

PLACE, ECONOMIC GROWTH AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY BOARD Agenda

Date Thursday 15th June 2023

Time 6.00 pm

Venue Crompton Suite, Civic Centre, West Street, Oldham, OL1 1NL

Notes 1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST- If a Member requires advice on any item involving a possible declaration of interest which could affect his/her ability to speak and/or vote he/she is advised to contact Paul Entwistle or Constitutional Services at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting.

2. CONTACT details for this meeting are available from the Constitutional Services team – telephone 01617705151, or email, constitutional.services@oldham.gov.uk

3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS - Any Member of the public wishing to ask a question at the above meeting can do so only if a written copy of the question is submitted to the contact officer by 12.00 noon on Tuesday, 13th June 2023.

4. FILMING - The Council, members of the public and the press may record / film / photograph or broadcast this meeting when the public and the press are not lawfully excluded. Any member of the public who attends a meeting and objects to being filmed should advise the Constitutional Services Officer who will instruct that they are not included in the filming.

Please note that anyone using recording equipment both audio and visual will not be permitted to leave the equipment in the room where a private meeting is held.

Recording and reporting the Council's meetings is subject to the law including the law of defamation, the Human Rights Act, the Data Protection Act and the law on public order offences.

Please also note the Public attendance Protocol on the Council's Website

https://www.oldham.gov.uk/homepage/1449/attending_council_meetings

MEMBERSHIP OF THE PLACE, ECONOMIC GROWTH AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY BOARD

Councillors Ghafoor, Hince, Hindle, Ibrahim, Iqbal, McLaren (Chair), Moores and Williamson

Item No

- 1 Apologies For Absence
- 2 Declarations of Interest
To Receive Declarations of Interest in any Contract or matter to be discussed at the meeting.
- 3 Urgent Business
Urgent business, if any, introduced by the Chair
- 4 Public Question Time
To receive Questions from the Public, in accordance with the Council's Constitution.
- 5 Terms of Reference (Pages 1 - 6)
- 6 Proposed Audit Committee Work Programme for 2023-24 (Pages 7 - 14)
To consider the Proposed Audit Committee Work Programme for 2023/24 in terms of some of the issues that are included within the programme.
- 7 Work Book on Scrutiny (Pages 15 - 46)
To note and discuss the Work Book on Scrutiny produced by the Local Government Association as a guide for elected Members.
- 8 Place and Economic Growth
Presentation by the Executive Director for Place and Economic Growth
- 9 Work Programme
To be circulated
- 10 Key Decision Document (Pages 47 - 68)

Review of Scrutiny in Oldham

"To ensure scrutiny has a clear role and focus within the organisation, that Oldham has an influential scrutiny function which is held in high regard by its many stakeholders and which achieves measurable service improvements and adds value for the people of Oldham through a member led process of examination and review"

To achieve this Scrutiny will follow the nationally agreed 'Four Principles of Good Scrutiny';

1. Provide 'critical friend' challenge to decision makers, through holding them to account for decisions made, engaging in policy review and policy development;
2. Promote Scrutiny as a means by which the voice and concerns of the public can be heard;
3. Ensure Scrutiny is carried out by 'independent minded' Board members;
4. Improve public services by ensuring reviews of policy and service performance are focused.

To achieve this we will ensure:

- Parity of esteem, the scrutiny function of the council has the same importance in the governance system as executive decision-making activities.
- The offer of senior officer support and providing senior officer leads
- We are Listening to local people and making sure their views are heard by decision makers
- Looking at decisions, policies or issues that affect local people
- Authentic cross-party working
- Working and co-operating with Statutory and non-Statutory partners
- Conclusions and recommendations that are evidence based
- Engagement and training of elected members

To Align with the Council's Priorities the following Scrutiny Boards are to be introduced:

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Board will look at the how the Council fulfils its strategic priority of A great start and skills for life:

This strategic outcome aims to:

- increasing the number of quality school and college places for Oldham's young people,
- expanding youth activities outside of school,
- improving post-16 education and training, so everyone has options to help them increase their skills and knowledge.

Areas covered by the Children and Young People Scrutiny Board in scrutinising how the Council meets this strategic outcome could include:

- Educational achievement
- School performance

- Healthy lifestyles
- Youth service
- Looked after children
- Early Help
- Children’s Social Care
- Child Protection
- School Attendance and Exclusions
- School leavers’ progression to further education and training
- Healthy schools
- Take-up of sporting and cultural opportunities
- Increased involvement of young people in developing services
- Education, employment and training for care leavers
- Children’s Centres
- Young people’s fear of crime
- Youth Offending
- Freedom from poverty
- Youth Justice Plan;
- Children’s and Young People Strategic Plan;
- HE provision including Oldham College and UCO

The Board will also include Co-opted Members Voting and representation from THE Youth Council.

Co-opted Members (Voting):

- Roman Catholic representative
- Church of England representative
- Parent Governor representative (Primary)
- Parent Governor representative (Special)
- Parent Governor representative (Secondary)

Co-opted Members non voting

- Teacher representatives
- Early Years Development and Childcare representative
- Youth Work representative

Board	Council Functions	Officer oversight Exec Functions
Children Young People and Families Board 5 meetings per Municipal Year	Managing Director of Children Young People	Managing Director of Children Young People Director of Education, Skills & Early Years Director of Children’s Social Care Director of Economy

The Adults Social Care and Health Scrutiny Board will look at the how the Council fulfils its strategic priority of Healthy, safe and well supported residents Looking after our most vulnerable residents, keeping people safe and healthy are crucial responsibilities of any local authority focusing on services for adults and public health services to monitor progress towards improving health, lifestyles and quality of care across the Borough; and providing oversight of integration and partnership working within and between the council and health bodies. The Board will also oversee the

active lifestyle related functions and activity across the Borough. The Board will review and scrutinise the commissioning and delivery of local health and social care services in Oldham to ensure reduced health inequalities, access to services and the best outcomes for local people.

The Board will discharge its statutory duties to:

- the review and scrutiny of any matter relating to the planning, provision and operation of the health service in the Council’s area;
- the making of reports and recommendations to relevant NHS bodies and health service providers;
- responding to proposals and consultations from NHS bodies in respect of substantial variations in service provision and any other major consultation exercises;
- referral of comments and recommendations on proposals referred to the Committee by a relevant NHS body or relevant service provider to the Secretary of State if considered necessary; and
- all matters relating to Healthwatch.

Areas covered by the Adults Social Care and Health Scrutiny Board in scrutinising how the Council meets this strategic outcome could include:

- Adult Social Care
- Adult Safeguarding
- Public Health
- Integrated Care
- All Health related matters including Children’s Health
- Scrutiny of NHS and NHS providers including NCA
- S.75 arrangements
- GP services
- Health and Wellbeing Board, including the development, implementation, review and monitoring of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- Adult and Health Services Budget Outturn
- Review of provision of Health Services
- Leisure Offer
- Place Based Working
- arrangements made by the authority for public health, health promotion, health improvement and for addressing health inequalities

Board	External	Council Functions	Officer Oversight Exec Functions
Adults Social Care and Health Board	Relevant NHS bodies or health service providers including:-NHS England	None	Director of Adults Social Care (DASS) Director of Public Health

5 meetings per Municipal Year	Integrated Care Partnership Place Lead - Oldham NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care Locality Board Local NHS Trusts and other NHS service providers Healthwatch		Assistant Director Youth, Leisure and Communities
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The Place, Economic Growth and Environment Board will look at how the Council fulfils 3 strategic priorities and is also responsible for reviewing and scrutinising the exercise by risk management authorities of flood risk management functions which may affect the Borough of Oldham and to exercise the functions of a crime and disorder committee including the following:

- a) To review or scrutinise the exercise of crime and disorder functions by responsible authorities and
- b) To review or scrutinise any local crime or disorder matter raised by a Member.

Better jobs and dynamic businesses

The strategic outcomes are:

Providing the infrastructure to make Oldham a great place to spend time, and somewhere to open and grow a successful business.

Investments in the next three years include

- the redevelopment of Spindles, a new performance space and a town centre park,
- support for residents to help them into good jobs through Get Oldham Working,
- increasing the amount the council spends with local companies, to maximise the impact of the Oldham pound.

Quality homes for everyone

The strategic outcomes are:

To work with developers and housing associations to deliver the affordable homes that our residents need, and support renters to defend their rights. Over the next three years we will

- increase the number of high-quality homes that are affordable and meet residents' needs,
- support tenants to fight back against rogue landlords,
- enable improvement to home insulation to help protect residents from rising energy prices.

A clean and green future

The strategic outcomes are:

Responding to the climate emergency and keep Oldham clean and tidy.

- support the borough’s growing green industry, as part of making the borough carbon neutral by 2030,
- improve our green spaces, including Northern Roots,
 - continue our Don’t Trash Oldham campaign, so our residents have neighbourhoods to be proud

Areas covered by the Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board in scrutinising how the Council meets this strategic outcome could include:

- Spindles Development
- Planning
- Housing
- Housing Strategy
- Don’t Trash Oldham Campaign
- Northern Roots
- New Performance Space
- Get Oldham Working
- Town Centre Park
- Local procurement and value for money
- Social
- Solar Farm
- Green energy
- Climate Emergency
- Community Safety
- Crime and Disorder
- Licensing and Gambling Policies (respective 2003 and 2005 Acts);
- Plans and Strategies which together comprise the Local Plan – Core Strategy;
- Community Safety and Cohesion Partnership Strategy;

Board	External	Council Functions	Officer Oversight Exec Functions
Place, Economic Growth and Environment Board 5 meetings per Municipal Year	Risk management authorities (defined by S6 Flood and Water Management Act 2010) Responsible authorities (defined by S5 Crime and Disorder Act 1998)	Executive Director of Place and Economic Growth Head of Planning	Chief Executive Executive Director Place and Economic Growth Director of Environment Director of Economy

The Governance, Strategy and Resources Board role includes the scrutiny of key policy items, the annual budget proposals, proposals with significant service and or budgetary implications, risk and performance. The Board will also scrutinise particular proposals being developed at the Greater Manchester level and by the Council's strategic partners, considering the implications for the Borough and for the Council.

The Board will also monitor and hold to account the performance of service delivery within Oldham Council and of strategic partners etc with particular reference to the Corporate Plan and all other strategic plans and monitor organisational risk.

Areas covered by the Governance, Strategy and Resources Board in scrutinising how the Council meets the required outcomes could include:

- Oldham Plan (sustainable community strategy);
- The Council's Corporate Plan;
- Fair Employment Charter;
- Integrated Commissioning Framework; and
- Pay Policy Statement.
- Performance monitoring including performance reports
- Risk reports – Governance
- Annual Budget Setting
- To scrutinise the financial performance of the Council against the approved budget and efficiency savings identified
- To scrutinise issues identified as requiring improvement by external assessors (with the exception of social care matters) ensuring that there is appropriate statutory representation of co-opted members in respect of education matters.
- In reviewing the performance of Council and other services, to scrutinise plans for improvement where performance is weak and to maintain oversight until performance improves.
- The Scrutiny Board (Governance, Strategy and Resources) is the allocated residual responsibility for any function not otherwise allocated to a Scrutiny Board.

