Society, Environment, and Council Development Executive Advisory Board Report

Ward(s) affected: All

Report of Director of Resources

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Date: 13 July 2017

Revised Governance Arrangements: 12 Month Review

Executive Summary

The Localism Act 2011 gave local authorities the freedom to determine for themselves whether to operate an executive system, a committee system or other governance arrangements prescribed by the Secretary of State. On 7 October 2014, full Council requested the Joint Scrutiny Committee to review all available decision making models and to make recommendations to the Executive and full Council on improvements to our governance arrangements.[1]

On 13 November 2014, the Joint Scrutiny Committee established a task and finish group to undertake the review of governance arrangements that Council requested. This task group was required to report its findings and recommendations within the 2014-15 municipal year. Detailed proposals and recommendations[2] from the Joint Scrutiny Committee, accompanied by comments from the Executive, were agreed by full Council on 7 October 2015.[3]

Thereafter, a hybrid approach with an altered role for a new, single Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC), and the addition of two Executive Advisory Boards (EABs) to advise and make recommendations to the Leader and Executive was implemented with effect from 1 January 2016 including a recommendation that these arrangements be reviewed after a twelve-month period of operation. As part of those recommendations, it was further agreed that a full-time, dedicated Scrutiny Officer should be recruited.

On 7 March 2017, a seminar to which all councillors were invited was held to review the new governance arrangements. This report sets out the outcomes of that seminar and invites the EAB to comment on these, together with the recommendations of the Corporate Governance and Standards Committee (15 June 2017), which are set out in

[1] Minute CO55, Council meeting, Guildford Borough Council, 7 October 2014

[2] Review of Governance Arrangements Overview and Scrutiny Task & Finish Group Report, Guildford Borough Council, 17 September 2015

[3] Minute CO56, Council meeting, Guildford Borough Council 7 October 2015

the Recommendation below.

This report will also be considered by the Borough EAB and by OSC, at their respective meetings on 10 and 11 July. Their comments and recommendations, together with this EAB's will be summarised in the report to be submitted to full Council on 25 July 2017.

Recommendation:

(1) That the public webcasting of meetings of the Executive Advisory Boards be discontinued with immediate effect.

(2) That an annual/bi-annual meeting between the Leadership and the EAB and O&S Committee chairmen and vice-chairmen be established to discuss topic areas for future work programmes and to discuss how the EABs and O&S Committee could make a more effective contribution to the decision-making process.

(3) That, in order to improve the arrangements for topic selection and agenda planning, the Executive/CMT be requested to provide suggestions for topic areas for EABs drawn from the (revised) Corporate Plan Action Plan for consideration at future work programme meetings and to have a CMT (as well as Executive) representative attend those meetings.

(4) That the approach to development of the O&S Committee work programme be broadened, by amending O&S Procedure Rules to introduce a more flexible approach to topic selection through replacing the topic selection flow chart in O&S Procedure Rules with the PAPER tool.

(5) That O&S Committee members should have an opportunity for putting written questions to lead councillors attending O&S Committee meetings in advance so that written answers may be prepared.

(6) That lead councillors should normally present matters (supported by officers as appropriate) for discussion at EAB meetings and engage actively in a dialogue with the EABs regarding those matters, and that the terms of reference of the EABs be amended accordingly.

(7) That EABs be encouraged to set up task groups to research and review areas for policy development.

(8) That the focus for public engagement should be aimed more at O&S than EABs.

(9) That more proactive measures for public engagement in respect of the work of the O&S Committee be established by:

(a) inviting suggestions for the O&S work programme from the public and partners as well as officers and councillors; and

(b) alerting the public about O&S agenda topics on days leading up to the meeting, on the day of the meeting and action agreed at the meeting through press releases/social media.

(10) That progress on matters previously considered by EABs be reported back to them periodically.

(11) That a briefing note be provided to those officers invited to attend O&S Committee meetings to ensure there is full comprehension of the process, including the role of scrutiny and the Scrutiny Officer.

