

TERMS OF REFERENCE

COMMITTEE: OVERVIEW SCRUTINY AND AUDIT

COMPOSITION

10 Elected Members; politically balanced

The full committee will meet at least twice a year in order to deal with those tasks of scrutiny and overview specifically allocated to it and consider any items specific to Policy, Finance and Administration Committee. The full committee will meet four times each year to discharge the responsibilities of the Audit Committee: these meetings will allow the committee to:

- Approve the Annual Audit Plan (March);
- Receive the Annual Report of Internal Audit (June);
- Receive the External Auditor's Letter (September); and
- Assess the performance of Internal Audit in delivering the Annual Audit Plan (December)

Special meetings may be held at any time as required and there shall be no barrier to the committee discharging both its Audit Committee and its Overview, Scrutiny and Audit responsibilities at the same meeting.

The remainder of the time the committee will split into two groups - workshops which will meet alternately under a common chair. These two groups will deal with REEA and CSA committees respectively. Any of the Policy committees may refer items to Overview, Scrutiny and Audit for its consideration.

The Workshop Teams will have the following remit:

- To investigate options and present those options with the appropriate background information to the Policy Committee/Full Council.
- The aim of this format is to be responsive to committee and Council needs and nimble enough to deal quickly and effectively with matters of an urgent or pressing nature.
- Short agendas to facilitate the focus on particular problem areas of policy development.
- The Workshops will operate mainly through the direct support of the Heads of Service.
- As a general rule these meetings will be with officers only.

DELEGATED FUNCTIONS

1. To assist the Council in the development of its budget and policy framework as detailed in the Council's budget and Policy Framework Rules.
2. To conduct research, community and other consultation in the analysis of policy issues and possible options.
3. To act as the Council's Audit Committee by:
 - Keeping under review the Council's corporate governance arrangements;
 - Providing independent assurance as to the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's risk management arrangements; the associated control environment; and anti-fraud and anti-corruption arrangements;

- Monitoring the Council's Risk Management Strategy; the Risk Register and the actions taken by officers to identify; evaluate; manage and monitor the Council's material risks;
 - Reviewing summary internal audit reports and the main issues arising and seeking assurance that action is taken on the main issues raised in these reports;
 - Approve internal audit's strategy and plans and monitoring the performance of internal audit;
 - Ensuring that there are effective arrangements between internal and external audit and that the value of the audit process is actively promoted;
 - Obtaining appropriate assurance that the Council's Annual Governance Statement, and any other assurance statements required of the Council, properly reflect the risk environment and any actions required to improve it;
 - Reviewing the External Auditor's Opinion and other reports made by the External Auditor to Members and monitoring management action in response to issues raised by external audit.
4. To consider and implement mechanisms to encourage and enhance community participation in the development of policy options.
 5. To question members and officers in accordance with the Overview & Scrutiny procedure rules about their views on issues and proposals affecting the area.
 6. To liaise with other external organisations operating in the area, whether national, regional or local, to ensure that the interests of local people are enhanced by collaborative working.
 7. To review and scrutinise the decisions made by and performance of committees and Council officers both in relation to individual decisions and over time, including consideration of officer reports and recommendations following complaints by members of the public in relation to service delivery.
 8. To make recommendations to the appropriate committee and/or Council arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process.
 9. To review and scrutinise the performance of other public bodies in the area and invite reports from them by requesting them to address the Overview, Scrutiny and Audit Committee and local people about their activities and performance.
 10. To question and gather evidence from any person (with their consent).
 11. To consider the following specific areas of Council business:
 - (a) Ombudsman reports
 - (b) Reports of statutory inspection;
 - (c) Reports from the Council's internal auditor and external auditor;
 - (d) Draft policies, plans and strategies where appropriate;
 - (e) Any proposals for modification of the Council's Constitution.
 12. To prepare an annual work plan identifying particular topics for review during the year.
 13. To exercise overall responsibility for the finances made available to it.
 14. To exercise the powers of the Council under section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 in reviewing and scrutinising the actions and decisions of the Council in discharging its crime and disorder functions.