Board	External	Council Functions	Officer Oversight Exec Functions
The Governance, Strategy and Resources Board 5 meetings per Municipal Year		Chief Executive S.151 Officer Monitoring Officer	Chief Executive Deputy Chief Executive Assistant Chief Executive Director of Finance (s.151 Officer) Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)



Report to Audit Committee

Proposed Audit Committee Work Programme for 2023/24

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Abdul Jabbar MBE, Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Resources

Officer Contact: Anne Ryans, Director of Finance

Report Author: Mark Stenson, Assistant Director of Corporate Governance and Strategic Financial Management.

8 June 2023

Purpose of Report

To present to the Audit Committee, a proposed work programme for 2023/24.

Executive Summary

Appendix 1 sets out a proposed work programme for the Audit Committee for 2023/24. Members are therefore asked to consider the content of the Appendix and advise of any amendments or revisions.

Recommendation

That Members of the Audit Committee consider the attached Appendix setting out the proposed work programme for 2023/24 and comment as required.

Updated Audit Committee Work Programme for the 2023/24 Municipal Year

Appendix 1

Meeting Date & Venue	Agenda Item	Summary of Report Issue
Thursday 8 June 2023 at 6.00 pm	Audit Committee Chair – Charged with Governance, Management Processes and Arrangements.	The draft response of the Audit Committee Chair to provide key assurances to support the Audit Process which are then discussed by the Committee.
	Director of Finance – Charged with Governance, Management Processes and Arrangements.	The draft response of the Director of Finance to provide key assurances to support the Audit Process which are then discussed by the Committee.
	Update on Key Developments within the remit of the Committee.	This report provides an update on matters pertinent to this Committee including an update on the final accounts, developments linked into the future oversight of local audit and planned training for the Committee.
	Local Code of Corporate Governance	This is an update to the previously agreed Local Code of Corporate Governance.
	Internal Audit and Counter Fraud Progress Report on 2022/23	An update report on the progress made by the Internal Audit Service.
	Proposed Audit Committee Work Programme for 2023/24	This report detailing the proposed work programme for 2023/24 including actions required to support the approval of the Statement of Final Accounts which are not yet closed.
	Private Report; Partnership Risk Dashboard	This is the regular report produced for the Committee to assess the ongoing risk to the Council from its key partnerships.
	Private Report, Senior Information Risk Owner Update	An update report by the Senior Information Risk Owner of key developments in Information Governance impacting on Oldham Council.

Updated Audit Committee Work Programme for the 2023/24 Municipal Year

Appendix 1

Meeting Date & Venue	Agenda Item	Summary of Report Issue
Tuesday 27 June 2023 at 6.00 pm	Update on External Audit Matters	An update if required, on national developments linked into the on-going developments and consultations on the provision of external audit to Local Government Bodies.
	2022/23 Annual Report to Audit Committee	This is the Annual Report of the Chief Internal Auditor on the overall Internal Control Environment of the Council for the financial year 2022/23.
	Draft 2022/23 Annual Statement of Accounts	This is the report to the Audit Committee on the draft Statement of Accounts which also details the outturn for the financial year 2022/23.
	Draft Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23	The detailed review of the Draft Annual Governance Statement by the Audit Committee in advance of the Statement of Final Accounts.
	Reserves Policy for 2022/23 to 2023/24	This is the annual update to the Reserves Policy considering the provisional out-turn for the financial year 2022/23.
	Treasury Management Review 2022/23	The annual review of Treasury Management for 2022/23 by the Audit Committee.
	Feedback on the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Review of the Internal Audit Service	This is the feedback to the Committee of the review undertaken of the Internal Audit Service and whether its working practices comply with International Auditing Standards.
	Private Report; Update on the Corporate Risk Register	A report on the Corporate Risk Register as at 31 March 2023.
Thursday 20 July 2023, 6.00pm.	Update on External Audit Matters	An update if required, on national developments linked into the on-going developments and consultations on the provision of external audit to Local Government Bodies.

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Updated Audit Committee Work Programme for the 2023/24 Municipal Year

Appendix 1

Meeting Date & Venue	Agenda Item	Summary of Report Issue
	Update on 2020/21 and 2021/22 Annual Statement of Accounts	This is an update on the accounts for these two financial years which still require formal audit sign off.
	Internal Control Matters for Adult Social Care	This is the report to Committee on Internal Control Matters within the Adult Social Care Service.
	Compliance with the CIPFA Code of Financial Management	This report details the assessment within Oldham Council on how it complies with the CIPFA Code of Financial Management with appropriate recommendations for improvement.
	Update on Financial Administration in Local Authorities	A report detailing challenges experienced in the financial administration at other Local Authorities including Section 114 Notices issued as reported in the public domain.
	Proposed Audit Committee Work Programme for the Municipal Year 2023/24	A report detailing the proposed work programme for 2023/24 including actions required to support the approval of the Statement of Final Accounts which are not yet closed.
	Private Report; Update on the Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23 and new issues for 2023/24	This updates the Audit Committee on key matters included within the Annual Governance Statement and ad hoc matters the Assistant Director of Corporate Governance and Strategic Financial Management highlights to the Audit Committee.
Tuesday 5 September 2023, 6.00 pm	Update on External Audit Matters	An update produced by the External Auditor of issues to be brought to the attention of this Committee.
	2022/23 Statement of Final Accounts	This report provides an update on the 2022/23 draft Statement of Accounts and associated issues arising from the external audit.
	The CIPFA Audit Committee Guidance Documents	This report sets out the updated guidance issued by CIPFA in respect of the best practice to follow in operating an Audit Committee.

Updated Audit Committee Work Programme for the 2023/24 Municipal Year

Appendix 1

Meeting Date & Venue	Agenda Item	Summary of Report Issue
	Audit and Counter Fraud Progress Report including significant issues highlighted on internal control	This is the routine report on the progress made against the agreed audit and counter fraud plan detailing any control weaknesses identified.
	Proposed Audit Committee Work Programme for 2023/24	This report detailing the proposed work programme for 2023/24 including actions required to support the approval of the Statement of Final Accounts which are not yet closed.
	Private Report; Update on the Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23 and new issues for 2023/24	This updates the Audit Committee on key matters included within the Annual Governance Statement and ad hoc matters the Assistant Director of Corporate Governance and Strategic Financial Management highlights to the Audit Committee.
	Private Report; Update on the Corporate Risk Register	This sets out the position as of 30 June 2023 in relation to matters included on the Corporate Risk Register.
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 85</p> <p>Tuesday 31 October 2023, 6.00pm</p>	External Audit Progress Report	An update produced by the External Auditor of issues to be brought to the attention of this Committee.
	Treasury Management Mid-Year Review 2023/24	The planned scrutiny of the 2023/24 Treasury Management Mid-Year review before submission to Cabinet in November.
	Update on General Matters	This is an update on regulatory developments to inform the Audit Committee in support of its Governance role.
	The Financial Reporting Council (FRC) 2023 reports	This report updates the Committee on the transition of the FRC to the Auditing Reporting and Governance Authority. It also details the findings from the Quality Review of Local Authority and National Health Service audits undertaken across the public sector in the calendar year 2023.
	2023/24 Internal Audit and Counter Fraud Progress Report including significant issues highlighted on internal control	This is the routine report on the progress made against the agreed audit and counter fraud plan detailing any control weaknesses identified.

Updated Audit Committee Work Programme for the 2023/24 Municipal Year

Appendix 1

Meeting Date & Venue	Agenda Item	Summary of Report Issue
	Updated Audit Committee Work Programme for 2023/24	This report detailing the proposed work programme for 2023/24 including actions required to support the approval of the Statement of Final Accounts which are not yet closed.
	Private Report; Partnership Risk Dashboard	This is the regular report produced for the Committee to assess the on-going risk to the Council from its key partnerships.
	Private Report; Update on the Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23 and new issues for 2023/24	This updates the Audit Committee on key matters included within the Annual Governance Statement and ad hoc matters the Assistant Director of Corporate Governance and Strategic Financial Management highlights to the Audit Committee.
Page 88	Private Report; Update on the Corporate Risk Register	This sets out the position as of 30 September 2023 in relation to matters included on the Corporate Risk Register.
	Private Report; Senior Information Risk Owner update	This updates the Audit Committee on the key matters relating to data protection and information security breaches
Monday 15 January 2024, 6.00 pm	External Audit Progress Report	An update produced by the External Auditor of issues to be brought to the attention of the Committee.
	External Audit of Teachers' Pensions Agency Return 2022/23	This report considers the feedback following the external audit of the Teachers' Pension Agency return.
	Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2023/24	This report sets out the Proposed Treasury Management Strategy for 2023/24 to support the Corporate Objectives of the Council.
	Internal Control Matters; Payroll	This is the report to Committee on Internal Control Matters within the administration of payroll.
	Audit and Counter Fraud Progress Report including significant issues highlighted on internal control	This is the routine report on the progress made against the agreed Audit and Counter Fraud plan detailing any control weaknesses identified.

Updated Audit Committee Work Programme for the 2023/24 Municipal Year

Appendix 1

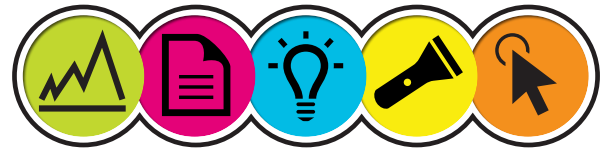
Meeting Date & Venue	Agenda Item	Summary of Report Issue
	Proposed Audit Committee Work Programme for the remainder of 2023/24 and the 2024/25 financial year	This report detailing the proposed work programme for 2023/24 including actions required to support the approval of the Statement of Final Accounts which are not yet closed.
	Private Report; Update on the Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23 and new issues	This updates the Audit Committee on key matters included within the Annual Governance Statement, the Corporate Risk Register and ad hoc matters the Assistant Director of Corporate Governance and Strategic Financial Management highlights to the Audit Committee.
	Private Report; Partnership Risk Dashboard	This is the regular update requested by the Committee on partnership governance considering potential issues identified on governance elsewhere.
	Private Report; Update on the Corporate Risk Register	This sets out the position as of 30 September 2023 in relation to matters included on the Corporate Risk Register.
Tuesday 6 March 2024, 6.00pm	2022/23 Annual Statement of Accounts - Update	Update on the progress of the audit of the 2022/23 accounts and related matters.
	2023/24 Final Accounts – Proposed Accounting Policies and Critical Judgements	In line with best practice, approval is sought for the significant accounting policies and critical judgements to be adopted in preparation for the completion of the 2023/24 Statement of Accounts.
	Housing Benefit Subsidy Audit 2022/23	This report considers the feedback on the external audit of the Housing Benefit Subsidy Grant claim.
	Internal Audit Charter 2024/25	An updated Internal Audit Charter for the financial year 2024/25.
	Update on General Matters	This is an update on regulatory developments to inform the Audit Committee in support of its Governance role.