Reason for Recommendation:
To ensure that the Council's decision-making processes remain accessible, robust and accountable to local people.

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 Following consideration of the recommendations of a Joint Scrutiny Committee report on 7 October 2015, the Council agreed a number of recommendations aimed to improve the decision-making process. Essentially, this included the dissolution of the two existing scrutiny committees in favour of a single OSC with revised terms of reference, and the establishment of two new EABs. The remit of the EABs was to provide early stage involvement in the formulation and development of policies and projects that will help deliver the Corporate Plan priorities.

1.2 The Council also agreed to recruit a dedicated officer to support the new OSC, with the Officer starting in post in April 2016.

1.3 Council resolved that there should be a review of these arrangements after twelve months to determine how successful the changes had been and to identify any weaknesses or areas for improvement. To this end, on 7 March 2017 a facilitated seminar was held to which all councillors were invited to reflect and comment on the revised governance arrangements after 12 months' operation.

2. Strategic Priorities

2.1 The Council's choice of governance arrangements is fundamental to delivery of strategic priorities and the Corporate Plan. The decision-making structure of the Council should provide a framework of transparent accountability to service-users, stakeholders, and the wider community.

3. Background

3.1 A seminar to which all councillors were invited to attend was held on 7 March 2017. John Cade, from the Institute of Local Government Studies (INLOGOV), University of Birmingham, facilitated the session.

3.2 The agenda for the session and the discussion points populated with councillors' comments at the break-out discussion groups are set out verbatim in **Appendix 1**.

3.3 Within these comments on the discussion points, there are some recurring themes, but also a number of conflicting views. Therefore, it was considered beneficial for these matters to be discussed further by the Corporate Governance and Standards Committee at its meeting on 15 June and by the EABs and the OSC at their July meetings so that their thoughts and ideas can be distilled and clarified into clear recommendations to Council.

3.4 A summary of the key points discussed at the seminar, together with options for consideration, including the Lead Councillor's suggestions, are set out below.

Discussion Point 1:
The constitution of the EABs and OSC in terms of size, terms of reference, chairmen and vice-chairmen, frequency of meetings, etc.

3.5 Generally, there was satisfaction with the constitutional framework for the revised governance arrangements, particularly in respect of the EABs. It was acknowledged that the outcomes of the governance review had opened up opportunities for more councillors to be involved in the decision-making process.

3.6 It was suggested that councillor discussions at EAB meetings may be more expansive if those meetings were not webcast. The EABs' principal remit is to discuss and contribute to early-stage policy development and it was suggested that such discussions could give the public an impression that topics were either certain to proceed or were imminent. Access to information regulations mean the Council cannot restrict public access to meetings unless the subject matter contains confidential or exempt information. It is not a legal requirement for the Council to webcast meetings. However, in the protocol for the operation of the EABs in Part 3 of the Council's Constitution, it is stated that "EABs will enable greater involvement and engagement of councillors *and the public* in significant Executive decisions". This may require amendment if the Council agrees to no longer webcast EAB meetings (see also Discussion Point 4 below).

3.7 For the reasons stated above, the Corporate Governance and Standards Committee, at its meeting on 15 June 2017, supported the proposal to discontinue webcasting EAB meetings.

3.8 Presently, the EABs receive an update report at every meeting on matters previously considered. The Forward Plan is emailed to all members. The relevant lead councillor for the agenda item is invited to attend the EAB meeting. With regard to improvements, it was suggested a communication channel between the Executive and the EABs and OSC would be useful.

3.9 It was also suggested that the EAB agendas contain too many 'information' or 'background' items. The agenda planning of EABs is covered under Discussion Point 2 below.

3.10 Another suggestion was that there should be no duplication of membership of an EAB and OSC in order to maximise involvement of non-Executive councillors in the decision-making process.

