allocated is tough. They should understand that, if work programming is robust and effective, there might well be issues that they want to look at that nonetheless are not selected.

Carrying out work

58. Selected topics can be scrutinised in several ways, including:

- a) **As a single item on a committee agenda** – this often presents a limited opportunity for effective scrutiny, but may be appropriate for some issues or where the committee wants to maintain a formal watching brief over a given issue;
- b) **At a single meeting** – which could be a committee meeting or something less formal. This can provide an opportunity to have a single public meeting about a

given subject, or to have a meeting at which evidence is taken from a number of witnesses;

- c) **At a task and finish review of two or three meetings** – short, sharp scrutiny reviews are likely to be most effective even for complex topics. Properly focused, they ensure members can swiftly reach conclusions and make recommendations, perhaps over the course of a couple of months or less;
- d) **Via a longer-term task and finish review** – the ‘traditional’ task and finish model – with perhaps six or seven meetings spread over a number of months – is still appropriate when scrutiny needs to dig into a complex topic in significant detail. However, the resource implications of such work, and its length, can make it unattractive for all but the most complex matters; and
- e) **By establishing a ‘standing panel’** – this falls short of establishing a whole new committee but may reflect a necessity to keep a watching brief over a critical local issue, especially where members feel they need to convene regularly to carry out that oversight. Again, the resource implications of this approach means that it will be rarely used.

7. Evidence Sessions

59. Evidence sessions are a key way in which scrutiny committees inform their work. They might happen at formal committee, in less formal 'task and finish' groups or at standalone sessions.

Good preparation is a vital part of conducting effective evidence sessions. Members should have a clear idea of what the committee hopes to get out of each session and appreciate that success will depend on their ability to work together on the day.

How to plan

60. Effective planning does not necessarily involve a large number of pre-meetings, the development of complex scopes or the drafting of questioning plans. It is more often about setting overall objectives and then considering what type of questions (and the way in which they are asked) can best elicit the information the committee is seeking. This applies as much to individual agenda items as it does for longer evidence sessions – there should always be consideration in advance of what scrutiny is trying to get out of a particular evidence session.

Chairs play a vital role in leading discussions on objective-setting and ensuring all members are aware of the specific role each will play during the evidence session.

61. As far as possible there should be consensus among scrutiny members about the objective of an evidence session before it starts. It is important to recognise that members have different perspectives on certain issues, and so might not share the objectives for a session that are ultimately adopted. Where this happens, the Chair will need to be aware of this divergence of views and bear it in mind when planning the evidence session.
62. Effective planning should mean that at the end of a session it is relatively straightforward for the chair to draw together themes and highlight the key findings. It is unlikely that the committee will be able to develop and agree recommendations immediately, but, unless the session is part of a wider inquiry, enough evidence should have been gathered to allow the chair to set a clear direction.
63. After an evidence session, the committee might wish to hold a short 'wash-up' meeting to review whether their objectives were met and lessons could be learned for future sessions.

Developing recommendations

64. The development and agreement of recommendations is often an iterative process. It will usually be appropriate for this to be done only by members, assisted by co-optees where relevant. When deciding on recommendations, however, members should have due regard to advice received from officers, particularly the Monitoring Officer.

65. The drafting of reports is usually, but not always, carried out by officers, directed by members.
66. Authorities draft reports and recommendations in a number of ways, but there are normally three stages:
- i. the development of a 'heads of report' – a document setting out general findings that members can then discuss as they consider the overall structure and focus of the report and its recommendations;
 - ii. the development of those findings, which will set out some areas on which recommendations might be made; and
 - iii. the drafting of the full report.
67. Recommendations should be evidence-based and SMART, i.e. specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timed. Where appropriate, committees may wish to consider sharing them in draft with interested parties.
68. Committees should bear in mind that often six to eight recommendations are sufficient to enable the authority to focus its response, although there may be specific circumstances in which more might be appropriate.

Sharing draft recommendations with executive members should not provide an opportunity for them to revise or block recommendations before they are made. It should, however, provide an opportunity for errors to be identified and corrected, and for a more general sense-check.

Annex 1: Illustrative Scenario – Creating an Executive-Scrutiny Protocol

An executive-scrutiny protocol can deal with the practical expectations of scrutiny committee members and the executive, as well as the cultural dynamics.

Workshops with scrutiny members, senior officers and Cabinet can be helpful to inform the drafting of a protocol. An external facilitator can help bring an independent perspective.

Councils should consider how to adopt a protocol, e.g. formal agreement at scrutiny committee and Cabinet, then formal integration into the Council's constitution at the next Annual General Meeting.