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Updated Audit Committee Work Programme for the 2023/24 Municipal Year

Appendix 1

Meeting Date & Venue	Agenda Item	Summary of Report Issue
	Proposed Audit Committee Work Programme for the remainder of 2023/24 and the future 2024/25 financial year	This report detailing the proposed work programme for the remainder of 2023/24 including actions required to support the approval of the Statement of Final Accounts which are not yet closed and setting out the future plan of work for 2024/25.
	Private Report; 2024/25 Internal Audit and Counter Fraud Plan	The proposed plan of work for the financial year 2024/25 to enable review by the Committee.
	Private Report; Update on the Corporate Risk Register	An update on the Corporate Risk Register as of 31 December 2023.
Page 88	Private Report; Update on the Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23 and new issues	This updates the Audit Committee on key matters included within the Annual Governance Statement, the Corporate Risk Register and ad hoc matters the Assistant Director of Corporate Governance and Strategic Financial Management highlights to the Audit Committee.



A councillor's workbook on scrutiny



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This councillor workbook includes references to materials published by the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS). Further information can be found at www.lga.gov.uk and www.cfps.org.uk.

All documents published by the CfPS and referenced in this workbook can be found in full on the CfPS website www.cfps.org.uk.

Foreword

This workbook has been designed as a learning aid for elected councillors. It makes no judgement about whether you have been a councillor for some time, or whether you have been elected more recently. If you fall into the former category the workbook should serve as a useful reminder of some of the key skills, approaches and tactics that make for an effective ward councillor – it may even challenge you to reconsider how you have approached aspects of the role to date.

Those councillors who are new to local government will recognise that they have much to learn. The workbook will help you to get up to speed with key aspects of the ward councillor role that require focus and attention. In effect, it should provide you with some pointers on how to develop a style and approach that you are comfortable with, and that enables you to be most effective in your day to day duties.

The workbook can be used as a standalone learning aid or as an adjunct to other material you may cover. It offers few firm rules for councillors as it is recognised that each individual must decide how best to use and develop their influencing skills, based on individual preference and confidence. As such, the workbook should serve more as a direction marker rather than a road map.

In practical terms, the document will take between two to three hours to work through. You do not need to complete it all in one session and may prefer to work through the material at your own pace. The key requirement is to think about your own approach in influencing other people – how the material relates to your local situation, the people you serve and the council you represent.

In working through the material contained in this workbook you will encounter a number of features designed to help you think about the ward councillor role. These features are represented by the symbols shown below:



Guidance – this is used to indicate research, quotations, explanations and definitions that you may find helpful.



Challenges – these are questions or queries raised in the text which ask you to reflect on your role or approach – in essence, they are designed to be thought-provokers.



Case studies – these are ‘pen pictures’ of approaches used by other people or organisations.



Hints and tips – these represent a selection of good practices which you may find useful.



Useful links – these are signposts to sources of further information and support, outside the workbook, which may help with principles, processes, methods and approaches

Scrutiny in local government

Introduction

The Local Government Act 2000 introduced a new political management system for local councils in England and Wales, requiring them to have a separate 'executive' in the form of a leader, or elected mayor, and cabinet.

To provide a counterweight for this, the Act also introduced the concept of 'overview and scrutiny', whereby every council with an executive management structure is required to have an overview and scrutiny committee. This enables the rest of the council to scrutinise the executive by investigating their decisions and policies, and issuing reports and recommendations where any shortcomings are identified.

The Localism Act 2011 gave councils the option of converting to a committee system form of governance. Councils that have chosen this option are not required to have a separate overview and scrutiny committee, although they may choose to do so. It is still expected that scrutiny will take place within committees to identify where improvements need to be made.

Whichever governance system a council operates, scrutiny is an essential part of ensuring that local government remains transparent, accountable and open, resulting in improved public policies and services.

As a councillor, you have been elected by your local community because they believe you will represent them in ensuring the council provides the services they need, to the standard they expect. By understanding their needs you can bring a different perspective to the decision-making process to that provided by the council executive or officers, which helps decisions to be more robust.

Whether or not you are directly involved in the scrutiny function, it is important that you understand how scrutiny works and the benefits that it can bring. This workbook will:

- explain what scrutiny is and how it works in practice
- describe the scrutiny review process
- look at who is involved in scrutiny
- give an overview of useful skills for carrying out scrutiny.

Powers of scrutiny

The principal power of a scrutiny committee is to influence the policies and decisions made by the council and other organisations involved in delivering public services. The scrutiny committee gathers evidence on issues affecting local people and makes recommendations based on its findings.

Scrutiny can investigate any issue which affects the local area or the area's inhabitants. However, effective scrutiny work relies on scrutiny's 'soft' influencing power, as it has no formal power to compel anyone to make changes. For this reason, before undertaking any scrutiny work it is important to think about not only scrutiny's legal powers but also about how to build a positive working relationship with those who are the subject of scrutiny's recommendations. This ensures a much higher chance of scrutiny's recommendations being implemented.

Generally, a scrutiny committee has the legal power to:

- require that the council makes information available to it, both in the form of written reports and by officer and cabinet member attendance at committee meetings
- require that the cabinet responds to its recommendations within a set time frame.

Scrutiny also has powers relating to certain external partners. More information can be found on the CfPS website (www.cfps.org.uk/practice-guides).

Effective scrutiny

For scrutiny to be effective it needs to be seen as a ‘critical friend’ and it is important to identify where decisions could be improved and how to prevent mistakes being made or repeated. However, the focus should be on forward thinking and making positive changes, rather than apportioning blame and focusing on the negatives. This will help to foster positive and constructive relationships between scrutiny, councillors and officers.

Successful scrutiny relies on the following conditions:

Effective work programming

Work programming is the planning stage of scrutiny, where subjects for further investigation are identified. It is most effective when there are clear criteria for the selection of subjects and agenda items. This is covered in more detail later in the workbook.

Positive attitude of the council executive and council officers

Scrutiny works well when the council’s executive views it in a positive light and as an opportunity to improve council performance. Scrutiny’s effectiveness will be reduced if the executive sees it as aggressively critical, which will lead to defensive behaviour and make it difficult for scrutiny to influence change.

Similarly, scrutiny will be more effective if council officers are willing to provide information and assistance when required. Ideally, officers should see scrutiny as an essential partner in improving services, where non-executive councillors can help them to better understand local people and make robust judgements about priorities.

Positive attitude of scrutiny councillors

Scrutiny councillors need to be committed to making the function work and to developing the conditions necessary for working effectively with the council’s executive and officers, and any other relevant partner organisations.

It is also important that scrutiny is seen as impartial and stays separate from party politics. However, scrutiny work includes looking at issues that are locally politically contentious and high profile, and as such an element of political disagreement is inevitable. The challenge for you, as a scrutiny councillor is to use your political skills and understanding of the needs of local people to shape the discussions, whilst not acting in a party political manner or using the discussions to further party political objectives

More information can be found in ‘Overview and scrutiny in local government: a handbook for elected members’ (CfPS, 2013), accessible from: www.cfps.org.uk



Guidance What is good scrutiny?

Fundamentally, all scrutiny work must add value: it must make a positive contribution to the lives of local people and scrutiny committee members must be very clear about how their work will do this. When scrutiny is carried out properly it is constructive and focuses on the priorities of local people, which feeds into the priorities of the council and its partners. Good scrutiny:

- tackles issues of direct relevance to local people
- tackles issues where, through the unique perspective of elected councillors, it can add the most value
- is about talking to a wide range of people, drawing them together and building consensus
- is about challenging the accepted ways of doing things and acting as a champion for developing a culture of improvement in the local area.

Adding value

The purpose of scrutiny is ultimately to improve the lives of local people through improved public services. To justify the resources allocated to scrutiny it is important to be able to demonstrate that scrutiny work adds value and makes a difference to local people.

A scrutiny review is successful if it fulfils one or more of the following conditions:

- it meets the objectives set out by the scrutiny committee
- feedback from the public shows that they think there has been the service improvement they desired
- the work has helped to achieve corporate or partnership priorities
- there is a return on investment, demonstrating scrutiny's impact and outcomes in financial terms.

The impact scrutiny has can be measured in two ways:

Outputs – quantitative expressions of the activities being reviewed, for example 'waste bin collections have increased to 10,000 every week'. These can be expressed in financial terms to show return on investment.

Outcomes – what stakeholders experience as a result of the review, for example if the local community recognises an improvement. The council and its partners could also be stakeholders, for example where scrutiny recommendations relate to internal processes.

The CfPS publication 'Tipping the Scales' details a model for measuring return on investment for overview and scrutiny.



Case study

Adur, Arun and Worthing – measuring the return on investment

A scrutiny review was undertaken to consider the ROI of improving the health and wellbeing of homeless people, after evidence showed that Arun District has the fourth highest number of people in the UK who sleep rough on its streets.

Return on investment

The review explored whether the demand on A&E and hospital admissions for homeless people was linked to whether or not they were registered with a GP. The following conclusions were reached:

- on average, homeless people who were not registered with a GP were eight times more likely to visit A&E
- this meant the burden on A&E services could be reduced if homeless people were registered with a GP
- it cost less when a homeless person registered and visited a GP than when they attended A&E.

Further work then identified the cost of undertaking the review, which made it possible to calculate how many homeless people needed to be registered with a GP for there to be an overall net saving.

Return on investment calculation

Review costs: 334 review hours x average wage £11.60/hr = £3874

Estimated cost per visit to A&E = £131

Cost of registration and visit to GP = £79

Potential saving if registered with GP = £52 (£131-£79)

Return on Investment = £52 x 8 visits = £416

Number of homeless people needed to register to balance review = 10 (£416 x 10 = £4160)

You can find more Scrutiny Return on Investment (SROI) examples in the CfPS publication 'Tipping the Scales', which is available at: www.cfps.org.uk

Being cost-effective

Scrutiny committees need to work effectively with limited resources. They can do this by:

Carrying out work more efficiently – for example, holding single-topic committee meetings, so a group of councillors can speak to a large number of witnesses in a round-table format.

Targeted work programming – having processes in place to decide what will and what will not be reviewed and investigated.

Providing officer support more efficiently – for example, by thinking more carefully about what support scrutiny committee members want and need from officers and what skill set officers have and require.

Resource availability – work programming should be influenced by what resources are available.

Circulating information – providing or making information available to councillors prior to meetings on a more regular and informal basis, so they spend less time in meetings reading reports. Councillors and officers can work together to limit the volume of material councillors are sent to material that is relevant and useful to them.

Public scrutiny

The involvement of the public provides a unique perspective on how well public services are being delivered and how they could be improved, from the point of view of those receiving and using the services.