Options:

1. To consider not webcasting the EAB meetings.
2. To establish an annual or bi-annual meeting between the Leadership and the EAB and OSC Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen to discuss topic areas for future work programmes
3. To request political group leaders to avoid duplication when nominating councillors for appointment to EABs and OSC.

Discussion Point 2:
Topic selection and agenda planning arrangements

3.11 Although the selection of topics to date had been well received, there was a strong message that there should be greater advance planning of work programmes. The agenda for the Executive and the EABs should be better aligned with the Forward Plan and the Corporate Plan. It should be noted that constitutionally, the EABs are thematically aligned to the Corporate Plan.

3.12 Over the next few months, the Council's new Managing Director and the Executive will be reviewing the Corporate Plan, particularly the various policies and projects included in the Action Plan attached to it. As part of this process, the Lead Councillor would like to establish a mechanism by which both the Executive and the Corporate Management Team (CMT) can discuss and suggest topic areas, which would benefit from early stage consideration by the EABs for referral to the Work Programme Meetings.

3.13 There were comments, particularly with regard to scrutiny, that the public could be more engaged with the process of agenda setting and that the Council might undertake publicity via the website and social media to achieve this. Please see discussion point 4 below for options relating to this matter.

3.14 The Lead Councillor suggests that EABs may wish to consider only one topic on the agenda for each meeting, so that the topic may be considered in sufficient depth. At the Corporate Governance and Standards Committee on 15 June 2017, it was felt that the number of topics on EAB agendas should be left to the discretion of the respective chairmen and vice-chairmen to determine at the Work Programme meetings.

3.15 It was also suggested that consideration be given to adopting the PAPER prioritisation tool that councillors were introduced to as part of advice and training sessions on overview and scrutiny from John Cade. The acronym PAPER highlights the following considerations for prioritising issues in the OSC work programme:

Public interest: concerns of local people should influence the issues chosen
Ability to change: priority should be given to issues that the OSC 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

Options:

1. To improve the arrangements for topic selection and agenda planning, the Executive/CMT to provide suggestions for topic areas for EABs drawn from the (revised) Corporate Plan Action Plan for consideration at future work programme meetings and to have a CMT (as well as Executive) representative attend those meetings.

2. The Lead Councillor suggests that EABs may wish to consider only one topic on the agenda for each meeting, so that the topic may be considered in sufficient depth.
3. To broaden the approach to development of the OSC work programme, for example, by amending O&S Procedure Rules to introduce a more flexible approach to topic selection through replacing the topic selection flow chart in O&S Procedure Rules with the PAPER tool.

Discussion Point 3:
Involvement of the Leader/Executive in EABs and OSC

3.16 The comments arising from the seminar under this discussion point between what has worked well and what has not are somewhat conflicting and are most likely due to different individual member experiences. Overall, it is crucial for the lead councillors to attend for their portfolio items with regard to the EABs and OSC.

3.17 It was felt that the Lead Councillor sessions at OSC had worked well, but some councillors argued that OSC needs to be more challenging in holding the lead councillors to account and exploring other areas of their portfolio responsibilities. It was suggested that there should be an opportunity for questions to be put to the lead councillors in advance so that written answers may be prepared.

3.18 Some councillors felt that the lead councillors should attend EAB meetings merely to listen to the discussions, rather than actively participating, whilst others were of the view that it should be the lead councillors, rather than officers, who present items to EABs and engage in a dialogue with the EAB. The Lead Councillor recommends strongly that the lead councillor role at EABs should be more proactive in this way.

3.19 There was a repeat request for feedback from the Executive to the EABs and a request for an annual meeting with the EAB chairmen and vice-chairmen and Executive to plan forthcoming topics.

Options:
1. To consider whether OSC members should have an opportunity for putting written questions to lead councillors attending OSC meetings in advance so that written answers may be prepared.
2. To agree that lead councillors should present all matters for discussion at EAB meetings and engage actively in a dialogue with the EABs (This would require an amendment to the terms of reference of the EABs).
3. As suggested above, an annual or bi-annual meeting with the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the EABs, the OSC and the Leadership could be convened to review the work programmes and to discuss how the EABs and OSC could make a more effective contribution to the decision-making process.