The protocol, as agreed, may contain sections on:

- The way scrutiny will go about developing its work programme (including the ways in which senior officers and Cabinet members will be kept informed);
- The way in which senior officers and Cabinet will keep scrutiny informed of the outlines of major decisions as they are developed, to allow for discussion of scrutiny's potential involvement in policy development. This involves the building in of safeguards to mitigate risks around the sharing of sensitive information with scrutiny members;
- A strengthening and expansion of existing parts of the code of conduct that relate to behaviour in formal meetings, and in informal meetings;
- Specification of the nature and form of responses that scrutiny can expect when it makes recommendations to the executive, when it makes requests to the executive for information, and when it makes requests that Cabinet members or senior officers attend meetings; and
- Confirmation of the role of the statutory scrutiny officer, and Monitoring Officer, in overseeing compliance with the protocol, and ensuring that it is used to support the wider aim of supporting and promoting a culture of scrutiny, with matters relating to the protocol's success being reported to full Council through the scrutiny Annual Report.

Annex 2: Illustrative Scenario – Engaging Independent Technical Advisers

This example demonstrates how one Council's executive and scrutiny committee worked together to scope a role and then appoint an independent adviser on transforming social care commissioning. Their considerations and process may be helpful and applicable in other similar scenarios.

Major care contracts were coming to an end and the Council took the opportunity to review whether to continue with its existing strategic commissioning framework, or take a different approach – potentially insourcing certain elements.

The relevant Director was concerned about the Council's reliance on a very small number of large providers. The Director therefore approached the Scrutiny and Governance Manager to talk through the potential role scrutiny could play as the Council considered these changes.

The Scrutiny Chair wanted to look at this issue in some depth, but recognised its complexity could make it difficult for her committee to engage – she was concerned it would not be able to do the issue justice. The Director offered support from his own officer team, but the Chair considered this approach to be beset by risks around the independence of the process.

She talked to the Director about securing independent advice. He was worried that an independent adviser could come with preconceived ideas and would not understand the Council's context and objectives. The Scrutiny Chair was concerned that independent advice could end up leading to scrutiny members being passive, relying on an adviser to do their thinking for them. They agreed that some form of independent assistance would be valuable, but that how it was provided and managed should be carefully thought out.

With the assistance of the Governance and Scrutiny Manager, the Scrutiny Chair approached local universities and Further Education institutions to identify an appropriate individual. The approach was clear – it set out the precise role expected of the adviser, and explained the scrutiny process itself. Because members wanted to focus on the risks of market failure, and felt more confident on substantive social care matters, the approach was directed at those with a specialism in economics and business administration. The Council's search was proactive – the assistance of the service department was drawn on to make direct approaches to particular individuals who could carry out this role.

It was agreed to make a small budget available to act as a 'per diem' to support an adviser; academics were approached in the first instance as the Council felt able to make a case that an educational institution would provide this support for free as part of its commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility.

Three individuals were identified from the Council's proactive search. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the committee had an informal discussion with each – not so much to establish their skills and expertise (which had already been assessed) but to give a sense about

their 'fit' with scrutiny's objectives and their political nous in understanding the environment in which they would operate, and to satisfy themselves that they will apply themselves even-handedly to the task. The Director sat in on this process but played no part in who was ultimately selected.

The independent advice provided by the selected individual gave the Scrutiny Committee a more comprehensive understanding of the issue and meant it was able to offer informed advice on the merits of putting in place a new strategic commissioning framework.

Annex 3: Illustrative Scenario – Approaching an External Organisation to Appear before a Committee

This example shows how one council ensured a productive scrutiny meeting, involving a private company and the public. Lessons may be drawn and apply to other similar scenarios.

Concerns had been expressed by user groups, and the public at large, about the reliability of the local bus service. The Scrutiny Chair wanted to question the bus company in a public evidence session but knew that she had no power to compel it to attend. Previous attempts to engage it had been unsuccessful; the company was not hostile, but said it had its own ways of engaging the public.

The Monitoring Officer approached the company's regional PR manager, but he expressed concern that the session would end in a 'bunfight'. He also explained the company had put their improvement plan in the public domain, and felt a big council meeting would exacerbate tensions.

Other councillors had strong views about the company – one thought the committee should tell the company it would be empty-chaired if it refused to attend. The Scrutiny Chair was sympathetic to this, but thought such an approach would not lead to any improvements.

The Scrutiny Chair was keen to make progress, but it was difficult to find the right person to speak to at the company, so she asked council officers and local transport advocacy groups for advice. Speaking to those people also gave her a better sense of what scrutiny's role might be.

When she finally spoke to the company's network manager, she explained the situation and suggested they work together to consider how the meeting could be productive for the Council, the company and local people. In particular, this provided her with an opportunity to explain scrutiny and its role. The network manager remained sceptical but was reassured that they could work together to ensure that the meeting would not be an 'ambush'. He agreed in principle to attend and also provide information to support the Committee's work beforehand.

Discussions continued in the four weeks leading up to the Committee meeting. The Scrutiny Chair was conscious that while she had to work with the company to ensure that the meeting was constructive – and secure their attendance – it could not be a whitewash, and other members and the public would demand a hard edge to the discussions.