Members of the public can attend scrutiny meetings and can make their views known to their local councillors and members of the scrutiny committee. There are also opportunities for the public to get involved in a more meaningful way in task and finish reviews, which are covered in more detail later in the workbook.



Case study Successful scrutiny – Lincoln Against Poverty

Every year, the Centre for Public Scrutiny presents the Good Scrutiny Awards, which recognise councils who have undertaken successful scrutiny work. The 2015 top winner was the City of Lincoln Council for their Lincoln Against Poverty scrutiny work. Here is a summary of the project.

Objective

To build an effective plan to tackle poverty that includes and is supported by over 120 partners from a wide range of organisations.

Scope

The review covered a wide range of topics including benefits and low income, accessing work, child poverty and education, health and housing. In Lincoln, one in four children lives in poverty, a significant number of residents are in fuel poverty, and the city is recognised as having one of the highest rates of acute deprivation in England.

Approach

In 2014, the Lincoln Against Poverty Conference was a key forum for delivering workshop sessions that focused on areas that had been reviewed, and enabled partners to explore and discuss the different facets of poverty and the support required to move beyond it in the coming year. The council used a wide range of data including statistical data, academic and organisational journals and reports, and case studies on those in the city experiencing poverty first hand.

Recommendations

From this extensive review project, and input from partners, 100 suggestions were put forward and used to develop the Lincoln Anti-Poverty Action Plan 2014/15. The impressive number of suggested actions implemented demonstrated not only the council's dedication to tackling this issue but the positive and effective outcomes that can be achieved by engaging relevant partners and the community.

Outcomes

Some of the key actions that were recommended or directly influenced by the Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee include:

- Relocating the Lincolnshire Credit Union from the outskirts of the city into Lincoln City Hall in the city centre. As a result, there were 78 new customers, 78 small loans were issued – key in challenging doorstep loans and resulting in an estimated £121,000 savings to customers by not using a doorstep lender.
- In partnership with City of Lincoln Council, Lincoln Christ's Hospital School, Lincolnshire Credit Union, and Barclay's Bank, Year 7 students undertook money awareness and the benefits of savings courses. Students were provided with the opportunity to open savings accounts and were encouraged to start the savings programme through an incentive scheme set up by the City of Lincoln Council.
- A loan shark awareness programme was undertaken involving the extensive use of multiple media platforms to deliver the message. As a result, 48 per cent of clients surveyed at the JobCentre were aware of the campaign, the Lincoln Citizens Advice Bureau saw a 12.4 per cent increase in people seeking advice compared to the year before, and the Lincoln Christians Against Poverty saw a five-fold increase in waiting times for debt advice.
- Finally, the re-distribution and recycling of large household items was improved, as well as a better alignment of food bank and welfare services to address changing situations of those in need.

You will find more examples in Successful Scrutiny Good Scrutiny Awards, which is published on the CfPS website: www.cfps.org.uk

Work programming

The role of scrutiny is to achieve positive outcomes for local people by undertaking a thorough, targeted examination of the council's service provision and procedures. However, it is not possible to examine every service in detail, so it is important for the scrutiny committee to prioritise and plan its workload. Some councils do this at the beginning of each year and some do it on an ongoing basis.

Planned scrutiny

Work programming is the process for determining which topics scrutiny will look at over the coming year, either at committee meetings or

in task and finish groups. This involves evaluating a number of factors to decide which topics are to be investigated and when. The process will typically involve long-listing and then short-listing topics before making a final decision.

Responsive scrutiny

Whether planned scrutiny takes place at the beginning of the year or on an ongoing basis, the priorities for scrutiny need to be monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis. This makes sure scrutiny can be flexible and responsive to high-priority issues or policy changes that occur throughout the year.



Hints and tips

The scrutiny topic selection process

Each council has its own method for selecting topics for scrutiny; in some councils there may be a very structured selection process, whilst in others it may be more informal. Whatever level of detail is involved, the general process should include the following activities.

1. Identify issues

You can identify potential issues by:

- consulting with all members of scrutiny committees, senior officers, cabinet members and council officers
- looking at corporate priorities, business plans and the Forward Plan of the council (and the council's neighbours)
- considering events and decisions in the council's calendar that could require an input from scrutiny, such as setting budgets
- evaluating previous council performance and identifying any follow-up work required to previous scrutiny work
- carrying out work to engage with local people, for example through surgeries, local media, opinion surveys and online forums.

2. Prioritise topics

Identify and prioritise potential scrutiny topics, considering the resources they would require and the level of impact they could achieve.

3. Plan scrutiny work

Decide which scrutiny topics to review and include them in the work programme.

4. Review and evaluate

Review progress and evaluate outcomes to demonstrate the value added by scrutiny.



Guidance Criteria for selecting scrutiny topics

The following criteria provide a useful guide for prioritising and selecting which topics are suitable for scrutiny to review.

Topics **are** suitable for scrutiny when:

- scrutiny could have an impact and add value
- the topic is of high local importance and reflects the concerns of local people
- the resources are available that would be required to conduct the review, in terms of manpower and budget
- it avoids work duplication elsewhere
- the issue is one that the committee can realistically influence
- the issue is related to an area where the council, or one of its partners, is not performing well
- the issue is relevant to all or large parts of the local area
- the review would be in the council's interests.

Topics **are not** suitable for scrutiny when:

- the issue is already being addressed elsewhere and change is imminent
- the topic would be better addressed elsewhere (and will be referred there)
- scrutiny involvement would have limited or no impact upon outcomes
- the topic may be sub-judice or prejudicial to the council's interest
- the topic is too broad to make a review realistic
- new legislation or guidance relating to the topic is expected within the next year
- the topic area is currently subject to inspection or has recently undergone substantial change.

Defining scrutiny topics

For every item on the work programme/new referral, it should be clear:

- What is the issue/activity/project under consideration?
- What is scrutiny being asked to do?
- What are the reasons for/expected benefits of involving scrutiny in the matter?
- Is there a specific deadline for the piece of work?



Challenge 1 – prioritising topics

Consider the issues that are important to the people you represent in your ward. List the five issues you think are the most important, then put them in order of priority; make a note of your reasoning. Do you know all the information you need to handle complaints effectively? Consider these statements to identify any gaps. If you answer ‘no’ to any of them, take some time to find the answers from your council’s website or your work colleagues.

1

2

3

4

5

Think about how you would translate these into strategic issues. Here is an example:

The issue

A number of residents have been complaining that the trees in the local area are not being pruned regularly enough, becoming a hazard and presenting a potential danger to the public. Complaints include difficulty in walking on the pavement, damage to tall vehicles, trip hazards from tree roots and gardens being overshadowed by trees.

Strategic considerations

The council needs to consider how it allocates its Environmental Services’ resources so that it can be efficient whilst also meeting the needs of local residents. It can look at:

- how services are procured, commissioned and contracted
- which are the most hazardous streets and where the biggest improvements can be made
- prioritising and planning a programme of work for tree pruning.

How scrutiny works

The ongoing formal business of scrutiny is usually carried out by committees, the purpose and composition of which is defined by legislation. The scrutiny committee chair is usually proposed by the council executive, although Full Council votes on the membership of committees and chairs at council AGM.

Scrutiny work is also carried out in smaller, informal ‘task and finish’ groups, which are not covered in legislation. These are time-limited bodies established by scrutiny committees to gather evidence and produce recommendations on a specific subject.

The overview and scrutiny committee

Councils that operate under executive arrangements are required by law to have an overview and scrutiny committee. This must be composed to reflect the political proportions of the council as a whole (so, for example, in a council with 25 Conservatives and 20 Labour councillors, a scrutiny committee may have five Conservative and four Labour members). The chair of the scrutiny committee can represent any political party; when considered collectively they do not need to be politically balanced.

Councils using a committee system of governance are not required by law to create an overview and scrutiny committee, but they may do so if they wish.

Members of the council's executive **may not** sit on the overview and scrutiny committee; cabinet assistants **may** sit on scrutiny committees, since the executive's decision-making powers cannot be delegated to them. However, to avoid a conflict of interests it is common for assistants to be assigned to committees that do not reflect their portfolios.



Challenge 2 – scrutiny in your council

There is no prescribed structure for implementing scrutiny in a council – there may be one overview and scrutiny committee, or several committees and sub-committees. Find out how scrutiny is implemented in your council.

Scrutiny meetings

Scrutiny committee meetings are formal and public. They provide a forum whereby councillors can:

- discuss written information they have received, from the council and external bodies
- hear evidence from witnesses, which could include other councillors, council officers, experts, representatives from other organisations and members of the public
- question witnesses to gain a better understanding of the issues
- draw conclusions from their discussions and the evidence examined, in the form of an outcome.

Committee meetings usually involve one or more substantive written reports being tabled on issues selected by the committee and its chair on the basis of the work programme. The purpose of scrutiny is to provide recommendations for improvement, so it is important to have a clearly defined outcome at the end of the meeting.

The Local Government Act 1972 sets out a variety of requirements around formal committee meetings:

- They must be in public. The public may only be excluded if it is likely that confidential or exempt information will be disclosed.
- The agenda and related papers must also be made public at least five working days before the meeting, unless the meeting is convened at shorter notice. Certain papers may be excluded from publication if they contain confidential or exempt information.
- The council's constitution must have rules of procedure for overview and scrutiny committees, including provisions on:
 - public questions and the public's right to speak at the meeting
 - length of meetings and the use of motions to extend meetings where necessary
 - how witnesses will be managed
 - how the chair will conduct the meeting.

Task and finish groups

Task and finish groups are informal, usually small and time-limited bodies comprised of councillors and, often, co-optees brought in from outside the council for their specific skills and experiences. They are established by a parent committee to undertake a discrete piece of scrutiny work, and report back to that committee with their findings and recommendations.

Task and finish groups are not mentioned in legislation, although most councils make provision for them in their constitution. The following rules of thumb have been developed by CfPS:

- membership should be defined and agreed by the group's parent committee
- the parent committee should also decide on who should chair
- while party whips may nominate other councillors to sit on groups, the ultimate decision rests with the committee and the committee chair
- as far as possible, membership should loosely reflect the political proportionality of the authority (the only caveat being that attempts are usually made to involve smaller parties where they otherwise would not be entitled to a seat)
- members of the group (and even the chair) need not be drawn exclusively from the group's parent committee – any councillor can be nominated to participate
- decision-making in the group (ie deciding on the wording of a final report and deciding on recommendations) should be undertaken through consensus rather than through a vote, given the fact that the membership may not directly reflect political proportionality.

To demonstrate transparency and accountability, it is also recommended that task and finish groups make published information, minutes and evidence-gathering sessions accessible to the public.



Guidance

Effective scrutiny meetings

The role of the committee chair is critical in making sure the committee works as a team and fully understands the issues under discussion in scrutiny meetings. The chair takes an active role in leading and directing the discussion and managing any disagreement between committee members. This is covered in more detail later in the workbook.

There are a number of ways that scrutiny meetings can be made more effective, although a council's ability to do all of these will be limited by the resources it has available.