Discussion Point 4:
Extent to which EAB/OSC have engaged councillors/public

3.20 In terms of councillor engagement, it was felt that there had been an improvement under the revised governance arrangements. It was suggested that EABs could make greater use of task groups to look at specific issues in greater depth.

3.21 However, there was general dissatisfaction with the levels of public engagement both with Scrutiny and from the EABs. However, it was accepted that the public will only get involved if there is a specific item that takes their interest. Requests for greater press engagement and social media activity were made, but also with the acceptance that the new arrangements need more time to become established.

3.22 If it is accepted that we should no longer webcast EAB meetings in order to encourage more expansive discussions, it will clearly be more difficult for EABs to engage with the public. It could be argued that public engagement is a great deal more important for the OSC than for EABs. As mentioned above, it was felt that the public could be more engaged with the process of agenda setting for OSC, with an opportunity for suggesting topic areas for OSC to consider. It was also suggested that the Council might undertake publicity via the website and social media to achieve this. There was also support for greater use of social media and press releases in relation to business at OSC meetings.

3.23 The Corporate Governance and Standards Committee, at its meeting on 15 June 2017, welcomed greater public engagement in suggesting topic areas for OSC, but recognised that ultimately the OSC would determine the merits of any such suggestions.

3.24 It should be noted that as part of the governance review, work was undertaken to the website to create a more intuitive experience for members of the public seeking to understand the role of committees and how decisions are made as follows:

(a) Have a 'Your Council' section under Council on our website with the link visible from the home page as a top link under the Council box
(b) Your Council page will explain / give an overview of how the Council works/operates and how it is structured,
(c) As part of the above, explain decision making – the process of how decisions are made and scrutinised – and add a link through to the 'recent decisions' area of moderngov
(d) List the various committees and link them through to the relevant committee pages on modern.gov
(e) List the current groups (working, review etc) that there are and which Councillors are involved in which groups
(f) Brief overview of and link through to the Council's Constitution on modern.gov
(g) Outline of our priorities / plans for the future – link through to http://www.guildford.gov.uk/corporateplan page
(h) Move 'Have your say' section into 'Your Council' box and link to this area from the 'Your Council' page (brief sentence or two letting people know they can have a say etc…then link)
(i) Tidy up 'Have your say' area so that the various subpages (Consulting You, Informing You) are more clearly linked to – keep the Citizens Panel link prominent
(j) Move link to 'Council - minutes, agendas and reports' into 'Your Council' box and link to clearly from within the 'Your Council' page too
(k) Make the link to the 'Public participation' page (http://www.guildford.gov.uk/publicparticipation) more prominent, explaining

how the public can participate at meetings – speaking, expressing views, asking questions etc.

(l) Move link to 'Your Councillors' (re-direct to modern.gov section) into 'Your Council' box and link to clearly from within the 'Your Council' page too

(m) Tie this section in with relevant parts of the 'Policies and procedures' section of the website (Executive Arrangements, Corporate Management Team, Corporate Plan, Policies) – cross-link from 'Your Council' page

Options:

1. To encourage EABs to set up task groups to research and review areas for policy development.
2. To agree that the focus for public engagement should be aimed more at OSC than EABs.
3. To establish more proactive measures for public engagement in respect of the work of OSC by, for example:
   (a) inviting suggestions for the OSC work programme from the public and partners as well as officers and councillors; and
   (b) alerting the public about OSC agenda topics on days leading up to the meeting, on the day of the meeting and action agreed at the meeting through press releases/social media.

Discussion Point 5:
Extent to which EABs/OSC have made a difference in terms of outcomes

3.25 Some examples of good work and successful process were noted; however, once again there were conflicting comments from individuals from which it can be hard to draw a consensus. It would appear the role of the EABs and their relationship with the Executive could be closer and more constructive.