The scrutiny committee agreed that the meeting would provide a space for the company to provide context to the problems local people are experiencing, but that this would be preceded by a space on the agenda for the Chair, Vice-chair, and representatives from two local transport advocacy groups to set out their concerns. The company were sent in

advance a summary of the general areas on which members were likely to ask questions, to ensure that those questions could be addressed at the meeting.

Finally, provision was made for public questions and debate. Those attending the meeting were invited to discuss with each other the principal issues they wanted the meeting to cover. A short, facilitated discussion in the room led by the Chair highlighted the key issues, and the Chair then put those points to the company representatives.

At the end of the meeting, the public asked questions of the bus company representative in a 20-minute plenary item.

The meeting was fractious, but the planning carried out to prepare for this – by channelling issues through discussion and using the Chair to mediate the questioning – made things easier. Some attendees were initially frustrated by this structure, but the company representative was more open and less defensive than might otherwise have been the case.

The meeting also motivated the company to revise its communications plan to become more responsive to this kind of challenge, part of which involved a commitment to feed back to the scrutiny committee on the recommendations it made on the night.

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Executive meeting	Item of business	Decision taken (K) = Key Decision	Chair of O&S informed under General Exception provision of Access to Information Procedure Rule 15	Chair of O&S agreement obtained under Special Urgency provision of Access to Information Procedure Rule 16	Chair of O&S agreed to waive call-in
22 May 2018	Surrey Leaders' Group – Nominations for appointment to outside bodies 2018-19	To submit nominations to the Surrey Leaders' Group in respect of the appointments of district council representatives to various outside bodies	n/a	n/a	✓
17 October 2018 (Decision taken by the Leader)	Acquisition of leasehold interest in property	(K) To agree the transfer of monies from the provisional capital programme to the approved capital programme to allow the Council to acquire the long leasehold of a property in Guildford in order to facilitate the redevelopment of the site.	n/a	✓	✓
30 October 2018	Submission of Garden Village Bid for Wisley Airfield	(1) To endorse the preparation and submission of a Garden Village Bid for Wisley Airfield to the MHCLG. (2) To authorise the Director of Planning and Regeneration to finalise and submit the bid following consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Director of Finance.	n/a	n/a	✓

7 March 2019	Slyfield Area Regeneration Project	<p>(K)</p> <p>(1) To transfer £10 million from the provisional capital programme to the approved capital programme to facilitate the funding of 50% of Thames Water's costs as well as any future spend covering Thames Water's legal, professional fees, and design costs leading to the submission of the planning application for the Sewage Treatment Works.</p> <p>(2) To authorise the Managing Director, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to sign and complete the Development Agreement with Thames Water to proceed with the implementation of the relocation of the Sewage Treatment Works and associated works.</p>	✓	n/a	✓
23 April 2019	Acquisition of the Leasehold of an Industrial Unit	(K) To acquire the leasehold interest of an Industrial Unit at Slyfield Industrial Estate	✓	n/a	✓

P.A.P.E.R. topic selection tool

Public interest: concerns of local people should influence the issues chosen

Ability to change: priority should be given to issues that the Committee can realistically influence

Performance: priority should be given to areas in which the Council and Partners are not performing well

Extent: priority should be given to issues that are relevant to all or a large part of the Borough

Replication: work programme must take account of what else is happening to avoid duplication or wasted effort

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Matters outstanding from previous meetings

Item	Action	Status/response
Emergency Planning in Guildford Borough, 5 March 2019, Minute OS54	Details of local Emergency Assistance Centres, the information pack on emergency planning to be circulated to Councillors, and Councillor training on emergency planning to be held soon.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Emergency plan was circulated on the 6 March. Following the recent Borough Election the plan has been resent to all Members. 2. The plan contains the details of our identified Emergency Assistance Centres. It is most likely that we would use the Park Barn or Shawfield Centres as our first choice as they are fully equipped to operate and staff are familiar with the centres. The location of these centres is not widely published as we seek to protect vulnerable people from media intrusion during an incident. 3. Members will be informed if we are operating an Emergency Assistance Centre and will be kept informed of any incident that we are involved in through the incident management team. 4. Communication with members during an incident will be through the incident management team representative rather than directly to officers involved in the incident in order that they can focus on the incident. 5. The location of the Borough Emergency Centre and alternative sites is still ongoing. However, members should be assured that since the Committee meeting a full technical test of the BEC has been successfully undertaken. 6. Brexit planning is ongoing. 7. It is proposed to run Emergency Planning awareness training for Members in July, on a date yet to be confirmed. <p>[Response provided on 28 June]</p>
Food Poverty – Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Group, 4 June 2019, Minute OS5	Confirmation of whether the Council pays the real Living Wage or the national Living Wage. Plus, the number and percentage of Guildford Borough Council employees that are not paid the real Living Wage.	Update to follow.

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