Agenda

Having clear criteria for assessing agenda items means that only necessary items make it onto the agenda.

Limiting the number of agenda items helps to keep meetings focused and easier to manage. Evidence from the CfPS Annual Survey suggests that any more than three substantive items per meeting is detrimental to its effectiveness.

Preparation

You can make the best use of your time in preparing and attending meetings by prioritising and planning any information you need to prepare or read beforehand.

Effective agenda management, where councillors are provided with a short briefing and key sources of corporate information prior to meetings, can also help to minimise the amount of time spent during the meeting on reading documents, and means more time can be spent on analysis and discussion.

Pre-meeting

If time and resources allow, holding a pre-meeting to plan questions can help to ensure that topic selection is based on councillor interests, so everyone will be willing to make a contribution.

Objectives

Having clearly defined and agreed objectives and outcomes for the meeting means that:

- councillors can work towards a common target in their questioning and witnesses can be fully prepared
- discussions can be easily summarised at the end of the meeting and in the minutes, with a focus on actions, post-meeting communication and follow-up work
- findings and conclusions can be more easily converted into clear, concrete recommendations at the meeting.

Outcomes

Defining outcomes at the end of the meeting makes sure that agenda items are concluded with certainty and there are no 'repeat items' at the next meeting.

It also makes it possible to monitor progress on outcomes and commitments at the following meeting.

Co-optees

Council scrutiny functions have the opportunity to co-opt people from outside the council to sit either on scrutiny committees (as voting or non-voting co-optees) or on task and finish groups.

The formal appointment of a co-optee onto an overview and scrutiny committee is provided for in the Local Government Act 2000. Task and finish groups may co-opt group members without restriction.

For councils responsible for education functions, there is a requirement for certain co-optees to be appointed to the relevant committee. The provisions in the 1996 Act apply to overview and scrutiny committees by virtue of Schedule 1 of the 2000 Act.

For most councils, this will be two diocesan representatives (one Church of England, one Catholic) and two parent governor representatives (one primary, one secondary, and both from maintained schools). Such co-optees have voting rights and are treated as opposition councillors for the purposes of political proportionality (in order to assure that the largest party retains an absolute majority at committee).

For task and finish groups, the parent committee chooses co-optees at the scoping stage. The co-optee's role is identical to that of a councillor member of the review group, but when it comes to making a final decision on a report or recommendations, in practice it will be councillors' views that take precedence.

Combined authorities

The Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016 requires that combined authorities in England have their own overview and scrutiny committee.

Combined authorities are bodies formed jointly by a number of councils in a geographic area. They are the formal basis for the devolution of powers from central government to local areas. As such, combined authorities will have a significant part to play in big decisions around economic development, skills and transport, as well as other areas such as health and social care. The scope and nature of these decisions mean that having robust scrutiny arrangements in place is particularly important.

A combined authority has been in existence in Greater Manchester for several years, but others have recently been established such as in the West Midlands, Tees Valley and Liverpool City Region. Government has not set out any national expectations – it is for local areas to decide how arrangements will work.

The large areas covered by combined authorities means that there will be logistical difficulties about getting councillors together for overview and scrutiny meetings. These meetings will be additional to those held in individual local councils, so there will be an additional workload for some councillors too. This means that it will be vital for combined authority overview and scrutiny committees to be extremely focused and targeted in their work.

In practice, combined authority overview and scrutiny committees will work similarly to joint committees (see below) although some of the legal and practical issues are slightly different.

General issues around governance under devolved arrangements are discussed in the CfPS paper 'Devo why, devo how?' (2015).

Joint committees

Joint committees are committees which have representatives from two or more local authorities. In particular, they have an important role to play in health scrutiny.

There are a number of considerations which need to be taken into account for a joint scrutiny committee to work effectively:

Logistics – finding mutually convenient venues to ensure no one councillor or authority loses out.

Work objectives – gaining broad agreement on the committee's aims and objectives.

Political and personal opinions – bringing together a larger number of people to sit on a committee makes it harder to find consensus and manage differences of opinion.

Resources – establishing and managing a joint committee requires a significant expense, which needs to be shared between the participating authorities.

The scrutiny review process

Scrutiny reviews can take place before or after a decision has been made.



Hints and tips

The scrutiny review process

Each council has its own process for conducting a scrutiny review, which will be influenced in part by the resources it has available. Here is a generic scrutiny review process.

Scope the review

- determine the key issues and objectives
- identify key stakeholders
- identify who needs to be involved
- decide what evidence needs to be gathered and how
- determine how the work will be managed
- consider potential risks and ways of managing them

Gather evidence

- undertake consultation through public meetings, surveys, workshops and focus groups
- carry out site visits
- source data and reports
- interview experts and witnesses
- conduct focus groups and workshops
- work with officers and councillors to research issues

Evaluate evidence

- consider all the evidence in the context of the scope of the project
- look at evidence alongside other sources of data to gain a comprehensive view of the performance of a given service

Report and make recommendations

- document the work carried out and what conclusions have been reached
- make recommendations
- distribute the reports and recommendations to the relevant stakeholders for approval

Implement

- agree and develop an implementation plan
- action the agreed recommendations
- feedback outcomes to stakeholders, including the local community

Monitor

- track progress of the changes being implemented
- evaluate and assess impact
- conduct further investigation and make additional recommendations if necessary

Pre-decision scrutiny

Pre-decision scrutiny is planned during the work programming activity and could take place immediately before a decision is made, or a more significant amount of time beforehand. By challenging assumptions and assessing what risks might arise from the implementation of a decision, scrutiny provides the opportunity to influence and improve decisions before they are finalised.

Councils are required to give 28 days' notice of a planned decision. The majority of councils publish their planned decisions in a Forward Plan, often with longer than 28 days' notice, so this is a useful scrutiny tool in identifying pre-decision topics. The decisions are brought to scrutiny as drafts of the final cabinet report.

Pre-decision scrutiny that is carried out immediately before a decision is made will have obvious time limitations, so it is best focused on key questions around the decision's implementation, risks and measures of success.

Scrutiny carried out several months before a decision is made will have more time and resources with which to delve into the fundamentals of the decision and propose alternative options. This is the best way to scrutinise major decisions and significant strategic matters. Overall, pre-decision scrutiny can help the decision-making process by:

Providing an impartial perspective – scrutiny can gather its own evidence to contribute towards the decision-making process, and consult those directly affected by the decision impartially and independently.

Challenging assumptions and making evidence-gathering more robust – scrutiny can look at projections relating to the impact of the decision – financial, social, economic, environmental – and consider whether those projections and assumptions are justified.

Developing realistic plans and targets – scrutiny can help to develop challenging but realistic targets that will be impartial and focused on outcomes rather than outputs.

Securing ownership and buy-in to the final decision – engaging with scrutiny will help the executive to understand the expectations of the wider group of elected councillors and, by extension, the public.

Engaging with and satisfying the public – scrutiny can help the council to understand local needs, with public engagement being led by councillors who approach discussions with no vested interest or stake in the final decision.

Post-decision scrutiny and call-in

Post-decision scrutiny takes place in response to decisions that have already been made. This is particularly useful for influencing policy changes in the medium to long term.

For decisions that have been made but not implemented, scrutiny has the power to call-in the executive to revisit a decision and delay its implementation. This applies only to 'key decisions', which are predominantly decisions made by the executive, either as individuals or as a whole. Councils define key decisions in different ways, but usually these are decisions with implications over a certain financial threshold, eg over £250,000, and which affect two or more council wards.

The purpose of call-in is to provoke further debate on a topic of political contention. It acts as a means to draw attention to opposition to a decision, and provides a forum for that opposition to be voiced.

Call-in is a tool that should be used in exceptional circumstances and for issues of particular contention. To use it otherwise would prolong the decision-making process overall and create unnecessary tension between the executive and the scrutiny committee. Effective pre-decision scrutiny will help to avoid the need for call-in.



Challenge 3 – the call-in process in your council

The call-in process, and the approach to managing call-in meetings, differs from council to council. Make a note here about how your council manages call-in.



Case study Scrutiny and policy development

Brighton and Hove's Traveller Strategy Scrutiny Review Panel (2011) conducted its scrutiny review alongside the executive's preparation of a Traveller Strategy. The strategy was amended in response to recommendations in the scrutiny review.

Brighton and Hove City Council was looking to create a strategy for Gypsies and Travellers which was forward thinking and inclusive. The council hoped to pioneer new ways of addressing their needs while remaining sensitive to their traditional lifestyle, as well as providing basic services such as education and health, and fostering good relationships with local Traveller and Gypsy communities.

Unauthorised encampment was an unwelcome and costly issue for the council. The scrutiny panel's recommendations recognised that the creation of a permanent

site, managed by the council, was key to reducing tensions and could help facilitate mutual understanding. Evidence showed that solving the issue of accommodation could significantly curb economic costs. Also, when Gypsies and Travellers are in authorised sites returns are generated in rent, council tax and utility bills.

The recommendations were supported by evidence gathered from 31 expert witnesses as well as written evidence.

www.brighton-hove.gov.uk

Gathering evidence

There are several methods for using meetings to gather evidence.

‘Scrutiny day’ or ‘challenge panel’

This is a half-day or full-day session where scrutiny councillors, and others, come together to gather evidence on a topic and to make recommendations. This is the standard approach taken by a number of councils.

Light touch review

This is a review of a narrow topic which might involve holding two or three evidence-gathering meetings over the course of about a month.

Full length review

This involves members meeting periodically over the course of several months and was the traditional approach to scrutiny reviews in many councils until quite recently. The resource involved can be significant.

Standing panels

Standing panels are bodies set up to provide oversight for an ongoing council process. They are used when scrutiny is shadowing a time-limited piece of work carried out by someone else – for example, the council’s budget preparation or a major NHS reconfiguration.

Sources of information

The information gathered during a scrutiny review, and where to find it, will depend on the topic under review. In the interests of efficiency, scrutiny councillors have a responsibility to actively seek out information for themselves, so it is important that you are aware of what information is available and how to access it. Here are some examples of information that could be useful.

Information on performance, finance and risk

- quarterly performance and finance reports
- programme and project management information
- risk registers
- complaints logs
- internal reviews and action plans

Strategic information

- budget and policy frameworks
- external inspection reports
- corporate peer challenge letters, reports and information
- departmental plans and strategies
- partnership plans and strategies
- council or partnership programmes
- cross-departmental strategies
- improvement plans
- information from benchmarking clubs, where councils share information

Feedback

- from consultations and residents’ panels
- from frontline staff



Challenge 4 – where to find information

You will have direct access to much of the information you need through your council's website or internal computer systems. There is a benefit to reviewing raw data, rather than a report prepared by an officer, in that it allows you to use your unique perspective as an elected representative, with detailed knowledge of your ward, to make your own links and connections between performance issues.

Do you know where to find management information for your council?

Make a note of where your council makes this kind of information available.