Options:

1. See option referred to in paragraphs 3.9 and 3.17 above
2. To report back to EABs on progress on matters previously considered.

Discussion Point 6:
Evaluation of the officer support for the EABs and OSC

3.26 Individual cases of officers responding to individual members may have fallen short on occasion, but overall, there appears to be high satisfaction with the levels of officer support.

3.27 The role of scrutiny was particularly highlighted as not fully understood by officers.

Options:

1. With regard to officer understanding of the role of scrutiny and the Scrutiny Officer, a briefing note could be provided to those officers invited to attend OSC meetings to ensure there is full comprehension of the process.
2. The role of scrutiny could be included in the induction process for new officers.

4. Consultations

4.1 The seminar itself was consultative with all councillors who were able to attend. Councillors who were unable to attend the seminar were contacted and offered the opportunity of submitting comments. The recommendations from the Corporate Governance and Standards Committee are set out in the recommendation in this report. The report will also be considered by the Borough EAB on 10 July and the OSC at its meeting on 11 July. Thereafter, the various recommendations will be summarised in a separate report to the Council meeting on 25 July 2017 for final determination.

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

5.1 There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 Withdrawal from webcasting EABs would result in a small cost saving in staff evening attendance allowance, otherwise there are no financial implications arising at this stage. All proposals could be implemented from within existing budgets.

7. Legal Implications

7.1 An advantage of informal governance arrangements change, compared with a decision for a complete change in governance structure (that is to say, from the current Leader and Executive model to a committee system or directly elected mayor) is that the Council retains the flexibility to continually adapt and improve the model in the light of experience.

8. Human Resource Implications

8.1 There could be officer resource implications should the work of the EABs develop to include greater use of task and finish groups.

9. Summary of Options

9.1 This report attempts to collate a wide range of comments arising from the councillor seminar held on 7 March 2017. In some cases, those responses were conflicting and it has been necessary to undertake further discussions on these matters at meetings of the Corporate Governance and Standards Committee, the EABs and OSC in order to distil the options to be taken forward as recommendations for improvements to existing processes.

10. Conclusion

10.1 It was generally agreed that the new arrangements are very new and beginning to embed; however, there were some common threads running through the comments about how the governance arrangements could be reviewed/improved as follows:

- Webcasting arrangements for EABs
- Communications between the Executive and the EABs/OSC

- EAB work programming
- Development of the function of the EABs
- Officer awareness of the role of the EABs and OSC
- Publicity for the work of the OSC

11. Background Papers

Review of Governance Arrangements Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Group Report, Guildford Borough Council, 17 September 2015

12. Appendices

Appendix 1: Programme for seminar for all councillors held on 7 March 2017, discussion points and verbatim councillor comments.

Appendix 1

GUILDFORD BOROUGH

SEMINAR FOR ALL COUNCILLORS ON THE 12-MONTH REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S REVISED GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

TUESDAY 7 MARCH 2017

PROGRAMME FOR THE EVENING

7:00pm Welcome and introduction by the Deputy Leader and Lead Councillor for Infrastructure and Governance, Councillor Matt Furniss.

7:10pm Our facilitator, John Cade, Institute of Local Government Studies (INLOGOV), University of Birmingham will explain the format for the evening and to facilitate the group and plenary discussions below.

Group session

7:20-8:15pm Group break-out session to identify:

a) What councillors feel has worked well over the first 12 months of the revised arrangements
b) What has not worked well over the past 12 months, and why
c) What we can do to improve the arrangements

In respect of each of the following discussion points:

- The constitution of the EABs and OSC in terms of size, terms of reference, chairmen and vice-chairmen, frequency of meetings, etc.
- Topic selection and agenda planning arrangements
- Involvement of the Leader/Executive in EABs and OSC
- Extent to which EAB/OSC have engaged councillors/public
- Extent to which EABs/OSC have made a difference in terms of outcomes
- Evaluation of the officer support for the EABs and OSC
- Any other matter (not considered above)

8:15-8:25pm Break

Plenary Session

8:25-9:05pm Each group to provide feedback from their discussions including conclusions, suggestions and recommendations in respect of each of the discussion points above.