Using evidence effectively

Using evidence effectively means looking at it alongside other sources of data, to see what themes emerge and whether different evidence sources disagree about services being provided on the ground.

For example, customer complaints data can be compared with performance information, finance information and risk registers, to take a comprehensive view of the performance of a given service. While performance information may suggest that all targets are being met, the service may be overspending and complaints data may demonstrate that the public are unhappy with the level of service being provided – an issue which has not been identified in the risk register as needing action. Linking together information in this way allows judgements to be made about difficulties which can help to frame and focus solutions in a way that will be useful to officers delivering the service on the ground.

Making a recommendation

Recommendations are the way that scrutiny can have an impact. Making good recommendations, and monitoring them, makes it more likely that scrutiny's work will add value.

A good recommendation is:

- specific about the change recommended
- evidence-based and realistic
- focused on measurable outcomes
- addressed to a specific person or group
- realistic about financing requirements
- developed in partnership with the executive, council officers and council partners.

There is a legal requirement for the executive to respond to recommendations within two months of them being made. If recommendations are made to a named partner organisation, however,

they do not have a duty to formally respond, although they do have a responsibility to 'have regard to' the recommendations.

The response to a recommendation from a decision-maker should consist of:

- a clear commitment to delivering the measure within the timescale set out
- a commitment to be held to account on that delivery in six months' or a year's time
- where it is not proposed that a recommendation be accepted, the provision of detailed, substantive reasons why not.

Scrutiny can help decision-makers to view recommendations in a positive light, and submit acceptable responses, by agreeing beforehand when and how recommendations will be made, and what an acceptable response will look like.

Monitoring recommendations

It is scrutiny's responsibility to monitor and evaluate recommendations once they are implemented, even though it is not their responsibility to deliver the changes.

Tracking the progress of recommendations does not require full scrutiny reviews, but a simple check that after six or twelve months they are being implemented and the outcomes detailed in the decision-maker's response are being fulfilled. Action can be taken if required; if everything is on track, scrutiny can trust the implementations are being made satisfactorily and move on.

Working with others

The effectiveness of the scrutiny committee relies on it establishing positive relationships with the council's executive, its officers and partner organisations.

The council executive and officers

The responsibility for scrutiny working well is shared with the council's executive, which has a duty to ensure its members do not undermine or denigrate scrutiny.

The Local Government Act 2000 requires the council executive and officers to:

- Attend meetings when required to do so. The word “require” is not defined in the Act but it can be assumed that it does not confer a choice as to whether or not to attend.
- Provide information, where required to do so. Again, this must be complied with.
- Respond to recommendations.

With some planning and consideration, scrutiny can make it easier for the executive and officers to engage with scrutiny, therefore making it more likely that they will accept and implement recommendations. The scrutiny committee can do this by:

- being clear about why topics have been chosen for scrutiny review and demonstrating, where possible, how they fit with the executive's priorities
- making invitations to scrutiny committee meetings far enough in advance that people are more likely to have availability
- being clear about the purpose of committee meetings and why people are being invited to attend

- where possible, sharing scrutiny reports and recommendations in draft form; this makes sure there are no unpleasant surprises for anyone, and allows the executive to highlight where it feels recommendations may require alteration for practical reasons
- defining the content and format of the executive's response to recommendations
- involving the executive and officers in discussion and dialogue as the work programme is put together
- making sure the executive's viewpoint is fully understood and reflected in scrutiny review reports.

A number of councils have developed a protocol to manage the scrutiny/executive relationship.

Statutory officers

Councils are required to designate two statutory officers who, between them, share the responsibility to protect and promote the scrutiny function: the scrutiny officer and the monitoring officer. They are ultimately responsible for securing good governance within the authority.

From time to time, questions and concerns will arise about the operation of the scrutiny function, and an officer will need to make a determination about what the law says, and how this should be applied to that particular situation. The scrutiny officer and monitoring officer need to have a nuanced and meaningful understanding of the scrutiny function in order to accurately make judgements about its operation when disagreements or other issues arise.

The scrutiny officer

The scrutiny officer has the responsibility for promoting the role of overview and scrutiny, supporting overview and scrutiny committees, and providing advice to officers and councillors about overview and scrutiny committees. This includes activities such as:

- providing, or managing, administrative work
- undertaking research
- analysing data
- preparing reports.

The scrutiny officer cannot be the council's head of paid service, the monitoring officer or the chief finance officer (s151 officer). They will not necessarily have the word 'scrutiny' in their job title; similarly, someone with the job title 'scrutiny officer' will not necessarily be the council's statutory scrutiny officer.

District councils in areas where there is also a county council, and shire districts in two-tier areas, do not have a duty to designate a statutory scrutiny officer.

The monitoring officer

The monitoring officer is responsible for ensuring that the council operates within the law. Their principal responsibilities are:

- to report on matters they believe are, or may be, illegal or amount to maladministration
- to be responsible for the conduct of councillors and officers
- to be responsible for the operation, review and updating of the constitution; this includes providing advice on the interpretation of the constitution, and making determinations where necessary.

The view of the monitoring officer on the meaning of the law as it relates to local government, and the council's constitution, is final. When issues arise around the scrutiny function, the scrutiny officer can provide advice

to the monitoring officer to assist them in reaching a decision or determination.

Scrutiny and partner organisations

Councils often work with partner organisations to deliver services. These could be in the private, public or voluntary sectors and include:

- contractors
- organisations with whom the council has jointly commissioned services
- organisations that the council funds to deliver certain services by means of grant funding or service level agreements.

It is likely that any service a council delivers, and therefore any scrutiny review, will involve a partner organisation in some way. Scrutiny has statutory powers to investigate the work of a council's partners.

Health

Health scrutiny committees may investigate any health-related issue in their area, and have an obligation to invite interested parties when they choose to carry out such investigations. When they make recommendations to local NHS bodies, scrutiny committees have the right to require a response within 28 days. Scrutiny can carry out investigations on its own initiative, or at the suggestion of Local HealthWatch.

Where scrutiny finds issues around substantial developments or reconfigurations of local health services, the council (rather than the scrutiny committee) has the power to refer it to the Secretary of State.

Community safety

Under the Police and Justice Act 2006, a committee of the council designated as a community safety scrutiny committee has the power to ask local community safety partners for information, request that those partners attend meetings (given reasonable notice) and require that those partners consider recommendations submitted to them.

Flood risk management

Following recommendations made by the Pitt Review, scrutiny committees have a formal role with regard to flood risk management, which allows for the review and scrutiny of such functions carried out by upper tier authorities.

Other partners

Scrutiny has some loose legal powers in relation to partner organisations working with the council to deliver public services. In real terms, though, it does not have any more rights than a private citizen, so it is important to foster positive working relationships with partners in order for scrutiny to achieve its objectives.

Scrutiny can, however, ask these partners to attend meetings, request information from them and require them to 'have regard to' their recommendations. There is no legal definition for 'having regard to', but some councils have defined it through scrutiny/partner protocols.

Contracted-out and commissioned services

These are not specifically provided for in legislation. However, scrutiny has a general responsibility to hold to account those people who commission services and manage contracts. This requires discussion and liaison with council officers in 'client-side' positions who are responsible for managing the relationship with contractors and providers.

Scrutiny is beneficial in this context because its perspective is informed by listening to and understanding the experiences of local people, thereby measuring services in terms of value to the community.



Hints and tips How to engage partners in scrutiny

Early planning and dialogue, to set out mutual expectations, is critical for encouraging partners to engage in scrutiny.

- Talk to partners early on to discuss the work programme (talking about topics you're considering looking at, and thinking about how they can be cast so as to better complement partners' own work).
- Ensure that partners know what to expect and understand the purpose of whatever meetings they are invited to and the overall purpose of the work on which you're engaged.
- Make sure that the scrutiny process is made transparent for partners, by providing them with agendas and associated information well in advance.
- Use one-off 'challenge panels' or 'scrutiny days' rather than expecting partners to be able to support a detailed piece of ongoing work.
- Be clear about how the information provided by partners will be used.

You can find more information in the CfPS 'Practice Guide 9: Engaging with partners'.

Other scrutineers

There are other organisations that also have a responsibility to scrutinise distinct public policy areas. It is important that scrutineers work together in the interest of streamlining governance and with a view to sharing the limited resources available to scrutiny.

Joint working includes activities such as sharing information, carrying out informal background research and working on a formal joint task force or committee.

Other scrutineers include:

Local government

- other tiers of government
- local neighbourhood and area structures
- the Local Government Association (LGA), which carries out corporate peer challenges
- OFSTED for children's services inspections
- the audit committee

Health

- Local HealthWatch
- Care Quality Commission
- NHS regulation organisations
- Education
- school governing bodies
- Policing
- police and crime panels
- police and crime commissioners

Fire

- fire and rescue authorities

Useful skills

Questioning techniques

Questioning is a crucial component of the 'critical friend' challenge and an important principle of good public scrutiny. The key to successful questioning is balancing the need to get answers with the need to build strong relationships. This can be achieved by a combination of good preparation, knowing what questions to ask and when to ask them, and understanding which style is appropriate for different situations.

Questioning is best carried out after some preliminary evidence gathering and research has been undertaken, so that questions can be targeted on the appropriate issues and the appropriate witnesses can be identified for questioning.

A pre-meeting can be a useful preparation tool to decide how to carry out the questioning, for example:

- Who will ask the questions?
- How the questions will be organised?
- Will the chair call people to ask questions in a free format, or will the use of supplementary questions will be tightly defined?
- Which types of question to use for different witnesses?
- How to respond to a witness who is unhelpful or evasive?



Hints and tips Selecting witnesses for questioning

- How will speaking to this witness help to achieve scrutiny's objectives?
- Will this witness be willing to help?
- Can this evidence be acquired from anywhere else?
- Will it be necessary to balance this witness's views with the views of others, as part of the wider evidence gathering?



Hints and tips Question types

Open questions

Open questions allow the witness to open up and to share all the information they have. Encouraging the witness to elaborate early on will allow them to speak and will calm their nerves. This will help them to relax, and can be helpful in ensuring the witness will answer further questions in a more helpful manner.

Useful phrases:

- How...?
- Why...?
- When...?
- Who...?
- What...?

Closed questions

Where a simple yes or no answer will suffice it is advisable to stick to closed questions (such as when checking a fact). Closed questions are harder to avoid and easier to challenge.

Useful phrases:

- Did you ...?
- Have you told.....?
- What I think I'm hearing is... is that right?

Reflecting questions

These are used to clarify something which has been said, and/or to get the respondent to speak about a subject in more depth.

Useful phrases:

- You said that...
- You sound as if
- I get the feeling that

Extending questions

Extending questions invite the witness to offer more information, and to elaborate on what they have already said.

Useful phrases:

- How else could...?
- Could you tell me more about..?

Comparative questions

These can be used to compare situations (for example on a before and after basis).

Useful phrases:

- What has it been like since...?
- What difference has...?

Hypothetical questions

The use of hypothetical frameworks allows the witness to answer a question from a safer theoretical position and may encourage them to explore issues in more depth.

Useful phrases:

- If...
- Imagine...

Rephrasing or paraphrasing

Another technique that can be used to clarify something that has been said by the witness, it may also encourage the witness to elaborate on their previous answer and provide more detail.

Useful phrases:

- Are you saying that...?
- Let me see if I understand the problem completely...

Linking questions

Linking questions rely on active listening on the part of the scrutineer (see below). By linking previous responses offered by the witness to other issues the scrutineer is able to demonstrate that he has valued the witness's input. This technique may then encourage the witness to offer further explanation

Useful phrases:

- You mentioned earlier that...
- How would you....?

The CfPS provides more detail in their 'Skills Briefing 1: Questioning Skills'.

Listening skills

Listening skills are an important part of the scrutineer's role and are closely linked with questioning. Active listening ensures the witness feels that they are being properly heard and understood, which can help to facilitate further questioning.

The basic principles of active listening are:

Positive body language – look attentive and show positive signs of encouragement; consider the body language of the witness to gain a fuller understanding of their response.

Check understanding – use paraphrasing and repetition to check that you have understood the witness.

Take notes – these can be referred to later or used to challenge the witness if an explanation has not been fully understood, or where a contradiction has appeared in the witnesses statements.

Chairing scrutiny

The chair of a scrutiny committee should seek to provide, through strong leadership, a good environment for the constructive challenge of decision-makers. They should foster discussion and encourage all concerned stakeholders to be involved in the process, whilst ensuring that all opinions are expressed in a constructive manner that contributes to the intended outcomes of the process.

The chair is also responsible for ensuring that the scrutiny process – within and outside the context of formal committee meetings – is managed in a way that creates a fair and balanced environment, keeping the scrutiny process free from political point scoring and allowing for the effective scrutiny of all evidence that is produced.

In summary, the chair needs to ensure that all work being delivered by the committee, or panel:

- makes a positive impact on services
- promotes good practice
- challenges underperformance
- acts as a catalyst for change
- deals, where appropriate, with relevant partnership issues.

The CfPS 'Skills Briefing 2: Chairing and Leadership in Scrutiny' provides an in-depth look at the role of the scrutiny committee chair.

Final summary

It is important that all levels of government are scrutinised and held accountable for the decisions they make and the impact they have on local communities. In local government, the scrutiny function ensures that decisions made by the council executive are transparent and robust, and ultimately focused on improving public services.

Being an effective councillor, representing the needs of your community, requires a commitment to promoting scrutiny and ensuring that it takes place. It is a tool which you can use to make sure your local community's needs are reflected in the decisions made by the council – a unique perspective afforded to you by being a councillor.

Effective scrutiny involves:

Effective work programming – planning ahead, selecting appropriate topics, allocating time and resources, scoping and planning activities.

Positive relationships – fostered through effective communication with the council's executive, officers, partners and other scrutineers.

Effective research and analysis – examining raw data and prepared reports, using appropriate questioning techniques and selecting appropriate witnesses.

Effective meetings – preparing the meeting and the invitees, communicating in advance and afterwards, staying on topic, summarising and confirming decisions.

Specific recommendations – stating what needs to change, associated time scales, who needs to be involved and how it should be implemented.

Good monitoring and evaluation – ensuring that recommendations are being implemented and measuring success in terms of outcomes.

Appendix – sources of further information and support



The Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) has published a series of practice guides and skills briefings which are available from its website www.cfps.org.uk.

The Local Government Association (LGA) produces a number of development materials for councillors, including resources on how to chair meetings. All materials are published on their website www.local.gov.uk.



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We consider requests on an individual basis.

KEY DECISION DOCUMENT – COVERING DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN FROM 19TH MAY 2023

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
	Wrigley Head Solar Farm	Executive Director for Place & Economic Growth - Emma Barton		Cabinet
Description: Update report on the Wrigley Head Solar Farm project and options for taking the project forward. Document(s) to be considered in public or private:				
Page 4	Backlog Maintenance 2022/2025	Executive Director for Place & Economic Growth - Emma Barton	February 2023	Cabinet
Description: Backlog Maintenance Priorities for the Council Corporate Property Portfolio Document(s) to be considered in public or private: Private - NOT FOR PUBLICATION by virtue of Paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and it is not in the public interest to disclose the information because it relates to the financial or business affairs of the Council.				
	LA Policy on Academy Conversion and Guidance for Schools		February 2023	Cabinet
Description: Document(s) to be considered in public or private:				
	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment	Executive Director for Place & Economic Growth - Emma Barton	February 2023	

KEY DECISION DOCUMENT – COVERING DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN FROM 19TH MAY 2023

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
Description: To seek approval for the publication of Oldham Council’s Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) as of 1 April 2022. Document(s) to be considered in public or private:				
	Specialist Health & Social Care Provision at Oldham College	Executive Director for Place & Economic Growth - Emma Barton	March 2023	Cabinet
Description: Proposal for a new facility at Oldham College to accommodate specialise Health & Social Care Provision including the relocation of UCO onto the main campus. Document(s) to be considered in public or private: N/A				
189 48	Wrigley Head Solar Farm – delivery options	Director of Economy – Paul Clifford	March 2023	Cabinet
Description: To provide a decision on the recommended delivery option for Wrigley Head Solar Farm Document(s) to be considered in public or private: Public				
	Acceptance of Adult Education Budget funding	Director of Education, Skills & Early Years - Richard Lynch	March 2023	Cabinet
Description: The report details funding offer received from the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) funding allocations of the Adult Education Budget grant for the 2022-2023 academic year and highlights how this funding will be used to meet the ESFA’s, GMCA’s and Council’s key priorities. Document(s) to be considered in public or private:				
	Establishment of the Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership Board			Cabinet
Description: Document(s) to be considered in public or private:				

KEY DECISION DOCUMENT – COVERING DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN FROM 19TH MAY 2023

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
	Spindles - Pre-Construction Services Agreement (PCSA) Extension	Director of Economy – Paul Clifford	April 2023	Cabinet Member - Regeneration and Housing (Leader - Councillor Amanda Chadderton)
<p>Description: Extension of Wilmott Dixon Appointment to undertake pre-construction services relating to the market, event and archive (Spindles).</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private: Creating a Better Place Cabinet Report - July 2022</p>				
Page 49	Spindles - Creating a Better Place - Piling	Director of Economy – Paul Clifford	April 2023	Cabinet Member - Regeneration and Housing (Leader - Councillor Amanda Chadderton)
<p>Description: Early order of piling for the new build of the Market, Events and Archive element of the Spindles redevelopment as authorised in the July 22 Creating a Better Place cabinet report. This is required to maintain programme continuity and provide greater cost certainty.</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private: Creating a Better Place Cabinet Report – July 2022</p>				

KEY DECISION DOCUMENT – COVERING DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN FROM 19TH MAY 2023

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
	Works Required to treat Mineshaft to continue progress of Spindles Redevelopment	Director of Economy – Paul Clifford	April 2023	Cabinet Member - Regeneration and Housing (Leader - Councillor Amanda Chadderton)
<p>Description: Any works required by the Coal Authority to infill or cap the existing mineshaft that sits beneath the former TJ Hughes building</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private: Creating a Better Place Cabinet Report – July 2022</p>				
50	Spindles - Creating a Better Place - Variation	Director of Economy – Paul Clifford	April 2023	Cabinet Member - Regeneration and Housing (Leader - Councillor Amanda Chadderton)
<p>Description: Variation related to Creating a Better Place Programme</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private: Creating a Better Place Cabinet Report – July 2022</p>				

KEY DECISION DOCUMENT – COVERING DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN FROM 19TH MAY 2023

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
New!	Exempt Contract Procedure Rules and put a contract in place with The Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust		April 2023	Director of Education, Skills & Early Years - Richard Lynch, Managing Director Children and Young People (DCS) - Gerard Jones

KEY DECISION DOCUMENT – COVERING DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN FROM 19TH MAY 2023

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
	<p>Description: Family Hubs is a new national initiative which looks to connect a range of services that support families at a universal and targeted level. The expectations for delivery include providing a range of support for families & babies, breastfeeding parents; vulnerable or underserved parents; fathers, co-parents and carers; parents/carers with mild-moderate mental health needs in improving the Perinatal Mental Health. This workstream represents the 31.1% of the Family Hubs funding.</p> <p>Agreement is being sought to exempt contract procedure rules and put a contract in place with The Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust to provide perinatal mental health and parent-infant – PIMH - relationship support within the Family Hubs Programme. This service would be for two years from 1st April 2023 – 31st March 2025.</p> <p>If approved, this will enhance the current PIMH offer in Oldham as the organisation is already working in partnership with the Council.</p> <p>The Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust is a valued partner both strategically and operationally within Oldham and Greater Manchester. The service is well-regarded and is a vital contributor at a strategic and operational level supporting a variety of PIMH actives e.g., lower level/ universal mental health support; one-to-one support to parents and carers with mild mental health difficulties and parent–infant relationship difficulties.</p>			
Document(s) to be considered in public or private:	6			

KEY DECISION DOCUMENT – COVERING DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN FROM 19TH MAY 2023

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
	Northern Roots VC and LC PCSA Award	Director of Economy – Paul Clifford	April 2023	Cabinet Member - Regeneration and Housing (Leader - Councillor Amanda Chadderton)
Description: The purpose of the report would be to award a contract to the successful bidder in respect to the Construction of a Visitor Centre and External Works and a Learning Centre Document(s) to be considered in public or private:				
Page 53	Exempt Contract Procedure Rules and put a contract in place with Home-Start		April 2023	Director of Education, Skills & Early Years - Richard Lynch, Managing Director Children and Young People (DCS) - Gerard Jones

KEY DECISION DOCUMENT – COVERING DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN FROM 19TH MAY 2023

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
	<p>Description: The implementation of a Family Hubs Framework in Oldham will require changes & new ways of working both in our current 0-19 service and with partners. Additionally, a series of activities and services need to be implemented to achieve the minimum and go further Family Hubs National requirements. According to the DfE requirements, the Family Hubs Programme should strengthen working in partnership with VCSFE organisations to deliver Family Hubs activities/services and outcomes. This report seeks approval to make a direct contract award to Home-Start Host Limited as a key local and valued organisation to deliver elements of the Oldham’s Family Hubs programme in year 2 and year 3 (April 2023 – March 2025). If approved, this will enhance the current Home-Start offer in Oldham as the organisation has already been commissioned by Oldham to deliver a peer support Befriending Service for 2023-24 as part of the Reform Investment Fund. This early support improves outcomes for families and reduces the need for escalation to Early Help and other higher cost services. Home-Start is a valued partner both strategically and operationally within Oldham and Greater Manchester. The service is well-regarded and is a vital contributor at a strategic level supporting a variety of work areas in Oldham e.g., outreach to increase take up of the 2-year-old free entitlement offer.</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private:</p>			