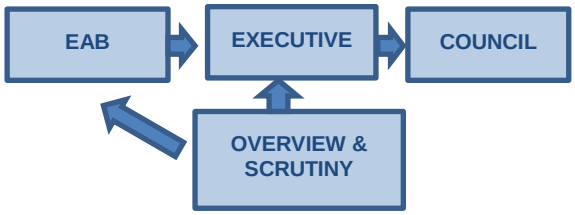
9.05-9.10pm Close of seminar

Discussion Point 1: **The constitution of the EABs and OSC in terms of size, terms of reference, chairmen and vice-chairmen, frequency of meetings, etc.**	
What has worked well over the first 12 months of the revised arrangements?	• Positive feedback • Size good • Anyone can attend • Starting with a blank sheet • More potential for Members to be involved who otherwise wouldn't be • Some evidence that discussions from EAB leads to clear decisions • Opportunity
What has not worked well over the past 12 months, and why?	• Webcasting restricts participation
What we can do to improve the arrangements?	• No duplication of membership • Maybe some formal feedback from Leadership to EABs • Agenda and context/background (contrary to the way EABs set up) • Scope of OSC – important to look at all reports and engage with all Councillors is what was envisaged.

Discussion Point 2: **Topic selection and agenda planning arrangements**	
What has worked well over the first 12 months of the revised arrangements?	• Good selection of topics so far • Timings and completion of agendas always good
What has not worked well over the past 12 months, and why?	• Retrospective • Needs to monitor the Forward Plan • Communication of Forward Plan • Scrutiny struggle to get topics, either from Councillors, Officers, Public • Not enough time on the agendas • Communication of significant issues – what goes to Scrutiny – review

What we can do to improve the arrangements?	• Publicity – to encourage the public to suggest topics for review/scrutiny • Communication to the public about the use of webcast and social media – needs to improve • Engagement with the public on key issues • Structure of meetings – themes • Improvement eg corporate plan monitoring • Point of EAB to advise Executive – earlier in the process • Review Forward Programme • Review Scrutiny topic selection process (use PAPER tool) • Longer term planning of EABs with Executive • Major decisions should be routinely scrutinised by OSC

Discussion Point 3: **Involvement of the Leader/Executive in EABs and OSC**	
What has worked well over the first 12 months of the revised arrangements?	• Involvement of Executive • Members at pre-meeting helpful • Ditto meeting itself • Presence of officers crucial • Lead member to Scrutiny • More input now – not just rubber-stamping • Majority of occasions listened to (EAB) • EABs good for early discussion • Air Quality Working Group recommendations taken on board by Executive
What has not worked well over the past 12 months, and why?	• Webcasting • Physical layouts for discussion not good (seating) • Lead Member for the portfolio item unable to be involved in EAB

	discussions • Councillor appearance at EABs • Lead member should come to listen • Need to be more open • Too stylised • Change the process • Reluctance on part of some members of Executive to appear before OSC • Lost committee involvement • Need for EABs to have influence on topics going to Executive
What we can do to improve the arrangements?	• Topical selection/flexibility • Opportunity for lead members to prepare answers • Regular feedback to both EAB and OSC from Leader / Executive • Press releases to say what is coming up on Scrutiny Committee and press release to show what happened • Sit down with members of Executive once a year to identify key EAB topics 