KEY DECISION DOCUMENT – COVERING DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN FROM 19TH MAY 2023

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
New!	Exempt Contract Procedure Rules and put a contract in place with Home-Start		April 2023	Director of Education, Skills & Early Years - Richard Lynch, Managing Director Children and Young People (DCS) - Gerard Jones

KEY DECISION DOCUMENT – COVERING DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN FROM 19TH MAY 2023

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Document(s) to be considered in public or private:

KEY DECISION DOCUMENT – COVERING DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN FROM 19TH MAY 2023

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
New!	Spindles Transition Programme and Project Management Capacity		April 2023	Cabinet Member - Regeneration and Housing (Leader - Councillor Amanda Chadderton)
Description: Appointment of programme and project management resource to provide additional organisational capacity supporting the delivery of number of key workstreams associated with transition to and occupancy of the refurbished Spindles Centre. Document(s) to be considered in public or private:				
Page 57	Exempt Contract Procedure Rules and put a contract in place with The Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust		April 2023	Director of Education, Skills & Early Years - Richard Lynch, Managing Director Children and Young People (DCS) - Gerard Jones

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Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
	<p>Description: Family Hubs is a new national initiative which looks to connect a range of services that support families at a universal and targeted level. The expectations for delivery include providing a range of support for families & babies, breastfeeding parents; vulnerable or underserved parents; fathers, co-parents and carers; parents/carers with mild-moderate mental health needs in improving the Perinatal Mental Health. This workstream represents the 31.1% of the Family Hubs funding.</p> <p>Agreement is being sought to exempt contract procedure rules and put a contract in place with The Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust to provide perinatal mental health and parent-infant – PIMH - relationship support within the Family Hubs Programme. This service would be for two years from 1st April 2023 – 31st March 2025.</p> <p>If approved, this will enhance the current PIMH offer in Oldham as the organisation is already working in partnership with the Council.</p> <p>The Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust is a valued partner both strategically and operationally within Oldham and Greater Manchester. The service is well-regarded and is a vital contributor at a strategic and operational level supporting a variety of PIMH actives e.g., lower level/ universal mental health support; one-to-one support to parents and carers with mild mental health difficulties and parent–infant relationship difficulties</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private:</p>			

KEY DECISION DOCUMENT – COVERING DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN FROM 19TH MAY 2023

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
	Old Library Phase 2 PCSA enabling works package	Director of Economy – Paul Clifford	April 2023	Cabinet Member - Regeneration and Housing (Leader - Councillor Amanda Chadderton)
<p>Description: Variation to the Pre-construction Services Agreement (PCSA)</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private: Delegated report (private)</p> <p>NOT FOR PUBLICATION by virtue of Paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and it is not in the public interest to disclose the information because it relates to the business and financial affairs of the Council</p>				
59 New!	Grant Acceptance: Active Travel Capability and Ambition Fund 2022/23		April 2023	Cabinet Member - Regeneration and Housing (Leader - Councillor Amanda Chadderton)

KEY DECISION DOCUMENT – COVERING DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN FROM 19TH MAY 2023

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
<p>Description: GMCA has been awarded £3.4 million of revenue funding from the Department for Transport's Active Travel Capability and Ambition Fund, to be used to develop active travel schemes, support network planning, and support activation activity to enable more people to walk and cycle. Oldham Council has been allocated £175,000 of this funding by GMCA for cycling and walking network and scheme design/planning.</p> <p>The purpose of this report is to seek approval to accept the award, enter into a grant agreement with GMCA for the award and spend £175,000 of Department for Transport (DfT) Local Authority Capability and Ambition Fund revenue funding from GMCA to deliver a programme of cycling and walking network development and scheme design/planning.</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private:</p>				
New!	Woodhouses Play 106		April 2023	Director of Environment - Nasir Dad
<p>Description: Decision to allocate Section 106 resources from DB 432 (PA/343302) Land at rear of Dog & Partridge Public House, Medlock Road, & DB427 (PA/34055) Land at 165 Medlock Road, Failsworth for improvements to Stamford Drive/Woodhouse Park Playspace, plus ongoing future maintenance and the award of the contract</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private:</p>				

KEY DECISION DOCUMENT – COVERING DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN FROM 19TH MAY 2023

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
	Hollinwood Junction - Kaskenmoor site	Executive Director for Place & Economic Growth - Emma Barton	May 2023	
<p>Description: Proposed residential development of Kaskenmoor site, Hollinwood Junction Document(s) to be considered in public or private: Private because it is not in the public interest to disclose the information because it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person.</p>				

KEY DECISION DOCUMENT – COVERING DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN FROM 19TH MAY 2023

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
<p>The decision is deemed to be a Key Decision by virtue of the fact that that expected expenditure for Oldham Council over the duration of the contract (4 Years) has the potential to exceed the £250k threshold dependent on service demand, although a considerable part of this expenditure is schools</p>	<p>DBS Contract Renewal</p>	<p>Assistant Chief Executive - Shelley Kipling</p>	<p>Before May 2023</p>	<p>Cabinet Member - Corporate Services (Councillor Shaid Mushtaq)</p>

KEY DECISION DOCUMENT – COVERING DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN FROM 19TH MAY 2023

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
<p>Description: The awarding of the contract is a Greater Manchester wide decision with an expected decision to be made n late December 2022 followed by a 10-day cooling off period - and the decision to be formally confirmed by mid- January 2023.</p> <p>It is the responsibility of officers at individual authorities to seek separate internal approvals (At both an Executive and Political level) in line with respective Procurement/ / Legal / Constitutional Services governance arrangements.</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private: The Document and report will be private due to the nature of information relating to the awarding of the contract - deemed commercially sensitive</p>				
<p>New!</p>	<p>Assessment of Safe and Active Travel Infrastructure to Oldham’s Primary and Secondary Schools</p>		<p>May 2023</p>	<p>Director of Economy – Paul Clifford</p>
<p>Description: This report seeks approval for Oldham Council to spend £79,418.00 of funding, awarded by the Department for Transport (DfT), from its Capability Fund, to undertake an assessment of all Active Travel Infrastructure around primary and secondary schools in Oldham. The assessment will form the basis of a wider strategy to improve walking and cycling infrastructure in Oldham, by means of building a pipeline of deliverable schemes in the short, medium and long term</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private:</p>				
	<p>Priority Programme Fund Community Grants</p>		<p>May 2023</p>	<p>Cabinet Member - Employment and Enterprise (Councillor Shoab Akhtar)</p>

KEY DECISION DOCUMENT – COVERING DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN FROM 19TH MAY 2023

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
<p>Description: To allocate grant funding from the Priority Programme Fund (PPF) to community grants, renewing existing grants for one year (23/24).</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private:</p>				
<p>Page 9</p>	<p>Social Prescribing Contract Extension</p>	<p>Deputy Chief Executive – Sayyed Osman</p>	<p>May 2023</p>	<p>Cabinet Member - Health and Social Care (Councillor Barbara Brownridge)</p>
	<p>Description: To extend the Social Prescribing Innovation Partnership contract which ends on 31st March 2023 for 1 year until 31st March 2024, including continuing the offer for children developed over the last year. The report requests a one-year extension as allowed within the provision of the current contractual terms.</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private:</p>			
<p>New!</p>	<p>Egyptian Room</p>	<p>Director of Economy – Paul Clifford</p>	<p>June 2023</p>	<p>Cabinet Member - Finance and Low Carbon (Deputy Leader - Councillor Abdul Jabbar)</p>
<p>Description: Variation to existing contract</p> <p>Document(s) to be considered in public or private: NOT FOR PUBLICATION by virtue of Paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and it is not in the public interest to disclose the information because it relates to the financial and business affairs of the Council</p>				

KEY DECISION DOCUMENT – COVERING DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN FROM 19TH MAY 2023

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
TBC	Town Centre Procurement / Oldham Town Centre – Master Developer	Director of Economy – Paul Clifford	June 2023	Cabinet
Description: To enter into a strategic partnership contributing to the ongoing delivery of the Creating a Better Place programme in Oldham Town Centre. Document(s) to be considered in public or private: N/A				
	Care at Home Market Changes.		June 2023	Cabinet
Description: Document(s) to be considered in public or private:				
Page 65	Carriageway Investment Funding	Director of Environment - Nasir Dad	June 2023	Cabinet
Description: Additional funding for carriageway surfacing/treatments Document(s) to be considered in public or private:				
New!	Grant Acceptance: City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) - Oldham Town Centre: St Marys Way	Executive Director for Place & Economic Growth - Emma Barton	June 2023	Cabinet
Description: Oldham Council has secured additional funding for scheme design and development via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) The purpose of this report is to confirm the value of the grant available to Oldham and to notify Cabinet of the intention to bring this additional resource into the transport capital programme to commence development of the full business case. Document(s) to be considered in public or private: N/A				

KEY DECISION DOCUMENT – COVERING DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN FROM 19TH MAY 2023

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
	City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) – Transport Capital Programme 2023/24	Director of Environment - Nasir Dad	June 2023	Cabinet
Description: With the strategic approach for the 5-year CRSTS funding having been approved in March 2022, this report seeks delegated approval of the programmes recommended for delivery in 2023/24 to utilise this funding. Document(s) to be considered in public or private:				
	Contractual Arrangements - Human Resources and Payroll System (MHR iTrent)	Assistant Chief Executive - Shelley Kipling	June 2023	Cabinet
Description: Review of the contract arrangements in relation to the HR and Payroll system (iTrent). The current contract with MHR International UK Limited (MHR) was due to expire on 18th April 2023 with an initial three months' contract extension being approved via Delegated Cabinet Member Decision Report from 19th April 2023 to 18th July 2023. Document(s) to be considered in public or private: Cabinet Report				
	Future Commissioning intentions for the Hospital to Home Service (Care at Home)		June 2023	Cabinet
Description: Document(s) to be considered in public or private:				

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Key:

New! - indicates an item that has been added this month

KEY DECISION DOCUMENT – COVERING DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN FROM 19TH MAY 2023

Key Decision Reference	Subject Area For Decision	Led By	Decision Date	Decision Taker
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- Notes:
1. The procedure for requesting details of documents listed to be submitted to decision takers for consideration is to contact the Contact Officer contained within the Key Decision Sheet for that item. The contact address for documents is Oldham Council, Civic Centre, West Street, Oldham, OL1 1UH. Other documents relevant to those matters may be submitted to the decision maker.
 2. Where on a Key Decision Sheet the Decision Taker is Cabinet, the list of its Members are as follows: Councillors Arooj Shah, Elaine Taylor, Shaid Mushtaq, Abdul Jabbar MBE, Mohon Ali, Barbara Brownridge, Chris Goodwin, Fida Hussain and Peter Dean.
 3. Full Key Decision details (including documents to be submitted to the decision maker for consideration, specific contact officer details and notification on if a report is likely to be considered in private) can be found via the online published plan at: <http://committees.oldham.gov.uk/mgListPlans.aspx?RPId=144&RD=0>

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