Discussion Point 4: **Extent to which EAB/OSC have engaged councillors/public**	
What has worked well over the first 12 months of the revised arrangements?	• Much better engagement of councillors with EABs • Overview and Scrutiny matured well • OSC Committee is better • Engaging public on special projects • Good involvement of Councillors – much improved • Air Quality OSC engaged Councillors and public very well • Policing Task and Finish Group – good

	involvement with partners, views robustly challenged • Working Groups worked well
What has not worked well over the past 12 months, and why?	• Not been able to reach the public – democracy and engagement with public • TAG example shows the difficulty in getting people involved • Difficulty in getting public interest unless it is something specific to them • Public not involved or interested • Scrutiny not very engaged with public • Still too early to gauge whether influence decisions • Public should come to council to OSC meetings to question decisions made – format of meetings does not allow public to attend – not engaged with process • EABs doesn't have a clear procedure for setting up working groups • EABs need to engage with partners externally
What we can do to improve the arrangements?	• Training of role of chair and councillors • Remote training • The mix of meetings to make decisions • Press Release • Web presence • Parishes • Social media • Needs more time to embed • Wider publicity and public involvement • More working groups

Discussion Point 5: **Extent to which EABs/OSC have made a difference in terms of outcomes**	
What has worked well over the first 12 months of the revised arrangements?	• Smart cities report – good outcome – on radar early • Procurement report helpful • £ cost of infant burials • Air Quality report – made us do things • Worked well – not a hostile environment • Too short a time to decide (EAB) • EABs' exploratory aspect works better than OSC • EABs have interesting discussions • EAB Local Plan recommendations to Executive was a positive outcome • Air Quality OSC report worked well • EABs very helpful and useful forum for Executive members
What has not worked well over the past 12 months, and why?	• How do members know whether the EABs/OSC have made a difference? • Difficult to establish impacts as lead-in times are lengthy • Early days – difficult to gauge impact • Not substantial items • Need a bit more embedding • Financial bids – not considered as a whole • Learning curve • EABs and OSC do not meet or address the remit under which they were created • Scrutiny doesn't hold Executive to account or call-in decisions. A failure legally. • People do not have confidence that issues will be called-in • EABs don't have much of an influence • EABs need to have a role in making policy – Executive • EABs are talking shops

What we can do to improve the arrangements?	• Wider circulation of work programmes across EABs and OSC • CMT involvement to suggest items for review and follow-ups • Timeliness • Significant decisions at the earliest stage • Progress reports to EABs • Clearer terms of reference for Scrutiny groups • More feedback and involvement • Working groups from EABs • Milestones involve members of EABs • EABs subject matter tracking of progress can be difficult eg Residential Design Guide • Members need to ask questions, particularly the delivery – do we ask the right questions • Officers and Executive need to respond effectively • Do we want to go forward with this structure • Should we look for a different model • Only been in for one year therefore needs revising. Wants a closer relationship with the Executive • Role of EAB as a constructive partner of the Executive

<u>Discussion Point 6:</u> **Evaluation of the officer support for the EABs and OSC**	
What has worked well over the first 12 months of the revised arrangements?	• Valuable support from officers at EABs • Dedicated Scrutiny Officer great • OSC happy and feel productive to have a dedicated resource • Officers have supported EABs and OSC fully (authors and advisers always in attendance). • EABs constructive ideas, good

	apolitical • Works together well • People trying to improve • Good officer support to EABs • On Forward Plan – so already decided • Councillors more engages – lots of topics • James went above and beyond his job in relation to policing the Task and Finish group. • Happy with officer support for EABs
What has not worked well over the past 12 months, and why?	• Training for councillors on role of officers • Officer not having the answer at the time – follow-up. Have all Councillor queries been answered on follow-up? (Committee Officers to facilitate this) • Sometimes late presentations – do not have time to review • Formal papers – formal process • Webcast? • Not clear all officers understood the role of the Scrutiny Officer as they take a leading role in investigation
What we can do to improve the arrangements?	• Induction for staff on role of officers (more frequent) • ALL Councillors to be made aware of any questions asked by ONE Councillor • Maybe the Chair/Vice-Chair to initiate swift follow-up to Councillor questions. • More flexible – less formal • Training need perhaps for officers